

Changing Course in Turkish Foreign Policy

*Explaining the Change in Turkish Foreign Policy in 2010s in the context of
the Middle Eastern Security Complex*

Abstract

This study investigates why there is a change in Turkish foreign policy in 2010s in the context of the Middle Eastern security complex through a “before-after” comparison. The main argument of the present research is that the change in the Middle Eastern regional security complex brought by the Arab uprisings, which is perceived and mediated by the Turkish foreign policy-makers through a foreign policy decision-making process, led to changes in Turkish foreign policy. In exploring this causal mechanism, the change in Turkish foreign policy is identified as adjustment, program, and problem and goal changes according to Charles F. Hermann’s typology for foreign policy change in terms of outcomes. Then, the Regional Security Complex Theory is used as an instrumental theory to research the elements of the Middle Eastern security complex and the change in the structure. The analytical findings of the mentioned chapter demonstrate that there was internal transformation of the regional security structure through the change in the patterns of amity and enmity in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings. Lastly, a foreign policy decision-making approach which concerns identification of the foreign policy problem and decision unit dynamics is employed in order to determine the role of the Turkish foreign policy leadership and decision-making. At this point, the empirical findings suggest that Turkish foreign policy-makers perceived developments and challenges in the regional security structure as a foreign policy problem, considered strategic beliefs and objectives as fundamental, and made decision for foreign policy change through “concurrence” within the single group decision unit based on groupthink.

Key words: Turkish foreign policy, foreign policy change, foreign policy analysis, foreign policy, decision-making, decision unit, leadership, Middle East, security complex, regional structure, internal transformation, Arab uprising
Words: 19476

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Abbreviations

EU European Union
FPA Foreign Policy Analysis
IR International Relations
ISIL Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
JDP Justice and Development Party
MFA Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO Non-governmental organization
NTC National Transition Council
UN United Nations
US United States of America

1 Introduction

1.1 Research Puzzle

The Middle East has hitherto been a unique example of a conflict prone region. Although the regional security structure remained largely intact for some decades, the year 2011 marked the beginning of significant developments throughout the region. In fact, it was the outbreak of a regional phenomenon, i.e. the Arab uprisings, which brought major challenges not only to the countries experiencing the events, but also adjacent countries in the region. The extensiveness of these challenges and developments caused by the said uprisings triggered substantial changes in the regional security structure in its aftermath.

Until the Arab uprisings, Turkey enjoyed rising prominence in the Middle Eastern regional affairs, particularly in the context of security affairs. With an apparently different foreign policy framework than those previously adopted when it was more reluctant to engage in Middle Eastern affairs to a greater extent, Turkey started to pursue a proactive and multi-dimensional foreign policy based on soft power in an effort to promote regional cooperation and stability from mid-2000s onwards. Particularly between 2007 and 2011, by actively engaging in regional security matters through mediation, facilitation, and any available means and platforms for pushing cooperation and stability in the region, Turkey adopted an integrative and constructive foreign policy in responding to the problems and challenges in the context of the Middle Eastern security environment.

However, proactive and multi-dimensional foreign policy of Turkey has been put into a serious test by the changing regional security structure by the outbreak of the Arab uprisings.¹ The prominence of the regional security developments triggered a series of debates for Turkish foreign policy and its capabilities and limits. It quickly became evident that this change made the continuation of such policy gruelling, if not impossible. In other words, regional factors and developments that Turkey cannot easily control have made it clear that the Turkish foreign policy cannot be conducted as comfortably as it was in its pre-Arab uprisings fashion.² On the other hand, the uprisings that posed serious challenges to Turkey's proactive foreign policy have provided new opportunities at the same time in its attempt to respond these challenges and overcome the limits inherent in

¹ E. Fuat Keyman and Sebnem Gumuscu, *Democracy, Identity and Foreign Policy in Turkey: Hegemony Through Transformation* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 84.

² Baskın Oran (ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası - Cilt III 2001-2012* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık, 2013), 210.

new opportunities.³ Therefore, the transformation of the regional security context forces researchers to closely investigate the revisions and changes in Turkish foreign policy.⁴ The puzzle of this study starts from the point that Turkey has faced a challenge as regards whether, to what extent, and in what manner to change its foreign policy vis-à-vis pressuring regional developments. Having underlined the change in Turkish foreign policy, the investigation on the factors behind it remains crucial.

1.2 Research Question and Aim

The research question of this study is *why there is a change in Turkish foreign policy in the context of the Middle Eastern security complex in early 2010s*. The aim is to seek an analytical explanation of this question by conducting an examination of Turkish foreign policy *before and after* the change through applying Charles F. Hermann's model for foreign policy change in terms of outcomes. Within this context, the present study argues that *change in regional security structure* in the face of the Arab uprisings is the main determinant of a smorgasbord of changes in Turkish foreign policy. It further investigates the Turkish foreign policy leadership and decision-making as factor perceiving and mediating the source of change and leading to the outcome.

In case studies, the research objective is not necessarily focused on the dependent variable, but it may alternatively be on the investigation of an explanatory variable in shaping the outcome.⁵ In this regard, although the specification of the outcome is still essential and will be carried out, this study primarily focuses on the explanation of the source of change and the intermediate step of leadership and decision-making. More specifically, its empirical analysis is directed towards the independent variable, i.e. source of change, and the intermediate step, i.e. foreign policy leadership and decision-making, rather than the foreign policy change itself.

The *empirical aim* of this study is to develop an analytical explanation of the change in Turkish foreign policy in the context of the Middle Eastern security complex in 2010s. By applying the explanatory model of foreign policy change to a case study, it aims to contribute to the empirical study on foreign policy change. Besides, by adopting a *before-after* research design on the change in Turkish foreign policy, the aim is also to enhance *policy evaluation research* in this field of study.

In addition to its empirical aims, the present study has theoretical motivations as well. The *theoretical aim* is to contribute to the study of foreign policy change.

³ E. Fuat Keyman and Sebnem Gumuscu (2014), 88.

⁴ Bülent Aras, 'Davutoğlu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy Revisited', *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 16/4 (2014a), 407.

⁵ Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2005), 80.

Taking insights from the earlier literature on foreign policy change to an important extent, it provides a functional alternative explanatory model of foreign policy change, which generates its essence partially from Jakob Gustavsson's three-step model. In addition, it intends to make a contribution to the scholarly literature as it combines Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) *focusing on actor's actions* and International Relations (IR) *focusing on system/structure*.

1.3 Organization of the Study

The study is composed of seven major parts. In *Chapter 1*, the empirical puzzle and the research question together with the theoretical and empirical objectives are presented. *Chapter 2* is to provide the theoretical framework of the study, which starts with a discussion on the study of FPA and continues with literature overview on the change in Turkish foreign policy. The model for foreign policy change in terms of outcomes follows the literature overview. Subsequently, the theoretical guideline is provided, which brings theoretical insights on the security complex and foreign policy decision-making separately. Finally in this chapter, the theoretical model for foreign policy change is explained, where how the causal process occurs is demonstrated. The methodological framework is aptly displaced in *Chapter 3* which intends to bring explanations concerning the methodological choices made in the conduct of this study. Research design, method and material, and operationalization of the variables are the contents of this chapter. In *Chapter 4*, the change in Turkish foreign policy is demonstrated in a directly comparative manner for each type of foreign policy changes, which includes the changes in its adjustment, program, and problems and goals. *Chapter 5* and *Chapter 6* are fundamentally of the empirical analysis put forth by this study. *Chapter 5* seeks to search for the source of change by studying the essential structure of the Middle Eastern security complex in a before, during, and after approach. Then, *Chapter 6* deals with leadership and decision-making in Turkish foreign policy, in particular in the face of the Arab uprisings. It basically focuses on the identification of the foreign policy problem and decision-making dynamics, including decision unit, its dynamics, and foreign policy vision. Lastly, *Chapter 7* aims to provide a summary of the findings, some possible generalizations, concluding points and recommendations for subsequent studies.

2 Theoretical Framework

This chapter seeks to provide the theoretical foundation of the study. It starts with explanations concerning the study field that it intends to contribute to, and discusses the possibilities of combining different theoretical approaches during its conduct. Subsequently, overview of existing studies in relation to the Turkish foreign policy is carried out in order to figure out possible contributions to the literature. Thirdly, a model for foreign policy change in terms of outcomes is presented in order to be specific, organized, and structured on the dependent variable. Then, it is followed by the theoretical guideline, which introduces theoretical underpinnings concerning the explanatory factor and intermediate step separately. Finally, theoretical model for foreign policy change, which models the overall causal process, is specified.

2.1 Foreign Policy as a Field of Research

Distinct from IR which concentrates primarily on the structure, FPA, which is an eclectic “actor-specific” sub-field of the former, is interested in explaining how and why foreign policy decisions come about.⁶ Although foreign policy has heretofore been a field of study that attracted attention of scholars studying IR and FPA, the rather specific study of foreign policy change remains relatively neglected. In these margins, this study starts with an interest on the theoretical question of how and why states act in international arena in specific and observable manners they bear, and particularly focuses on how and why states change their foreign policy. Within this understanding, what factors may be at work in driving states to change their foreign policies, what processes and dynamics concerning decision-making may be applicable to the making of decisions for change are significant questions to be examined.

By researching abovementioned queries, this study intends to contribute primarily to the study of FPA, while utilising IR studies at the same time. It researches the Middle Eastern regional security structure in order to discover the explanatory factor behind Turkey’s foreign policy change. For an individual state is never the sole actor operating in international and/or regional system and that there remains the constant interaction among international actors and structural factors, combining FPA and IR is efficient in the substance of this text. This fact

⁶ Marijke Breuning, *Foreign Policy Analysis - A Comparative Introduction* (New York: Palgrave, 2007), 164.

can potentially lead to changes in foreign policy of states. What is more relevant for the purpose of this study is that the structure *per se* within which that particular state conducts its foreign policy may bear factors conducive to change. Therefore, it is useful to contextualize the system and external structural factors in which that particular state operates.

Although there is no common theory of foreign policy in the literature, scholars tend to take factors at different levels of analysis into consideration and construct “multi-causal explanations” by adopting IR theories and other approaches such as those explaining domestic sources of foreign policy.⁷ As Gustavsson points out, it is sequentially important to see that structural conditions can be taken into account to the extent that they are perceived and reacted to by the decision-makers.⁸ From this perspective, conducting an inclusive FPA study that takes insights from both an IR theory for explaining regional structure and a “middle-range theory” concerning foreign policy decision-making is considered fruitful.

2.2 Literature Overview

It is important to build upon the existing studies in order to locate the study of own in the literature and to identify possible research contributions.⁹ In general, the literature on Turkish foreign policy does not provide a new theory, but contributes to theoretical discussions through regional studies.¹⁰ Within this context, the recent literature on the change in the Turkish foreign policy can be broadly categorized within three major areas of study:

- Change in the Turkish foreign policy with the ruling Justice and Development Party (JDP, *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*) with a focus on the rise of proactive and multi-dimensional foreign policy and its instruments, as well as discussion on “Turkey as a regional power”,¹¹
- Change in the Turkish foreign policy in terms of Turkey’s international orientation in late 2000s; discussions of “Europeanization vs. Islamization and/or Middle-Easternization” of Turkish foreign policy, and of the “axis shift”,¹² and

⁷ Baris Kesgin, ‘Foreign Policy Analysis’ in John T. Ishiyama and Marijke Breuning (eds.), *21st Century Political Science: A Reference Handbook* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2011), 4.

⁸ Jakob Gustavsson, *The Politics of Foreign Policy Change. Explaining the Swedish Reorientation on EC Membership* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1998), 16.

⁹ Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett (2005), 70.

¹⁰ Nilüfer Karacasulu, ‘International Relations Studies in Turkey: Theoretical Considerations’, *Uluslararası Hukuk ve Politika*, 8/29 (2012), 155.

¹¹ See Ziya Öniş, ‘Multiple Faces of the “New” Turkish Foreign Policy: Underlying Dynamics and a Critique’, *Insight Turkey*, 13/1 (2011), 47-65; Şaban Kardaş, ‘Turkey: A Regional Power Facing a Changing International System’, *Turkish Studies*, 14/4 (2013a), 637-660; Tarık Oğuzlu and Emre Parlar Dal, ‘Decoding Turkey’s Rise: An Introduction’, *Turkish Studies*, 14/4 (2013), 617-636.

¹² See Tarık Oğuzlu, ‘Turkey and Europeanization of Foreign Policy?’, *Political Science Quarterly*, 125/4 (2011), 657-683; Meltem Müftüler Baç and Yaprak Gürsoy, ‘Is There a Europeanization of Turkish Foreign Policy? An Addendum to the

- Turkish foreign policy in the Middle East, Turkish foreign policy in the aftermath of Arab uprisings, and the “model” discussion.¹³

Concerning the rise of proactive and multi-dimensional foreign policy, Öniş and Yılmaz writes in their influential article that proactive, multi-dimensional, and soft power-based foreign policy of Turkey, which is very much influenced by Davutoğlu’s “Strategic Depth” vision, marks a considerable continuity in foreign policy-making during the JDP era.¹⁴ The discontinuation, according to them, is that Turkey, which they call a regional power, shifted from deep Europeanization to “loose Europeanization” and what they call “soft Euro-Asianism” that holds Europeanization and Euro-Asian elements together.¹⁵ Similarly, the international orientation of Turkey generated great scholarly debate in the late 2000s. In particular, Oğuzlu argues that Turkish foreign policy has become Middle-Easternized due to pragmatic reasons than ideational, and that Turkey’s relation with the West has mainly been motivated by this pragmatism.¹⁶ On the other hand, according to Larrabee, Turkey’s diplomatic activism and efforts to establish new relations in such areas as Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia mainly are mainly to “overcome the anomalies of the Cold War” and to adapt to the post-Cold War political and security environment, which therefore do not represent an Islamization of its foreign policy.¹⁷

Among major discussions concerning Turkish foreign policy, I find those concentrating on the challenges brought by the Arab uprisings to the Turkish foreign policy more relevant to the content of this research. Keyman and Gumuscu argues that the Turkish foreign policy under the JDP governments has faced with two serious challenges for some decade which were the severe economic crisis in 2008 and Arab uprising in the early 2011.¹⁸ According to them, Arab uprisings led to the critical implication in relations with the neighbouring states and to the transformation in Turkish proactive and “zero problems with neighbours” foreign policies in the region.¹⁹ Similarly, investigating the impact of the Arab uprisings on the viability of Turkish foreign policy, Aras argues that Turkish foreign policy has

Literature on EU Candidates’, *Turkish Studies*, 11/3 (2010), 405-427; Ahmet Sözen, ‘A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges’, *Turkish Studies*, 11/1 (2010), 103-123; Soner Cagaptay, ‘Defining Turkish Power: Turkey as a Rising Power Embedded in the Western International System’, *Turkish Studies*, 14/4 (2013a), 797-798; Sevilay Kahraman, ‘Turkey and the European Union in the Middle East: Reconciling or Competing with Each Other?’, *Turkish Studies*, 12/4 (2011), 699-716.

¹³ See Tark Oğuzlu, ‘The ‘Arab Spring’ and the Rise of the 2.0 Version of Turkey’s ‘zero problems with neighbors’ Policy’, *SAM Papers*, No.1 (Feb. 2012); Kemal Kirişçi, ‘Turkey’s “Demonstrative Effect” and the Transformation of the Middle East’, *Insight Turkey*, 13/2 (2011), 33-55; Ömer Taşpınar, ‘The End of the Turkish Model’, *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, 56/2 (2014), 49-64.

¹⁴ Ziya Öniş and Şuhnaz Yılmaz, ‘Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism: Foreign Policy Activism in Turkey during the AKP Era’, *Turkish Studies*, 10/1 (2009), 7-9.

¹⁵ Ibid. 20-21.

¹⁶ Tark Oğuzlu, ‘Middle Easternization of Turkey’s Foreign Policy: Does Turkey Dissociate from the West?’, *Turkish Studies*, 9/1 (2008), 3, 17.

¹⁷ Stephen F. Larrabee, ‘Turkey’s New Geopolitics’, *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, 52/2 (2010), 158.

¹⁸ E. Fuat Keyman and Sebnem Gumuscu (2014), 84.

¹⁹ Ibid. 86-89.

tilted towards a direction based on more liberal principles, which is to reconcile with Turkey's "realpolitik concerns" for the region.²⁰

These researches offer remarkable insights on Turkish foreign policy and challenges and their implications brought by the Arab uprisings on it. Yet, the research gap exists in the literature as none of the studies concerning the change in Turkish foreign policy in early 2010s has been conducted in a systematic and theoretical manner covering structural factors and factors relating to foreign policy decision-making. More specifically, none of the research has so far studied change in Turkish foreign policy "before and after" the Arab uprisings explicitly in a comparative manner within a theoretical model existent in the foreign policy change scholarship. Even though I particularly consider the article by Altunışık and Martin, *Making Sense of Turkish Foreign Policy in the Middle East under AKP*, very useful study combining both theoretical and empirical insights of change in Turkish foreign policy, it compares the first (2002-2007) and second (2007-2011) JDP governments and roughly ends in the year 2011 with a little comment on the then-emerging Arab uprisings.²¹ From this perspective, this study aims to make a research contribution by conducting a *before-after* comparative case study on the change in Turkish foreign policy in the context of Middle Eastern security complex in 2010s with a significant emphasis on the structural changes and factors relating to foreign policy decision-making.

2.3 Model for Foreign Policy Change in Terms of Outcomes

First of all, concerning the dependent variable, i.e. foreign policy change, Hermann makes a distinction between foreign policy change resulting from regime change or state transformation and foreign policy change in a self-correcting manner by current decision-makers.²² As Hermann does, the present study also deals with "self-correcting" foreign policy change rather than the one through regime or government change.

Subsequently, it is also essential to note that types of foreign policy change may differ in terms of scope and domain.²³ In Hermann's framework, foreign policy change in terms of outcomes can be categorized in a model of four graduated types of change, namely adjustment changes, program changes, problem and goal changes, and international orientation change.²⁴ To describe these types of changes shortly, adjustment changes refer to minor and least demanding changes; in other words, changes only in "the level of effort and/or in the scope of

²⁰ Bülent Aras (2014a), 416.

²¹ See Meliha B. Altunışık and Lenore G. Martin, 'Making Sense of Turkish Foreign Policy in the Middle East under AKP', *Turkish Studies*, 12/4 (2011), 569-587.

²² Charles F. Hermann, 'Changing Course: When Governments Choose to Redirect Foreign Policy', *International Studies Quarterly*, 34/1 (1990), 5.

²³ Jakob Gustavsson (1998), 22.

²⁴ Charles F. Hermann (1990), 5.

recipient”, or simply in behaviours.²⁵ On the other hand, the remaining three types of foreign policy change represent “major foreign policy change”, either alone or together.²⁶ Program changes are those in methods, means and/or instruments through which a problem is addressed and a goal is pursued, as both of them remain fixed and unchanged.²⁷ Thirdly, problem and goal changes refer to “replacement or forfeit of the initial foreign policy problem and/or goal”.²⁸ This type of change may still be limited by few foreign policy issues. Lastly, speaking for itself, international orientation change is an extreme type of change in entire foreign policy of the state in question, switching the actor’s position in multiple foreign policy issues, roles and activities.²⁹



Figure 1 Hermann’s Model of Foreign Policy Change in Terms of Outcomes³⁰

2.4 Theoretical Guideline

As possibility of employing both IR theories and “middle-range theories” in FPA studies is mentioned, and the variables and the causal mechanism between them are specified, an initial theoretical explanation concerning the independent variable and the intermediate step is now needed before moving on with the subsequent chapters.³¹ In this theoretical guideline of the study, the Regional Security Complex Theory, which is quite explanatory in presenting the structural conditions from a regional security perspective, is presented at first. Subsequently, a theoretical approach on foreign policy decision-making, largely developed by Margaret G. Hermann and others, are provided in order to conceptualize the role of leadership and decision-making in leading to foreign policy change.

²⁵ Charles F. Hermann and Robert S. Billings in Charles F. Hermann in Charles F. Hermann (ed.), *When Things Go Wrong - Foreign Policy Decision Making under Adverse Feedback* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 27.

²⁶ Charles F. Hermann (1990), 5.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Information from Charles F. Hermann (1990), 5.

³¹ See Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett (2005), 181.

2.4.1 Regional Security Complex Theory

The Regional Security Complex Theory is a theory particularly very useful in explaining foreign policy change in the context of a security region, as it presents descriptive concepts for both static and dynamic analysis and provides benchmarks for locating significant change within the structure of international security relations.³² Although it derives much of its explanatory power from neo-realism and constructivism, it differs from them given its emphasis on a regional component and generation of new insights from a regional perspective.³³ The theory is primarily made up of indications provided by Barry Buzan and others, and broadly concentrates on security regions and security interdependence. It particularly suggests that the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of its bipolar international structure had great implications on the regional politics and regional security complexes. As superpower politics came to a close, an attention was diverted to regional powers, decades-long ideological confrontation was lifted, and new non-state actors as well as non-military issues were brought along.³⁴

Since most of the conflicts and security challenges of the post-Cold War era emerge at a regional level, various regions are significant discrete systems to be studied on their own circumstances.³⁵ Further, in the contemporary global setting, political and military threats travel more easily and quickly over short distances, i.e. within regional security complexes, and that proximity relates to security and insecurity to a greater extent.³⁶ The degree of security interdependence is also more intense among members of these complexes than those outside the complexes.³⁷ In these complexes, major security perceptions and concerns of states within the system are “so interlinked that national security of these states cannot be considered independent of the others”.³⁸ More specifically, Buzan and others suggest that the essential structure of a security complex is made of four elements as follows:

1. *Boundary*, a geographically distinctive and coherent grouping,
2. *Anarchic structure*, in which two or more autonomous units exist,
3. *Distribution of power*, which derives from polarity, and
4. *Patterns of amity and enmity*, which is the social construction of the complex indicating the pattern of security interdependence among the units.³⁹

³² Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, *Security - A New Framework for Analysis* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), 15.

³³ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers - The Structure of International Security* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 84.

³⁴ Ibid. 17-18.

³⁵ Şaban Kardaş (2013a), 641.

³⁶ Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde (1998), 11.

³⁷ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver (2003), 4.

³⁸ Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde (1998), 12.

³⁹ Ibid. 15.; Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver (2003), 53.

In this connection, security complexes have an ontological status within theory and cannot simply be used to describe any state groupings.⁴⁰ The use of the term *Middle Eastern security complex* is therefore a deliberate theoretical choice that fits the classification of Buzan and Wæver, the authors of the renowned book called *Regions and Powers*.⁴¹ Accordingly, the Middle East represents a geographically defined territory in which its members are subject to security interdependence within the scope of the abovementioned elements. Besides, they argue that conflictual traits within the Middle East region make it a great instance of “classical, state-centric, military-political type” of a regional security complex.⁴²

Once the essential structure of a security complex is identified, it can also be used to narrow down possible options for change by providing stepping stones for the location of significant changes in the structure.⁴³ In other words, the elements of the essential structure of a security complex are not only useful variables in describing the characteristics of the complex, but also useful indicators in identifying and assessing structural changes at a regional level. To be clear, changes in any of the elements lead to evolution of a security complex. In their influential book called *Security - A New Framework for Analysis*, Buzan and others define four options for change in a regional security structure, namely maintenance of the status quo, internal transformation, external transformation, and overlay.⁴⁴

To begin with, *maintenance of the status quo* indicates that the essential structure of a complex and its elements remain intact, where changes can still take place in a minor and unchallenging manner.⁴⁵ At the second place, *internal transformation* simply refers to essential structural changes within the context of its existing outer boundaries through either in its anarchic structure, decisive shifts in polarity and distribution of power, or major alternations in patterns of amity and enmity.⁴⁶ In other words, there is more than one possibility for internal transformation, be it by changes in anarchic structure, distribution of power or patterns of amity and enmity.⁴⁷ Thirdly, *external transformation* demonstrates either expansion or contraction of its existing outer boundary, thus to change membership in the complex.⁴⁸ Lastly, *overlay* revolves around an event where one or more external powers penetrate into the complex, and hence, suppressing and changing the particular security dynamics of the structure.⁴⁹

⁴⁰ Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde (1998), 12.

⁴¹ See Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver (2003), 187-218.

⁴² Ibid. 217.

⁴³ Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde (1998), 15.

⁴⁴ Ibid. 13.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver (2003), 53.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 257.

⁴⁸ Ibid. 53.

⁴⁹ Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde (1998), 13.

2.4.2 Foreign Policy Decision-Making Approach

Foreign policy problems, i.e. sources of foreign policy change, are subjective and depend on perceptions of political leaders and policymakers.⁵⁰ Although various domestic and/or international factors influence foreign policy decisions, these must be processed through a decision-making structure of a government or a decision unit which identifies, decides and implements foreign policy decisions.⁵¹ Since the Regional Security Complex Theory primarily intends to explain regional structural conditions and does not adequately focus on decision-making and factors that belong to decision-making, a separate, middle-range theoretical approach on foreign policy decision-making is necessary to better contextualize factors, processes, and dynamics relating to the mentioned content.⁵² A variety of approaches are existent in scholarly literature focusing on different aspects of foreign policy decision-making such as domestic politics, bureaucratic decision-making, cybernetics, and learning approaches.⁵³ Yet, the focus in the content of this study is more on the successive steps of decision-making process and dynamics within.

The models of foreign policy decision-making are helpful in explaining the process regardless of the evaluative assessment of the procedures and results they lead to.⁵⁴ In particular for the focus in this study, a model comprised of two core elements of the process is used, which is a practical choice in order not to investigate the whole decision-making process with particular interest from different approaches. In the decision-making model that is applied here, there are two primary steps to explore how the decision-making process functions as an intermediate step between the source of change and foreign policy change: First, identification of problem, and second, decision unit dynamics.

Identification of foreign policy problem

Structural conditions, as Gustavsson offers, do not have independent impact on foreign policy decision-making; but they are perceived and reacted by the foreign policy-makers.⁵⁵ Most foreign policy change comes after a perception by the foreign policy leadership of some change or initiative in the external environment, which are large events in terms of visibility and its immediate impact on the recipient.⁵⁶ Although foreign policy-makers have initial goals and agendas, their foreign policy can change upon an encounter with problems and challenges in international environment.⁵⁷ Within this context, decision-making concerning change in foreign policy takes place as soon as policy-makers recognize a foreign

⁵⁰ Margareth G. Hermann, 'How Decision Units Shape Foreign Policy', *International Studies Review*, 3/2 (Summer, 2001), 53.

⁵¹ Margareth G. Hermann and Charles F. Hermann, 'Who Makes Foreign Policy Decisions and How: An Empirical Inquiry', *International Studies Quarterly*, 33/4 (Dec. 1989), 362.

⁵² For a similar argument, see Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett (2005), 267-268.

⁵³ See Charles F. Hermann (1990), 6-10.

⁵⁴ Margareth G. Hermann (2001), 51.

⁵⁵ Jakob Gustavsson (1998), 23-24.

⁵⁶ Charles F. Hermann (1990), 12.

⁵⁷ Margareth G. Hermann (2001), 53.

policy problem. Therefore, a researcher needs to start with a problem in investigating how foreign policy decisions are made.⁵⁸ The identification of foreign policy problem requires various intelligence collections and analyses by foreign policy-makers.⁵⁹ According to Hermann, a foreign policy problem is recognized when foreign policy-makers declare that “something is wrong, needs attention, or presents an opportunity for gain if action is taken”.⁶⁰ Therefore, discourse by the members of the foreign policy decision unit on a current or potential difficulty is instrumental in researching the recognition of problem.⁶¹ Last but not least, foreign policy problems emerge episodically, and often necessitate a series of decisions rather than a single decision, which force policy-makers to get involved in a string of occasions for decisions.⁶²

Decision unit and its dynamics

When foreign policy decision-makers recognize a foreign policy problem, decision unit dynamics bear great significance since configuration and dynamics can affect foreign policy outcome.⁶³ In other words, since what happens in decision unit dynamics can lead to different foreign policy outcomes, the need to move beyond outcomes of the decision and to investigate decision unit dynamics is evident.⁶⁴ For this objective, subsequently after recognition of foreign policy problem by foreign policy-makers, the questions who makes decisions concerning a problem, what factors might be influential behind decisions, and what dynamics exist in foreign policy decision unit carry significance to be considered.

Decision unit is the authoritative body that has the ability to commit resources of a government to foreign affairs, and to prevent other individuals, groups, or entities from overtly reversing their decisions.⁶⁵ In fact, it is the decision unit that perceives and interprets pressures and constraints, and makes foreign policy decisions.⁶⁶ Therefore, configuration of a decision unit and the dynamics within affect a foreign policy action chosen.⁶⁷ Concerning the configuration of decision unit, Hermann and Hermann offer three different types of authoritative units as following:

1. *Predominant leader* who is a single individual with the ability to make foreign policy decisions by his own,
2. *Single group* consisting of a set of individuals as members of a single unit making foreign policy decisions in an interactive and collective manner, and

⁵⁸ Margareth G. Hermann (2001), 53.

⁵⁹ Charles F. Hermann, ‘What Decision Units Shape Foreign Policy: Individual, Group, Bureaucracy?’, *Policy Studies Journal*, 3/2 (1974), 168.

⁶⁰ Margareth G. Hermann (2001), 53.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ryan K. Beasley et al., ‘People and Processes in Foreign Policymaking: Insights from Comparative Case Studies’, *International Studies Review*, 3/2 (Summer 2001), 219.

⁶⁴ Margareth G. Hermann (2001), 50.

⁶⁵ Margareth G. Hermann, Charles F. Hermann and Joe D. Hagan in C.F. Hermann, Charles W. Kegley, Jr., and James N. Rosenau (eds.), *New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1987), 311.

⁶⁶ Ryan K. Beasley et al. (2001), 219.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

3. *Coalition of autonomous group* which is formed by separate individuals, groups or representatives that can act for a government but cannot decide by their own or force compliance on others.⁶⁸

For practical reasons, there is a need for identifying which decision unit and which decision unit dynamics might be applicable to the case at hand beforehand. This is basically because each type of decision unit and each type of dynamics within decision unit can be better explained by different theoretical approaches and insights. Concerning decision unit, in order to decide what unit is in charge at the given instance, it is necessary to take two significant issues into consideration. Firstly, decision unit may change in accordance with the nature of a problem. To illustrate, it may be at a lower level in the government for more routine problems, while the highest political authorities are likely to be part of the decision unit for foreign policy issues of utmost importance.⁶⁹ In the given content of this study, the choice for a decision unit is the latter. Secondly, Hermann points out some practical boundary issues in determining authoritative decision unit. The option of coalition of autonomous group is excluded since the Turkish government has been a single-party government. Thus, the focus is on the question of whether the decision unit is an example of a predominant leader or single group. According to Hermann, if a leader has the ability to make decisions as he or she prefers, the unit is a predominant leader model.⁷⁰ On the other hand, she argues that if a leader sees individuals as members of decision-making, the unit becomes a single group model based on interactive and collective decision-making.⁷¹ Considering such boundary and non-uniformity considerations, the study is developed with *single group* model. This choice will be empirically elaborated further in the relevant chapter.

A single group decision unit, a frequent model in contemporary governments, is composed of two or more people interacting directly with each other and collectively making a foreign policy decision.⁷² A single group decision unit is not necessarily a legal and formal authoritative unit; instead, it has to have a de facto ability to make foreign policy decisions without another unit's approval or reversal of its decisions.⁷³ As the definition tells, there may be several members and group of individuals in a single group, most commonly such as foreign and/or defence ministers, bureaucrats, advisors, who are primary loyal to the group. On the other hand, weight of the group members in influencing foreign policy decisions can vary.⁷⁴ In other words, power to influence decisions is unequally distributed among group members.⁷⁵ Although prime ministers as heads of the executive tend to be more influential in the foreign policy decisions, power to influence decisions can change depending on various factors. For instance, the leaders who have no prior policy expertise in policy area are highly subject to the need for information when

⁶⁸ Margareth G. Hermann and Charles F. Hermann (1989), 363-364.

⁶⁹ Ibid. 363.

⁷⁰ Margareth G. Hermann (2001), 63.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Margareth G. Hermann and Charles F. Hermann (1989), 366.

⁷³ Margaret G. Hermann, Charles F. Hermann and Joe D. Hagan (1987), 315.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid. 320.

taking decisions.⁷⁶ In this case, they are more likely to leave some members of a decision unit a major room for the formulation of foreign policy decisions. Eventually, the weight of these actors to influence decision-making can be expected to be higher than the rest of the group members.

As regards the importance of strategic beliefs and objectives in influencing decision-making for foreign policy change, Hermann and others argue that the nature of the foreign policy decisions is likely to be based on the general preferences of its members concerning the problem at hand.⁷⁷ For them, this can be examined by determining if the members share set of beliefs that are triggered by the problem, or by seeking knowledge on the orientations of any strong leaders in the group.⁷⁸ In other words, knowledge on individual members' preferences such as shared beliefs are explanatory; yet, when there is not enough information on it, the direction of the group decision can be considered by looking for other data such as the orientation of the influential member in the unit.⁷⁹ Besides, Boulding asserts that it is the set of beliefs, and biases, which can simply be defined as an "image" held by the foreign policy leadership which plays the most important role in forming foreign policy decisions.⁸⁰

Beyond formation of a decision unit, decision unit dynamics are crucial in determining the nature of process.⁸¹ Among three models existing in the literature to explain how to cope with conflict within the unit, i.e. "groupthink, bureaucratic politics, and winning majority", this study adopts *groupthink model*. In groupthink model, loyalty of members is to the unit; thus, they try to minimize a possible conflict by seeking concurrence.⁸² Concurrence often becomes process outcome in groupthink model of single groups since shared preferences and sense of movement is evident among its members.⁸³ Besides, if information received by members is from a common source and if there is a little conflict in general over foreign policy vision and issues, prompt consensus is even more likely.⁸⁴ Decisions made through concurrence tend to be most extreme in content-wise since decision-making process becomes more on what to do rather than mediating disagreements.⁸⁵ However, the fact that members perceive the world in a similar way, and that there is a strong cohesion among them concerning policy choices and alternatives, they may lack proposing alternative points of views and ways to confront a problem.⁸⁶ In other words, motivation of group members to maintain

⁷⁶ Thomas Preston in Charles F. Hermann (ed.), *When Things Go Wrong - Foreign Policy Decision Making under Adverse Feedback* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 59.

⁷⁷ Margaret G. Hermann, Charles F. Hermann and Joe D. Hagan (1987), 322.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid. 320.

⁸⁰ Kenneth Boulding cited in Chris Alden and Amnon Aran, *Foreign Policy Analysis - New Approaches* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2012), 5.

⁸¹ Margareth G. Hermann (2001), 64.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid. 69.

⁸⁴ Margareth G. Hermann and Charles F. Hermann (1989), 378.

⁸⁵ Ibid. 376; Margareth G. Hermann (2001), 70.

⁸⁶ Richards Diana (2001) cited in Marijke Breuning, *Foreign Policy Analysis - A Comparative Introduction* (New York: Palgrave, 2007), 103.

group consensus and feeling of loyalty may potentially lead to deterioration of decision-making quality.⁸⁷

2.5 Theoretical Model for Foreign Policy Change

Causal mechanisms are “unobservable physical, social, or psychological processes through which agents with causal capacities operate” in limited and specific frameworks.⁸⁸ In constructing the causal model, the “checklist models”, which are based on three analytical steps, are quite enlightening. According to Gustavsson, the three step of the checklist models are first the identification of some potentially important background factors; second, the intermediate step of cognitive factors and factors belonging to the decision-making; third, the connection of these to the outcome in a typology for different types of foreign policy change.⁸⁹

The three-step procedure held in this study is also similar to Gustavsson’s alternative model where he identifies “a number of ‘sources’ that are mediated by ‘individual decision-makers’ who act within the ‘decision-making process’ in order to bring about a change in policy”.⁹⁰ Similarly in my case, foreign policy change takes place following the causal process where the source of change, that is the foreign policy problem, is perceived and mediated by the foreign policy decision unit in a decision-making process. Although Gustavsson offers three particular conditions that facilitate foreign policy change in his model, viz. changes in fundamental structural conditions, strategic political leadership, and presence of a crisis of some kind, this study excludes last condition, and investigates the change in regional structural conditions and foreign policy leadership and decision-making.⁹¹

A difference between two studies may be noted in strategic leadership and decision-making process. In Gustavsson’s case, the Swedish government is a new coalition government and decision-making is an outcome of politics between divergent political parties or figures within the cabinet. In my case, on the other hand, the Turkish government is a single-party government that is in office for more than a decade, and foreign policy decision-making is carried out by a single group decision unit led by the same political leadership. Therefore, this theoretical choice largely derives from an empirical reason which is the difference between types of governments and foreign policy decision units.

Concerning the selection of independent variables, i.e. the sources of change, Gustavsson offers again a good framework in his dissertation *Politics of Foreign Policy Change*. Gustavsson’s twofold explanatory factors, which are international

⁸⁷ Valerie M. Hudson, ‘Foreign Policy Analysis: Actor-Specific Theory and the Ground of International Relations’, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 1 (2005), 8.

⁸⁸ Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett (2005), 137.

⁸⁹ Jakob Gustavsson, ‘How Should We Study Foreign Policy Change?’, *Cooperation and Conflict*, 34/1 (1999), 77.

⁹⁰ Jakob Gustavsson (1998), 23.

⁹¹ See *Ibid.* 4.

and domestic sources of change, and their political and economic sub-explanatory factors are quite inclusive, well-structured, and easy to grasp in explaining the causes of foreign policy change from a broad perspective.⁹² This is particularly a good choice for comprehensive research projects that seek multiple explanations at different levels behind an outcome. Yet, in order to conduct an even more focused research and seek the causal relationship between a single explanatory variable and a dependent variable, this study explores the change in regional security structure as the single source of change.

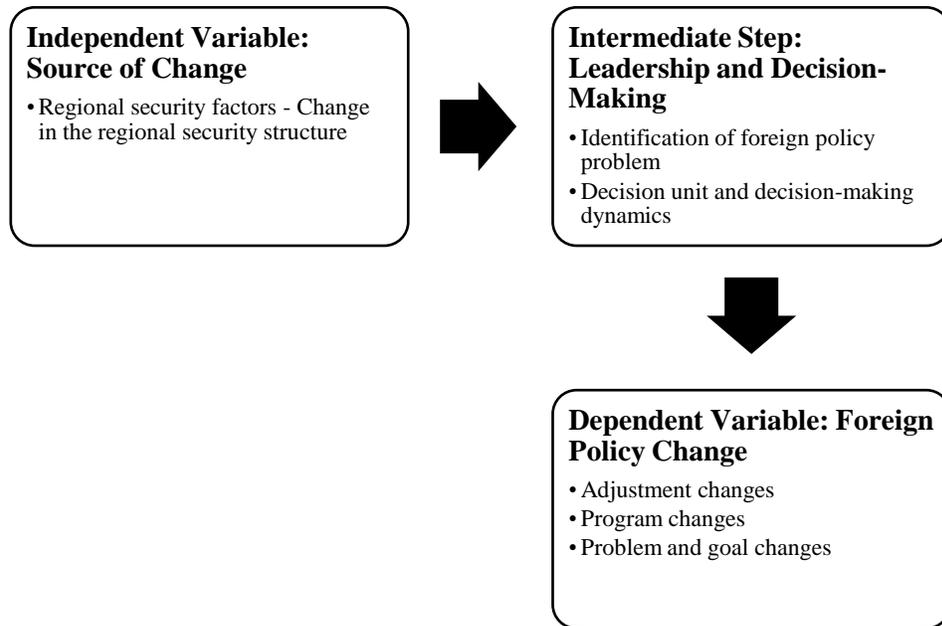


Figure 2 Theoretical Model for Change in Turkish Foreign Policy

⁹² Jakob Gustavsson (1999), 11.

3 Methodological Framework

This chapter aims to provide explanations concerning the methodological choices made in this study. To sum up in a few words, the research design employed is a *single case study*. Besides, it represents an instance of *before-after comparison* as a longitudinal case is divided into two as before and after a phenomenon. The method is *qualitative analysis*, which is enriched by the methods of *discourse analysis* as well as *process-tracing*. Lastly, the material includes both primary and secondary sources.

3.1 Research Design

This study is a single case study which focuses on the explanation of the change in Turkish foreign policy. Case studies are convenient for IR and FPA studies since they can provide intensive empirical analysis by enabling the researcher to identify plausible causal variables in a given phenomenon.⁹³ This case study is carried out at the within-case level of analysis which is eminently concerned with causal mechanisms and processes. Researching the causal mechanism between the change in regional security structure as the source of change and the change in Turkish foreign policy as the foreign policy change, this study adopts within-case level of analysis that enables to investigate in-depth the process within which the explanatory and intermediate factors produce the outcome.⁹⁴ In addition, it intends to provide a contextual description of the political phenomenon, namely foreign policy change, which is best served by single-case studies.⁹⁵

Although this study carries theoretical aims such as to contribute to the study of foreign policy change by providing an alternative model for foreign policy change and by combining FPA and IR studies, it is basically a case-centered case study rather than a theory-centered one. This notion implies that the use of theory is instrumental to provide a comprehensive explanation of the single case where the insights derived from the case are not used for the development of a general theory.⁹⁶ One possible disadvantage of this choice, as Rohlfing points out, is the non-generalization of the explanation for the single case to other cases in case-

⁹³ See George and Bennett (2005), 21.

⁹⁴ Ingo Rohlfing, *Case Studies and Causal Inference - An Integrative Framework* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 12.

⁹⁵ See Todd Landman, *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics - An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 3rd edition, 2008), 86.

⁹⁶ Ingo Rohlfing (2012), 3.

centered studies.⁹⁷ Although there is still, but limited, possibility to generalize the findings, case-centered case studies are clearly more convenient for generating policy-relevant knowledge rather than generalizing findings to other cases. In this regard, this study also intends to produce policy-relevant knowledge concerning the change in Turkish foreign policy in the given contents and limitations.

The way it is is a comparative study is its *before-after* comparison within a single case. Before-after comparison allows the researcher to achieve control by dividing a single longitudinal case into two sub-cases with the occurrence of a phenomenon functioning as an experimental intervention.⁹⁸ George and Bennett note that controlled comparison can be achieved by dividing a longitudinal case into “before” and “after” a discontinuous change in an important variable.⁹⁹ To be clear, the single longitudinal case, i.e. Turkish foreign policy, is divided as “before” and “after” the Arab uprisings. From this perspective, the Arab uprisings are taken as operating as the *watershed* for the Turkish foreign policy.

The need to determine time-wise limitations is fundamental for both methodological and theoretical reasons. The “before” period refers to the time span between 2007 and 2011. Its start marks the point when the ruling JDP government evidently consolidated its political power by coming to its second-term in power and started to enjoy comprehensive foreign policy dynamism, most notably in the context of Middle Eastern affairs. It lasts until the outbreak of the Arab uprisings. On the other hand, the “after” period refers to that between 2011 and 2014. It is between the outbreak of the Arab uprisings and the time when the making up of study is mapped. As the “after” period also represents the third term of the ruling JDP government, there remains continuity in the political governance in Turkey. Since case studies require a substantial level of observation, three to four-year period of observations are allocated for both before and after periods. In conclusion, by defining before and after periods as between 2007 and 2011 and between 2011 and 2014 respectively, the study is distinctively delimited with a time-wise perspective and directed in a more focused way.

3.2 Research Method and Material

As this study is motivated primarily by the questions of *why* and *how*, *qualitative method* of analysis is quite relevant in the conduct of the research of the phenomenon. Qualitative analysis is a discursive research method which generally focuses on one or a small number of cases in which a particular event, decision, institution, issue or a major change is investigated.¹⁰⁰ By combining qualitative

⁹⁷ Ingo Rohlfing (2012), 2.

⁹⁸ George and Bennett (2005), 166.

⁹⁹ Ibid. 81.

¹⁰⁰ Garry King, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry – Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), 4.

techniques and a case study, this study aims to have a better understanding of the context in which the phenomenon takes place.

On the other hand, within-case methods are also instrumental in constructing explanations in single case studies. Particularly for the purpose of in-depth research of the Arab uprisings and figuring out possible changes in the regional security structure, *process-tracing* is also used in examining the development of the Arab uprisings. In single-case studies which leaves more room for the researchers to study the case more intensively, process-tracing is a useful within-case method to explore the variables and any other possible variables. Another clear advantage of the use of process-tracing in a single case study is its ability to generate numerous observations within a case and to link them in particular ways to make an explanation of the case.¹⁰¹ In this regard, this study takes benefit of process-tracing method particularly in order to explore the development of the Arab uprisings, which helps to identify any particular changes in the regional security structure, which subsequently might become a foreign policy problem and lead to a foreign policy change.

With respect to the data collection and the material, both primary and secondary sources are benefited. At this point, *discourse analysis* is an important method used in this study particularly in the intermediate step of foreign policy leadership and decision-making, given its instrumentality in reflecting the behavioural and cognitive factors. It is also quite helpful in indicating the change in Turkish foreign policy since foreign policy can most of the time be observed from the discourse derived from declarations, writings, and speeches of the responsible people. It is therefore directed towards the key foreign policy decision-makers since they are, as human beings, those capable of seeing, perceiving, thinking, and making choices.¹⁰² In this regard, an array of secondary and primary sources and material such as earlier books, articles, and speeches by the foreign policy leadership as well as official press releases and documents by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) are used.

For the purpose of generating empirical evidences, newspaper sources and magazine articles are also valuable primary and secondary sources respectively. While using sources as such, the widespread and trustworthy international and national news agencies, newspapers, and magazines are utilized in order to sustain the objectivity and general acceptability. In addition to these, scholarly literature as a secondary source is often used as an informative tool throughout the study. These sources include literature not only on the Turkish foreign policy and its leadership and decision-making, but also on the Middle Eastern security structure. Although this is a qualitative case study, the use of statistical data is not irrelevant in the contextualizing the indicators at all.¹⁰³ The reports and the information derived from think-tanks, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and government bodies are seen as useful primary sources particularly for the purpose of acquiring

¹⁰¹ George and Bennett (2005), 207.

¹⁰² Jakob Gustavsson (1998), 24.

¹⁰³ See Garry King, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba (1994), 5.

statistical data on the indicators, notably in the chapters for the change in Turkish foreign policy and the source of change.

3.3 Operationalization of the Variables

The variables of the study are basically operationalized through the investigation of the following empirical questions:

- What has been changed? (What is the “change” in terms of dependent variable?)
- What were the adjustment, program, and problem and goal before?
- What are the adjustment, program, and problem and goal after? (for operationalization of the dependent variable)
- What explains this change? Why did foreign policy change occur? (for operationalization of the independent variable)
- What is the role of foreign policy leadership and decision-making? (for operationalization of the intermediate step)

How to narrow down the components of the study, and for what to look exactly in order to have an objective and analytical examination of the variables necessitate defining and showing the indicators and measurement. To begin with, it is useful to provide description of the concepts of *foreign policy* and *foreign policy change*. Hermann simply describes foreign policy as “a program designed to address some problem or pursue some goal that entails action toward foreign entities”.¹⁰⁴ To be more specific on the definition, Cohen and Harris describes foreign policy as “a set of goals, directives or intentions, formulated by persons in official or authoritative positions, directed at some actor or condition in the environment beyond the sovereign nation state, for the purpose of affecting the target in the manner desired by the policy-makers”.¹⁰⁵ Foreign policy change, on the other hand, is basically defined as “either a new act in a given situation or a given act in a situation previously associated with a different act”.¹⁰⁶ Yet, these definitions still need further explanation for what to look while investigating the source of change, leadership and decision-making, and foreign policy change.

First of all, in order to operationalize the change in Turkish foreign policy as the outcome, the model presented in the abovementioned theoretical framework is very helpful. The change in Turkish foreign policy is operationalized in terms of adjustment, program, and problem and goal. To be more specific, while observing the adjustment changes, change in the level of efforts and in class of targets is explained, which is largely through an observation of the new actors becoming the recipients of the Turkish foreign policy and examination of any increase or decrease in commitment in Middle Eastern security affairs. Then, program change

¹⁰⁴ Charles F. Hermann (1990), 5.

¹⁰⁵ Bernard C. Cohen and Scott A. Harris (1975) cited in Gustavsson (1998), 22.

¹⁰⁶ Kjell Goldmann (1988) cited in Jakob Gustavsson (1999), 76.

is operationalized by the observation of any change in methods and instruments of foreign policy. For this, any change in the use of coercive measures such as military intervention, military precautions, or economic sanctions is researched. Last but not least, any shift of emphasis on foreign policy problems and foreign policy objectives are researched for the operationalization of problem and goal change.

Secondly, in an attempt to be more specific in a more focused content, this study intends to investigate regional security structure as the only source of change, i.e. the explanatory variable, and explore the co-variance between a single source of change and the foreign policy change. To be clear, the regional security structure before and after the Arab uprisings, and the change between the two periods are implemented through the elements of the essential structure of the security complex, namely boundary, anarchic structure, distribution of power, and patterns of amity and enmity. At this point, the change in regional security structure takes form of *internal transformation* of the Middle Eastern security complex. The Arab uprisings operate as a *watershed*, leading to internal transformation of the regional security structure by altering the *patterns of amity and enmity*. In other words, the regional security structure change brought by the Arab uprisings in early 2010s is explained as *internal transformation* of the security complex in which *the patterns of amity and enmity* have been altered. Even more precisely, changes in the patterns of amity and enmity are operationalized through regime and government changes, rise of non-state actors, growing politicization of religious identities, emerging new security threats, and ongoing uncertainty and instability in the face of the uprisings.

Concerning the leadership and decision-making, this study focuses on how foreign policy-makers perceive the problem, who is responsible for making decisions on foreign policy changes, and what factors drive the decision-making dynamics. From this perspective, the chapter on foreign policy and leadership aims to research the identification of the foreign policy problem by the foreign policy-makers, the composition of the decision unit, the strategic beliefs, objectives, and foreign policy vision vis-à-vis the regional political and security affairs, and the factors influential in the decision-making dynamics respectively. While cognitive factors and perceived challenges play the decisive role in identification of a foreign policy problem, the weight to influence decisions is the predominant factor in exploring the composition of the decision unit. Subsequently, strategic beliefs and objectives are investigated as the operationalized leading factors in relation to a foreign policy vision. Lastly, the aspects of groupthink and concurrence are researched as regards the decision-making dynamics.

4 Change in Turkish Foreign Policy

This chapter aims to explain the dependent variable, i.e. the change in Turkish foreign policy in the context of the Middle Eastern security complex in the early 2010s. When the source of change, that is *internal transformation* of the Middle Eastern security complex, is interpreted and mediated by the foreign policy decision unit in a foreign policy decision-making process, the outcome is a change in Turkish foreign policy in the context of its regional affairs. Since this study first and foremost starts with the argument that there is a change in Turkish foreign policy, it is of utmost importance to mention the types of changes occurred. In line with the Hermann's model for foreign policy change in terms of outcomes, the change is defined under three categories: Adjustment changes, program changes, and problem and goal changes. In this regard, the present study argues that there has been no change in Turkey's international orientation; thus, excludes it from the content. That there have occurred two of three types of major foreign policy changes, it can be put forth that a major foreign policy change has occurred in Turkey's course, according to Hermann's typology. This section follows a *before-after* comparison in each part separately in order to have a better comparative insight concerning the change.

4.1 Adjustment Changes

In brief, when Turkish foreign policy-makers faced with the Arab uprisings, they made two main adjustment changes in the context of the Middle East security complex: First, increase in efforts concerning the Middle Eastern security issues, and second, shift in the main recipients of Turkish foreign policy.

4.1.1 Increase in Efforts in Regional Security Affairs

First of all, it is clear to acknowledge that particularly since the second half of the 2000s, Turkish foreign policy has shifted towards greater engagement with Middle Eastern affairs by seeking regional security through dialogue as a means of solving crises, conflict resolution and humanitarian assistance.¹⁰⁷ In fact, this was an extension of “zero problems with neighbours” policy that endangered Turkish involvement in regional issues.¹⁰⁸ In late 2000s, “zero problems with neighbours”

¹⁰⁷ E. Fuat Keyman and Sebnem Gumuscu (2014), 75.

¹⁰⁸ Kemal Kirişçi (2011), 43.

policy became increasingly evident largely by its extensive efforts for facilitation, mediation, resolution of conflicts, and pre-emptive diplomacy in the regional security challenges and conflicts such as in Iran's nuclear program, political crisis in Lebanon, between Shiites and Sunnis in Iraq, between Al-Fatah and Hamas in Palestine, between Syria and Israel, between Hamas and Israel.¹⁰⁹ Thus, Turkey appeared as a proactive, mediator state in facilitating direct or indirect talks in settling the conflicts and tensions between actors. Although Turkey's diplomatic visibility noticeably increased during the period before 2011 through mediation and facilitation efforts, the use of humanitarian and development aid as a means of soft power remained modest. During the period before the uprisings, Turkey primarily aimed to provide aid to the regional countries in crisis, such as Palestine, Iraq, and Lebanon; yet, the use of foreign aid as a foreign policy instrument was limited.¹¹⁰

Since the outbreak of the uprisings, there has been a dramatic increase in both diplomatic efforts and foreign aid. Firstly, in terms of the diplomatic efforts, Turkey particularly became vocal in Syria, Egypt, and Libya in the management of prospective transition. Given the failure of mediation and peaceful resolution of conflicts since the early stages of the uprisings, Turkey's diplomatic efforts during the uprisings and in its aftermath have taken a new form by its active use of diplomacy in pushing the international community. In this sense, the use of diplomatic means continues to embody one of the top elements of Turkish foreign policy since Turkey has been a leading member of several peace and mediation initiatives for the resolution of the regional conflicts and security challenges. However, given the inefficiency of diplomacy in bringing peace and solution during the uprisings, the efforts have gradually been shifted from mediation to the management of transition. This was evident in the case of Syria, where Turkey initially engaged in extensive efforts to persuade Assad, the President of Syria, to introduce reforms as early as the uprisings started.¹¹¹ Since these efforts became fruitless, Turkey ceased its relations with the regime, started to exert "all constructive efforts to speed up the peace process" by taking part in several international initiatives in an effort to provide peaceful resolution of the conflict.¹¹² Consistently, Turkey has also participated in all efforts by the international community in resolution of conflicts in several other countries, and sought to develop both its bilateral and multilateral relations in order to encourage democratic transition throughout the region.

Secondly, the increase in efforts is also evident in terms of Turkey's efforts in providing official development assistance and humanitarian aid. Turkey's foreign

¹⁰⁹ Murat Yeşiltaş and Ali Balcı, 'A Dictionary of Turkish Foreign Policy in the AK Party Era: A Conceptual Map', *SAM Papers*, No.7 (May 2013), 23.

¹¹⁰ See Meliha Benli Altunışık, 'Turkey as an 'Emerging Donor' and the Arab Uprisings', *Mediterranean Politics*, 19/3(2014), 337-340.

¹¹¹ Nurşin Ateşoğlu Güney, 'A New Challenge for Turkey: Civil War in Syria', *Insight Turkey*, 15/4 (Fall 2013), 53. Also see Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'Dışişleri Bakanı Sayın Ahmet Davutoğlu'nun Bahreyn, Katar ve Suriye'deki Temaslarına İlişkin Yaptığı Basın Toplantısı, 6 April 2011', 6 Apr. 2011; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'No: 178, 31 July 2011, Press Release Regarding the Recent Developments in Syria', 31 Jul.2011.

¹¹² Ministry of Foreign Affairs (n.d.), 'Türkiye-Suriye Siyasi İlişkileri', para.5.

aid in the face of the Arab uprisings continues to be motivated by security considerations and crises as it used to be before them. Nonetheless, there has been a dramatic increase in the amount provided.¹¹³ Since the beginning of the phenomenon, Turkey has tripled its official development assistance, reaching 3.3 billion US Dollars in 2013, more than 1.7 billion of which was allocated in the Middle East, making the region the top destination of the Turkish aid.¹¹⁴ The development assistance provided by Turkey during the period has largely been in the form of state-building assistance and economic development such as infrastructural improvement and provision of basic services; most notably in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya.¹¹⁵ In particular concerning the humanitarian aid, Turkey became the third most generous country and fourth largest donor in 2012, and “the most generous country” and third largest donor worldwide in 2013 by providing 0.13% and 0.21% of its gross national income respectively as humanitarian aid.¹¹⁶ In the aftermath of the uprisings, the crisis in Syria has elaborated a crystal clear instance of the dramatic increase of Turkish humanitarian aid. Turkey introduced an “open-door policy” to the Syrian people fleeing from the civil war in Syria, received more than 1.7 million Syrian citizen by providing them with a “temporary protection status”, and spent 5.6 billion United States (US) Dollars in total for humanitarian needs of the Syrian people living in Turkey.¹¹⁷

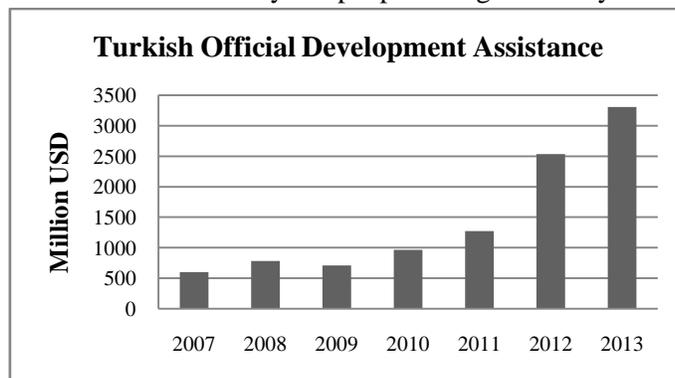


Figure 3 Official Development Assistance by Turkey between 2007 and 2013¹¹⁸

¹¹³ Meliha Benli Altunışık (2014), 344.

¹¹⁴ Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, *Turkish Development Assistance 2013* (2014), 10.

¹¹⁵ E. Fuat Keyman and Sebnem Gumuscu (2014), 93.

¹¹⁶ Global Humanitarian Assistance, *Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2014* (2014), 4, 30; Global Humanitarian Assistance, *Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2013* (2013), 23.

¹¹⁷ Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Management Authority, *Disaster Report - Syria* (2015), para.3-4. Also see Meliha Benli Altunışık (2014), 343-344.

¹¹⁸ Information from Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (2014), 9.

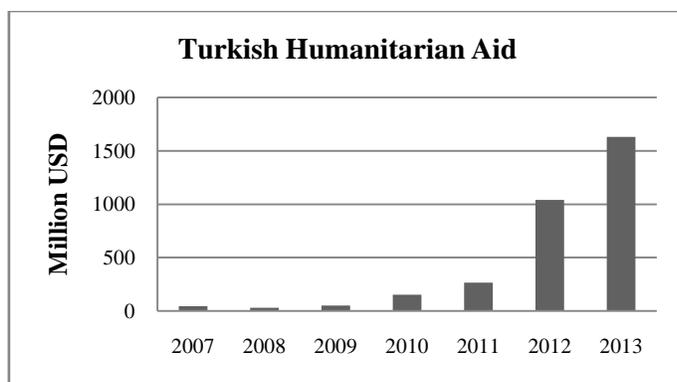


Figure 4 Humanitarian Aid by Turkey between 2007 and 2013¹¹⁹

4.1.2 Shift in Recipients of Turkish Foreign Policy

The second adjustment occurs in the form of shift in recipients of Turkish foreign policy. It is true that as early as the proactive and multi-dimensional foreign policy was implemented, Turkey recognized the necessity to have comprehensive communication channels that would include all relevant actors, both state and non-state, in the resolution of conflicts in the Middle Eastern security environment. Such foreign policy understanding can be seen, as mentioned above, in its mediation efforts between Iraqi Shiites and Sunnis, and between Hamas and Israel as well as others before the Arab uprisings. Still, the main recipient of the Turkish foreign policy during the period before the Arab uprisings remained the regimes and governments within the context of the “zero problems with neighbours” policy.

Following the Arab uprisings, there has been a shift in the main recipients of Turkish foreign policy from regimes to opposition groups. When the authoritarian regimes and governments in the region tried to suppress their own people and their demand for democracy by the use of violence, Turkey, according to Davutoğlu, had no choice other than to side with the opposition’s “struggles for honour and dignity”.¹²⁰ Thus, Turkey cut down its relations with the regimes, and sought to develop its relations with the opposition and other non-state groups. This was evident in the cases in which Turkey actively involved, such as in Syria, Egypt, and Libya. In Syria, Turkey has been one of the leading countries backing the Syrian opposition by hosting its several meetings and lobbying in the international community, for example through organizing the second summit of the Friends of the Syrian People in 2012.¹²¹ Similarly in Libya, Davutoğlu went to Benghazi and met leadership of the opposition National Transition Council (NTC) during the uprisings, and stated that “Qaddafi must go. We recognize the NTC as the legitimate representative of Libyan people”.¹²² Following the overthrow of the

¹¹⁹ Information from Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (2014), 13. The report also acknowledges that “Middle East region was top beneficiary on account of aid to Syrian guests.” 10.

¹²⁰ Bülent Aras (2014a), 408.

¹²¹ Ömer Taşpınar, ‘Turkey’s Strategic Vision and Syria’, *Washington Quarterly*, 35/3 (Summer 2012), 137.

¹²² Fevzi Kızılkoyun, *Radikal*, ‘Davutoğlu: Kaddafi Gitmeli’, 3 Jul. 2011, para.7.

authoritarian regimes, Erdoğan, together with several ministers, top officials and businesspeople, visited Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya and sought to develop political and economic relations with the new governments.¹²³ In this respect, the main recipients of Turkish foreign policy have shifted from regimes to opposition groups and new governments.

4.2 Program Changes

Following the minor adjustment changes, the first pillar of Turkey's major foreign policy change is that in its program. Shortly, program change in Turkish foreign policy in the context of the Middle East security complex takes place through a shift from the use of soft power instruments alone to the use of soft power and coercive foreign policy instruments together.¹²⁴

4.2.1 Introduction of Coercive Foreign Policy Instruments

During the period between 2007 and the outbreak of the Arab uprisings, the instruments of Turkish foreign policy in the Middle Eastern regional affairs were widely those of soft power as hard measures were refrained from as an instrument to tackle problems and to pursue foreign policy objectives. Consistently, the JDP government sought to mobilize soft power instruments including economic integration, mediation and conflict resolution, development assistance, and cultural dialogue.¹²⁵ In addition, such policies further included peaceful resolution of bilateral disputes, removal of visa requirements, establishment of free trade zones, and establishment of strategic cooperation councils with countries in its neighbourhood.¹²⁶ From this perspective, Turkish foreign policy program before the Arab uprisings was of proactive and multi-dimensional foreign policy principally based on the use of soft power in its conduct of diplomacy.

However, the changing regional structure has put a serious challenge to Turkish foreign policy for the continuation of this practice. In addition to the continuing emphasis on soft power means to deal with regional developments, the policy-makers have also gradually incorporated coercive foreign policy instruments into options available.¹²⁷ An important example of this was when Turkey took an active stance in the case of Libya back in 2011. Even though the

¹²³ Baskın Oran (ed.) (2013), 429.

¹²⁴ Coercive diplomacy is simply defined as “the threat or use of force against an opponent to foster a more cooperative cast of mind.” See G.R. Berridge and Loma Lloyd, *The Palgrave Macmillan Dictionary of Diplomacy* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, 3rd Edition), 57. Coercive foreign policy instruments therefore include the means that involve threat or use of force against an opponent.

¹²⁵ E. Fuat Keyman and Sebnem Gumuscu (2014), 75.

¹²⁶ Şaban Kardaş, ‘From zero problems to leading the change: making sense of transformation of Turkey's regional policy’, *Turkey Policy Brief Series*, 5th Edition, International Policy and Leadership Institute TEPAV (2012), 2.

¹²⁷ See Talha Köse, ‘Transformative Conflict Resolution in an Unstable Neighbourhood: Turkey's Conflict Resolution Efforts in the Middle East’, *Perceptions*, 18/4 (Winter 2013), 172; Şaban Kardaş, ‘Türkiye ve Arap Baharı: Türkiye'nin Orta Doğu Politikasındaki Değişiklikler’, *Hazar Raporu*, Spring (2013b), 79.

foreign policy leadership repeatedly opposed any foreign military intervention in the region as a principle, Turkey eventually took part in the international military intervention therein.¹²⁸ Some scholars more particularly argue that Turkish foreign policy-makers were quite reluctant in the beginning for an international military intervention in Libya given its economic and human security-interests where Turkey had 25,000 citizens and high amount of investments.¹²⁹ However, when the mediation efforts became fruitless and a foreign military intervention was seen imminent by Turkish policy-makers, they changed their policy and insisted on the command to be handed over to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).¹³⁰

Secondly, the change in Turkey's "non-military engagement" policy can be observed in the example of Syria in terms of introduction of coercive measures.¹³¹ First type of coercive measures included economic sanctions, freezing of assets, and travel ban, harming the Syrian economy and isolating the Assad regime with coercive measures.¹³² On the other hand, the emergence of threats to its own security, particularly from its Syrian border, led Turkish foreign policy-makers to consider developing its military measures and capabilities in addition to other coercive measures. The downing of a Turkish jet by the Syrian regime in 2012, frequent instances of border violations and mortar shelling, and Reyhanli bombings in 2013 were clear examples of such security challenges.¹³³ Hence, the JDP government increased its military expenditure since 2011, given its 13% increase in 2012 and 12% increase in 2013. Besides, in order to improve Turkey's air defence capabilities to defend its population and territory in November 2012, the government requested the deployment of Patriot missiles from NATO, which was eventually agreed by the North Atlantic Council in December 2012.¹³⁴ In brief, in addition to its emphasis on soft power instruments, coercive measures including economic sanctions and military measures were adopted in the face of regional developments and security challenges.

¹²⁸ 'NATO takes command of Libya campaign', *Hurriyet Daily News*, 31 Mar.2011, para.9-11.

¹²⁹ Emre Parlar Dal, 'Assessing Turkey's "Normative" Power in the Middle East and North Africa Region: New Dynamics and their Limitations', *Turkish Studies*, 14/4 (2013), 722; Bilgin Ayata, 'Turkish Foreign Policy in a Changing Arab World: Rise and Fall of a Regional Actor?', *Journal of European Integration*, 37/1 (2015), 101.

¹³⁰ Emre Parlar Dal (2013), 722.

¹³¹ Burak Bilgehan Özbek and Yelda Demirağ, 'Turkish foreign policy after the 'Arab Spring': from agenda-setter state to agenda-entrepreneur state', *Israel Affairs*, 20/3 (2014), 339.

¹³² Dan Bilefsky and Anthony Shadid, 'Turkey Moves to Intensify Sanctions Against Syria', *New York Times*, 30 Nov. 2011, para.1-2.

¹³³ Nurşin Ateşoğlu Güney (2013), 54-55. For the mentioned developments, also see 'Ankara insists Syria shot jet in int'l waters', *Hurriyet Daily News*, 2 Jul. 2012; Tim Arango and Anne Barnard, 'Turkey Strikes Back After Syrian Shelling Kills 5 Civilians', *International New York Times*, 3 Oct. 2012; and 'Turkey blames Syria for border gate attack', *Hurriyet Daily News*, 11 Mar. 2013; 'Turkey blames Syria over Reyhanlı bombings', *Guardian*, 12 May 2013.

¹³⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'Press Release Regarding the North Atlantic Council's Decision to Augment Turkey's National Air Defence', 4 Dec. 2012, para.1.

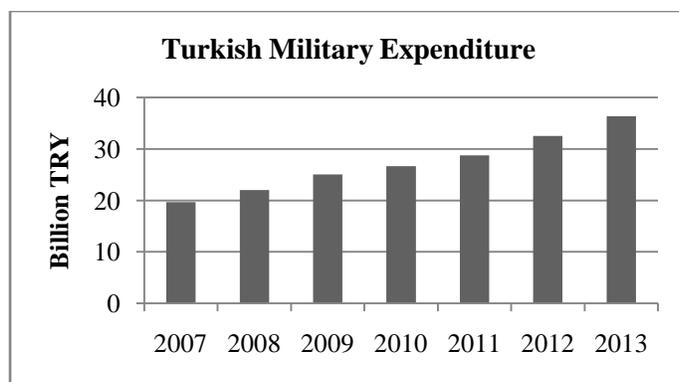


Figure 5 Military Expenditure by Turkey between 2007 and 2013¹³⁵

4.3 Problem and Goal Changes

The major change in Turkish foreign policy has been further compounded by that in problems defined and goals set. This section specifically presents anew an evaluation on those with the before and after the Arab uprisings tool.

4.3.1 Problem Changes

The regional problems before the Arab uprisings were long-lasting ideological rivalries and enduring conflicts in the region, institutionalized by authoritarian regimes and governments.¹³⁶ The problematization of such regional issues was the same for Turkish foreign policy as well, considering that they constituted major obstacles to the objective of promoting regional cooperation and integration. The problematization of ideological rivalries and “chronic” conflicts in the region by Turkish foreign policy-makers can be derived from the MFA’s main issues and priorities, as reflected in its extensive efforts for mediation and facilitation. Further, continuing problems of Turkey with its Middle Eastern neighbours were perceived as one of the top foreign policy problems, and were to be addressed through the prominent “zero problems with neighbours” policy and its relevant “proactive and pre-emptive diplomacy”.

Following the Arab uprisings, not only rivalries and conflicts have persisted in the region, but also concerns on two issues, namely human security and national security, have become apparent by Turkish foreign policy-makers. Firstly, efforts of authoritarian regimes to preserve and sustain their rule through brutal force simply led to intensification of violent clashes, and thus caused growing humanitarian suffering in Turkey’s neighbourhood. Death toll quickly reached to ten thousands, while hundreds of thousands had to flee their countries in several

¹³⁵ Information from Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), *SIPRI Military Expenditure Database - NATO members from 1949-2013*, n.d.

¹³⁶ Talha Köse (2013), 176.

countries. For Turkish foreign policy-makers, this was perceived as a humanitarian disaster next door particularly in the case of Syria, in addition to a development deteriorating its border management. Secondly, changes brought by the Arab uprisings have disturbed the balance of power compared to status quo ante, particularly in terms of territorial integrity and national security. Given the abovementioned security threats and incidents such as border violations, downing of jets, and bombings, national security has become a serious topic to prioritize for the policy-makers, most notably in its 900 km-long Syrian border where intensifying violent struggle and instability had direct consequences for Turkey.¹³⁷ Besides, the seizure of the Turkish Mosul consulate and the kidnapping of the Turkish consul together with 49 Turkish citizens, and growing security threats to the Tomb of Suleyman Shah, which is the property of Turkey in Syria, by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) militants have recently revealed increasing security threats to Turkey and its integrity.¹³⁸ In sum, foreign policy problems shifted from regional rivalries and conflicts to national and human security in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings.

4.3.2 Goal Changes

During the period before the Arab uprisings, Turkish foreign policy objectives were largely in line with the status quo and the regional balance of power. According to Aras, Turkey pursued a foreign policy aiming for indirect transformation of authoritarian regimes through close bilateral relations; thus, for gradual transformation of the regional order.¹³⁹ In any case, Turkish foreign policy was therefore not to challenge the status quo. In fact, it was widely identified with its “zero problems with neighbours” policy, which was basically formulated to eliminate the existing problems inhibiting the cooperation and integration with the neighbours and achieve “zero problems” back then. Davutoğlu remarks the objectives of Turkish foreign policy in the context of its zero problems policy by stating that Turkey needs to reconcile with its environs by sustaining economic, cultural and political integration.¹⁴⁰ “Zero problems with neighbours” policy therefore represents an instrumental policy for foreign policy goals to achieve regional cooperation and integration in a variety of issues.

Such scholars as Tür also displayed economic aspects of this formulation. According to her, by aiming to establish economic interdependence in the Middle East, Davutoğlu expected not only the opening up of new markets, but also the

¹³⁷ Bilgin Ayata (2015), 102-104.

¹³⁸ See Fazel Hawramy, *Guardian*, ‘Isis militants kidnap Turkish diplomats after seizing consulate in Mosul’, 11 Jun. 2014; Orhan Coşkun, *Reuters*, ‘Turkish military enters Syria to evacuate soldiers, relocate tomb’, 22 Feb. 2015.

¹³⁹ See Bülent Aras (2014a), 409; Murat Yeşiltaş, ‘The New Era in Turkish Foreign Policy: Critiques and Challenges’, *Insight Turkey*, 16/3 (2014), 31; Meliha Benli Altunışık (2014), 341.

¹⁴⁰ Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Teoriden Pratiğe - Türk Dış Politikası Üzerine Konuşmalar* (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2013a, 1st Edition), 343.

achievement of regional peace and stability.¹⁴¹ In the same vein, Turkish policy-makers facilitated greater regional cooperation and economic integration by gaining access to new markets and improving trade relations with the Arab countries.¹⁴² Thus, Turkey was eventually argued to become a *trading state*, given its foreign policy framework increasingly shaped by economic considerations.¹⁴³ Having the “zero problems with neighbours” policy at the top of the foreign policy agenda, Turkish foreign policy-makers also exerted great efforts to develop political relations with the governments of the status quo ante. Strategic cooperation councils and joint cabinet meetings with neighbouring governments such as with Iraq and Syria as well as high level visits such as to Libya are clear outcomes of these efforts.¹⁴⁴ In the context of cultural harmony, Turkey also favoured deep historical, cultural, social and religious ties with the Arab countries.¹⁴⁵ The removal of visa requirements with several neighbouring countries including Syria, Libya, Lebanon, and Iraq can be regarded as an instance of attempts to enhance cultural linkages. In addition to abovementioned aspirations planned with this policy set, there was an objective of providing “security for all” as one of the “building blocks” of Turkish foreign policy objectives.¹⁴⁶ According to Davutoğlu, by pursuing a more active and constructive role in the region, Turkey aimed to provide “security for all” that was perceived as a requisite condition for Turkey to ensure its own security and stability.¹⁴⁷

In the aftermath, although the existing foreign policy objectives were not entirely altered, the shift of emphasis has become increasingly evident. In this context, Davutoğlu repeatedly declared that “zero problems with neighbours” policy has not failed, nor has been rejected as it is not incompatible with Turkey’s stance against authoritarian regimes and governments, and its favouring of democratic transition in the region.¹⁴⁸ However, the prominence of the “zero problems” policy visibly declined due to structural changes as compared to the period before the uprisings. Instead, the emphasis concerning the goal of Turkish foreign policy has tilted from “zero problems with neighbours” policy towards the principle of “balance between security and freedom”.¹⁴⁹ Although this principle was existent during the before period as well, it was contextualized more at a national level back then, meaning that Turkey sought to establish a “balance between security and freedom” domestically which could eventually enable it to establish an area of influence in its environs.¹⁵⁰ In other words, the “balance

¹⁴¹ Özlem Tür, ‘Economic Relations with the Middle East Under the AKP - Trade, Business Community and Reintegration with Neighboring Zones’, *Turkish Studies*, 12/4 (Dec. 2011), 593.

¹⁴² Kemal Kirişçi (2011), 43.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.* 37.

¹⁴⁴ Ahmet Davutoğlu, ‘Turkey’s Zero Problems Foreign Policy’, *Foreign Policy*, 20 May 2010, para.22; also see ‘Başbakan Erdoğan Libya’da’, *ntvmsnbc*, 24 Nov. 2009.

¹⁴⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ‘Turkey’s Relations with the Arab countries’, n.d., para.1.

¹⁴⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ‘Policy of Zero Problems with our Neighbours’, n.d., para.3.

¹⁴⁷ Ahmet Davutoğlu, ‘Turkey’s Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007’, *Insight Turkey*, 10/1 (2008), 79.

¹⁴⁸ Ahmet Davutoğlu, ‘Zero Problems in a New Era’, *Foreign Policy*, 21 Mar. 2013b, para.1; Ahmet Davutoğlu, ‘Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy and Regional Political Structuring’, *SAM Vision Papers*, No.3 April (2012b), 8.

¹⁴⁹ Şaban Kardaş (2012), 1.

¹⁵⁰ Ahmet Davutoğlu (2008), 79.

between security and democracy” to be established in Turkey was particularly perceived as a means of soft power to influence its neighbourhood.¹⁵¹ Following the Arab uprisings, this principle has often been highlighted in a way that Turkish foreign policy-makers advised the authoritarian regimes to “no longer ignore their people’s quest for democracy” and to build a “balance between security and democracy”.¹⁵² Bearing such considerations in mind, a more moderate conclusion concerning Turkish objective in the region would therefore be a combination of “zero problems” policy and objective of “balance between security and freedom”.¹⁵³

Even at the beginning of the developments in the region, Turkey presented a strong endeavour to urge the regimes to conduct a peaceful transition and to mediate between them and opposing strands of societies, particularly in Syria, Egypt, and Libya.¹⁵⁴ From this perspective, until it became evident that the efforts to appease were fruitless, the goal of Turkish foreign policy was still to facilitate a gradual transformation of regimes without dramatically disrupting the status quo ante. When such transition proved impossible, given the escalation of uprisings and conflicts, Turkish foreign policy-makers eventually adopted a discourse favouring the removal of regimes and welcoming demands of opposition.¹⁵⁵ Within this context, the evident change in the goal of Turkish foreign policy can be seen in the case when Turkey assumed the role of leading the change. In one of his speeches at the parliament, Davutoğlu states this aim as following:

“We as Turkey will direct the wave of change in the Middle East from now on. We will continue to be the pioneer for this wave of change. [...] We will both continue to be the ‘conscience’ of the humanity and peoples in the region, and to preserve our national interests. No matter what they say, the pioneer and voice of the peaceful structure [in the Middle East] will be Turkey.”¹⁵⁶

¹⁵¹ Ahmet Davutoğlu (2008), 80.

¹⁵² Ahmet Davutoğlu (2012b), 6.

¹⁵³ See Ahmet Davutoğlu (2013b), para.13.

¹⁵⁴ Bülent Aras (2014a), 410.

¹⁵⁵ For the instance of these speeches, see *Hurriyet Daily News*, ‘Turkish PM Erdoğan urges Mubarak to heed Egyptian outcry’, 2 Jan.2011, para.1-3; Sebnem Arsu and Kareem Fahim, *International New York Times*, ‘Turkish Leader Says Qaddafi Must Step Down Immediately’, 3 May 2011, para.1-4; Sebnem Arsu, *International New York Times*, ‘Turkish Premier Urges Assad to Quit in Syria’, 22 Nov. 2011, para.1-2.

¹⁵⁶ ‘Ortadoğu’da değişimi yöneteceğiz’, *Milliyet*, 26 Apr. 2012, para.5 [Own translation from Turkish].

5 Source of Change

“Source of change” is the first step of the model for foreign policy change. In order to capture the change in Turkish foreign policy in the context of the Middle Eastern security complex in the 2010s, identifying and exploring the source of change remain fundamental. Within this context, the change in the regional security structure is taken as the single explanatory variable behind the change in Turkish foreign policy. Being marked by the Arab uprisings which have affected the essential structure, the change is evaluated within a framework before, during, and after the uprisings.

The empirical analysis presented here begins with a look at the regional structure before the Arab uprisings. Then, a summary of developments during uprisings is provided in order to identify the elements of the Middle Eastern security complex that might have changed. In other words, the Arab uprisings are traced in details in order to determine what element of the essential structure has changed. Subsequently, the empirical findings concerning the structure in the aftermath are demonstrated. Last section presents the implications of the changes in the Middle Eastern security complex.

5.1 Change in Regional Security Structure

5.1.1 Middle Eastern Security Complex Before the Arab Uprisings

The present section intends to introduce the contextual description of the Middle Eastern security complex before the Arab uprisings. The essential structure of this complex between 2007 and 2011 was of *the maintenance of the status quo*. The regional construction during the period before the uprisings was an extension of its past, meaning that the region enjoyed an intact security structure for decades. During this time-span, there was no major change in the essential features of the complex as compared to its past to a great extent. Therefore, while defining its elements and examining the structure, references to the past are occasionally possible for practical reasons. Bearing such considerations in mind, the Middle Eastern security complex during the before period is explained through the fundamental variables of the structure, i.e. boundary, anarchic structure, distribution of power, and patterns of amity and enmity.

To begin with, as put earlier in the theoretical framework, the term *boundary* refers to the external boundary that the security complex is separated from the

other complexes. In this context, the Middle East represents a much complicated picture in terms of the formation of a security complex and covers wide geographical extent. Buzan and Wæver suggest a more detailed understanding of this. Accordingly, the Middle Eastern security complex is made of three sub-complexes, namely the Maghreb, the Levant, and the Gulf regions, which include all Arab states as well as Israel and Iran, while treating Afghanistan and Turkey as insulators.¹⁵⁷

The second element is the *anarchic structure*. The Middle Eastern security complex was an anarchic structure in the sense that several autonomous units are interdependent in security terms. Within the structure of boundary and anarchical structure, this security complex can be defined by two kinds of relations, which are distribution of power and patterns of amity and enmity.¹⁵⁸ At first, in its simplest terms, *distribution of power* refers to concerns of polarity. In the Middle Eastern security complex, none of the states in the region was able to dominate the regional power dynamics; yet, four countries stood out as actual or potential regional powers, namely Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Turkey.¹⁵⁹ From this perspective, the distribution of power was of *multi-polarity* during the said period. All the states within the Middle Eastern security complex functioned within a status quo based on multi-polarity without challenging the power relations in a major manner.

On the other hand, the distribution of power in the Middle Eastern security order cannot simply be explained by its own regional dimensions. International engagement in the region and great power management of regional affairs also constituted a significant part of the status quo ante in terms of distribution of power between 2007 and 2011.¹⁶⁰ With regard to this aspect of the structure, the US and Russia appeared as two prominent actors. Although the US was seen by some scholars as the superior of the status quo in the Middle East relying on its definition of adversaries and regional geopolitical calculations, it has been argued to be of a power vacuum by several others, particularly with the beginning of the US withdrawal from Iraq.¹⁶¹ During the mentioned period, pro-US Arab bloc led by Egypt and Saudi Arabia arguably sought to counterbalance rising anti-US bloc led by Iran, Syria and their non-state allies Hezbollah and Hamas.¹⁶² In counter to

¹⁵⁷ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver (2003), 187-188. The term insulator refers to 'a state or mini-complex standing between regional security complexes and defining a location where larger regional security dynamics stand back to back.' 490. At this point, a controversy concerning its boundary exists in the literature for Turkey's definition as insulator. In either way, there is a good reason to think of Turkey as increasingly becoming a part of the Middle Eastern complex since the mid-2000s. During this period, Turkey developed its political and security linkages with the members of the complex, and involved in many of the regional conflicts and security problems as a mediator and/or facilitator; thus, became increasingly vocal in the Middle Eastern security complex.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 49.

¹⁵⁹ Business Monitor International (2010), 32.

¹⁶⁰ The term status quo ante refers to "the state of things as they existed before a specific event, especially one of legal significance, occurred." in Aaron X. Fellmeth and Maurice Horwitz, *Guide to Latin in International Law* (Oxford University Press, 2009).

¹⁶¹ See Kenneth M. Pollack, 'Bifurcating the Middle East - A new American strategy for the region: siding with the good guys', *National Interest*, 2 Mar. 2011; Christopher Phillips, 'US hegemony in the Middle East is ending', *Guardian*, 31 May 2010; Reva Bhalla interviewed in 'Agenda: Power Vacuum in the Middle East', *STRATFOR*, 1 Jul. 2011.

¹⁶² Simon W. Murden in Barry Buzan and Ana Gonzalez-Pelaez (eds.), *International Society and the Middle East - English School Theory at the Regional Level* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 138.

the US influence in the region, Russian engagement was particularly through the intensification of its relations with Iran and Syria, most notably through arms supplies.

Although distribution of power might be helpful in figuring out what constellations are likely, searching for patterns of amity and enmity bears great significance.¹⁶³ Expressly, the intact *patterns of amity and enmity* do not necessarily mean a stable and peaceful security environment in the context of the Middle East security complex during the abovementioned time-span. In contrast, ideological rivalries and enduring conflicts were still existent as parts of the status quo ante. In other words, rivalries and balance of power-type of state behaviour were two important characteristics of the Middle Eastern security complex.

According to Buzan and Wæver, the Middle Eastern security complex can largely be explained in terms of state and interstate security dynamics, with some admixture of non-state actors.¹⁶⁴ Within this context, the critical factor which relates to the shaping of patterns of amity and enmity is the type of governance of the regional countries. In connection with this, the common characteristic of the regional political structure before the uprisings was the lack of entirely representative and democratic governance as the governments were largely authoritarian established through a military coup, monarchy or elite rule with the few exceptions of Turkey, Israel, and Lebanon.¹⁶⁵ Despite a series of governmental and presidential changes in some of these states since the formation of modern states in the Middle East, the authoritarian and elite rules, either in the form of single-party regime or monarchical or family rule, dominated the Middle Eastern political life during the period between 2007 and 2011.¹⁶⁶ Despite the global trends emerged in the post-Cold War 1990s such as globalisation and democratisation, the governmental elites in the Middle East succeeded to keep control of the politics, economy and society in this period.¹⁶⁷ In fact, the insecurity of ruling elites in the domestic political governance was a determinant factor in shaping the dynamics of regional security overall.¹⁶⁸ In other words, one significant characteristics of the Middle Eastern political and security during the mentioned period was that the authoritarian and elite regimes were able to maintain power despite the lack of any solid legitimacy based on popular sovereignty and to hold on power without any major popular challenge against them.

As regards enmities, Gonzalez-Pelaez argues that the practice and threat of war in the Middle East is derivative of a series of candidates such as territoriality, national interest and regional hegemony, economic ambitions, ethnic rivalry, religious and political struggle between Sunni and Shia sects, and security matters

¹⁶³ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver (2003), 50.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. 186.

¹⁶⁵ Business Monitor International (2010), 26.

¹⁶⁶ See Roger Owen, *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East* (London: Routledge, 3rd edition, 2006), 23-55.

¹⁶⁷ Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations - Power, Politics and Ideology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 133.

¹⁶⁸ Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver (2003), 187.

such as terrorism.¹⁶⁹ Therefore, it is possible to identify several complicated patterns of enmity in the Middle Eastern security complex between 2007 and 2011. In this regard, although there may be some other instances of enmities, two main patterns are defined in this study in order to minimize the complexity of patterns: Religious sectarian rivalry and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Firstly, although the sectarian division between Sunni and Shia was visible both at the inter-state and intra-state levels, there was little to suggest a region-wise conventional division as such. At the inter-state level, the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia was an instance of the Sunni-Shia rivalry, particularly in the Gulf region. While Iran supposedly sought to consolidate a Shia sphere of influence in the region, Saudi Arabia was claimed to strengthen its position in the Gulf countries, concerned about Iran's regional rise.¹⁷⁰ At the intra-state level, the division had its reflection particularly in Iraq, Yemen, and Lebanon as the examples for sectarian intra-state struggles for political power.¹⁷¹ The long-standing Israel-Palestine conflict constituted a second pattern of enmities, which continued to lack a constructive solution. Despite futile attempts to progress peace such as the indirect talks between Israel and Syria in 2008, the Arab-Israeli conflict remained as a division line. Further, the problem indirectly provoked deteriorating relations between Turkey and Israel in May 2010 when Israel raided Turkish NGO flotilla *Mavi Marmara* carrying humanitarian aid and construction materials to Gaza in international waters, killing nine Turkish activists.¹⁷²

Last but not least, on the subject of the pattern of amities, bilateral political, economic, and security cooperation existed among some members of the complex, mostly depending on historical, cultural, and religious ties, and primarily shaped in accordance with the patterns of enmities. The institutional cooperation can be observed at both the regional and sub-regional levels such as the Arab League and Gulf Cooperation Council, but it is subordinated primarily by regional perspectives and conflicts. Institutional regional cooperation is therefore existent as well; yet, it remains limited.¹⁷³ In sum, the period between 2007 and 2011 demonstrates an instance of the *maintenance of the status quo* of the Middle East security complex which means no change in boundary, anarchic structure, distribution of power and patterns of amity and enmity. The rule of authoritarian elite regimes appeared as a distinctive characteristic of the status quo, which did not face any significant challenge to their existence.

5.1.2 Middle Eastern Security Complex During the Arab Uprisings

Although it is hard to conceptualize a comprehensive intra-regional phenomenon with divergent characteristics in different countries, a definition of the Arab

¹⁶⁹ Ana Gonzales-Pelaez in Barry Buzan and Ana Gonzalez-Pelaez (2009), 105.

¹⁷⁰ Business Monitor International (2010), 29.

¹⁷¹ See Ibid.

¹⁷² E. Fuat Keyman and Sebnem Gumuscu (2014), 77.

¹⁷³ See Peter Jones, 'Structuring Middle East Security', *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, Vol.51 No.6, December-January (2010), 107.

uprisings is still of significance in order to decide the aspects to be researched. The Arab uprisings were complex and rapidly unfolding phenomenon of popular movements, mass demonstrations, and revolutions with the ambitions such as democracy, freedom, economic opportunity, ending corruption, and regime change in the Middle Eastern region, particularly in the Arab world.¹⁷⁴ In fact, the uprisings were democratic movements in the sense that they sought for political empowerment on a mass level and the replacement of elite rule with popular sovereignty.¹⁷⁵ However, in several countries, the uprisings turned into an ongoing violent conflict between the different actors, most notably between the regimes and the opposition.

In order to examine the change in the regional security structure, it is necessary to trace the development of uprisings and of regime and government changes. The uprisings started in Tunisia against then-president Ben Ali in December 2010 and quickly spread to several others in less than a few months. In fact, although most Arab countries faced with at least minor protests, mass protests took place in six of them.¹⁷⁶ Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Bahrain experienced regime changes; yet, violent conflicts still persist in Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, and Syria, the latter of which even turned into a civil war. Since the effects of the uprisings and the degree of its continuity vary across the countries experiencing these, exploring the incidents country by country is helpful to identify their common features and implications on the regional structure. Therefore, this section aims to present a brief development of the uprisings.

The outbreak of the series of events spread throughout the region was marked by the self-immolation of a citizen in Tunisia on December 17, 2010 against humiliation by the police and feared loss of his livelihood.¹⁷⁷ The initially spontaneous and unorganized protests were quickly replaced by growing participation and organization against the regime, led primarily by the country's principal trade union.¹⁷⁸ When the army refused to take actions against the protestors, then-President Ben Ali fled the country on January 14, 2011.¹⁷⁹ Despite some democratic problems and political rivalry between Islamist and secular groups, the democratic transition has been well-managed in Tunisia.¹⁸⁰ The country was able to hold a new constitution and a presidential election in 2014.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁴ Karen Kaya, 'Turkey and the Arab Spring', *Military Review*, July-August (2012), 26.

¹⁷⁵ Nader Hashemi, 'The Arab Revolution of 2011: Reflections on Religion and Politics', *Insight Turkey*, 13/2 (2011), 15.

¹⁷⁶ Eva Bellin in Clement Henry and Jang Ji-Hyang, *The Arab Spring - Will It Lead to Democratic Transition?* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 36.

¹⁷⁷ Katerina Dalacoura, '2011 uprisings in the Arab Middle East: political change and geopolitical implications', *International Affairs*, 88/1 (2012), 63-64.

¹⁷⁸ International Crisis Group, *Popular Protests in North Africa and the Middle East (IV): Tunisia's Way*, Middle East/North Africa Report No.106 (2011a), 6-7.

¹⁷⁹ James L. Gelvin, *The Arab Uprisings - What Everyone Needs to Know* (New York: Oxford University Press 2012), 27.

¹⁸⁰ Katerina Dalacoura, 'The Arab Uprisings Two Years On: Ideology, Sectarianism and the Changing Balance of Power in the Middle East', *Insight Turkey*, 15/1 (2013), 80.

¹⁸¹ 'Tunisia profile', *BBC*, 31 Dec. 2014, para.1-4.

The ouster of Ben Ali in Tunisia also ignited popular demonstrations against the then-President Mubarak in Egypt on December 25, 2010.¹⁸² Altunışık argues that the regional effects of the uprisings against the existing regimes which began in Tunisia and spread to other Arab countries started to be shaped by the uprisings in Egypt.¹⁸³ In the face of quickly spread protests in Cairo and throughout the country, Mubarak announced a new government, which was unsuccessful in ceasing demonstrations.¹⁸⁴ Despite counter demonstrations and pro-regime media campaign, the growing anti-regime protests were then followed by the intervention of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces when a communiqué “endorsing the people’s legitimate demands”.¹⁸⁵ Shortly after, Mubarak resigned on February 11, 2011 and military took over his powers. Following the fall of Mubarak regime, the army assumed the territorial control of Egypt and huge popular influence in the Egyptian society.¹⁸⁶ Parliamentary elections were held in late 2011 and early 2012 and a new government was formed under the Muslim Brotherhood’s Justice and Freedom Party, despite its dissolution after that by the Supreme Court in June 2012.¹⁸⁷ Following the first free presidential elections in May-June 2012, Muslim Brotherhood’s candidate Morsi was elected as the president and took the presidential office on June 30, 2012. In late 2012, Morsi faced with a strong popular reaction against his attempts to concentrate further executive powers in his office.¹⁸⁸ His one year turbulent presidential term was ended up with his ouster by the military on July 3, 2013 when the huge unrest and protests against him became widespread with the accusation of monopolizing the political scene in favour of Muslim Brotherhood and Islamist allies.¹⁸⁹ Hundreds of Muslim Brotherhood supporters were killed in pro-Morsi demonstrations by security forces, and the activities of Brotherhood were outlawed in the country.¹⁹⁰ Following an interim presidential year, al-Sisi who was the former chief army was elected president in May 2014.¹⁹¹

The outset of uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt in late 2010 provoked the unrest in other parts of the Arab world as well. In Yemen and Bahrain, demonstration began against the ruling elite in January 2011. Despite several government changes, both countries still suffer from ongoing civil disorder and tension. The popular protests were suppressed in Bahrain by the deployment of Saudi forces in March 2011 allegedly in an effort to sustain minority Sunni regime ruling the Shia

¹⁸² Katerina Dalacoura (2012), 64.

¹⁸³ Meliha Benli Altunışık, ‘Ortadoğu’da Bölgesel Düzen ve “Arap Baharı”’, *Ortadoğu Analiz*, 5/53 (2013), 76.

¹⁸⁴ Katerina Dalacoura (2012), 64.

¹⁸⁵ International Crisis Group, *Popular Protests in North Africa and the Middle East (I): Egypt Victorious?*, Middle East/North Africa Report No.101 (2011b), 8, 14.

¹⁸⁶ Lisa Anderson, ‘Demystifying the Arab Spring - Parsing the Differences Between Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya’, *Foreign Affairs*, May/June (2011), 4.

¹⁸⁷ ‘Egypt supreme court calls for parliament to be dissolved’, *BBC*, 14 Jun. 2012, para.1-2.

¹⁸⁸ Katerina Dalacoura, (2013), 80.

¹⁸⁹ ‘Profile: Egypt’s Mohammed Morsi’, *BBC*, 18 Dec. 2013, para.19, 23, 32.

¹⁹⁰ ‘Egypt profile - Timeline’, *BBC*, 17 Feb. 2015, Section September 2013.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.* Section May 2014 and January 2015.

majority backed by Iran.¹⁹² On the other hand, despite replaced governments, Yemen still suffers from continuous violence, power vacuum and instability, and has gradually been stuck in an intra-state conflict for political power.¹⁹³

Contrary to ousters of Ben Ali and Mubarak in Tunisia and Egypt respectively, other Arab regimes such as that in Libya responded with brutal attacks on protestors.¹⁹⁴ In the face of protests in Benghazi which spread throughout the country following the arrest of a human rights activist in February 2011, violent clashes quickly intensified between Qaddafi's forces and opposition led by NTC.¹⁹⁵ The authorization of military intervention was carried out by NATO in March, and the NTC was backed by the NATO forces through naval blockade and no-fly zone.¹⁹⁶ The regime itself finally came to an end with the capture and killing of Qaddafi, and was replaced by a transitional government formed by the NTC in October 2011. Despite the overthrow of the regime, the result was not a unified movement for democracy and change due to lack of governmental institutions and absence of central authority.¹⁹⁷ By May 2015, the country still suffers from violence and lack of stability. There is increasingly a violent power struggle between the government of House of Representatives in Tobruk, the New General National Congress controlling Tripoli, and radical Islamic groups such as ISIL and others.¹⁹⁸

Lastly, Syria is an extension of the uprisings in the Arab world but a quite different example in the sense of its continuity and scope. As regards the effects of the uprisings on the regional dynamics, Altunışık argues that the regional dimension of the uprisings in the Arab countries became thoroughly shaped by the outbreak of uprisings in Syria.¹⁹⁹ The uprising in Syria against the Assad regime started in March 2011, and was harshly responded by regime forces, leading to dozens of deaths and provoking a violent unrest across the country.²⁰⁰ Widespread violence induced a civil war and *de facto* dissolution of the country among the Assad regime, radical groups such as ISIL, ethnic groups such as Kurds, and the loose opposing front including Free Syrian Army. Several peace-efforts led by the Arab League and the United Nations (UN), such as those in Geneva I and II which called for the establishment of a transition government of mutual consent, proved in vain, and international community thus far lacked a fruitful solution to end the civil war.²⁰¹ At this point, a mention to the division among the international community upon the conflict is legitimate. Assad and his ruling Ba'ath Party have been allegedly assisted by Iran and Lebanese militant group Hezbollah on the

¹⁹² Meliha Benli Altunışık (2013), 76.

¹⁹³ 'Yemeni government quits in protest at Houthi rebellion', *Guardian*, 23 Jan. 2015, para.1, 5-6.

¹⁹⁴ Marc Lynch, *The Arab Uprising - Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East* (New York: Public Affairs, 2012), 9.

¹⁹⁵ 'Libya profile', *BBC*, 16 Feb. 2015, Section February-July 2011.

¹⁹⁶ 'NATO ends 'most successful' Libya mission', *Telegraph*, 31 Oct. 2011, para.1, 9.

¹⁹⁷ Eva Bellin in Clement Henry and Jang Ji-Hyang (2012), 45.

¹⁹⁸ See Jon Lee Anderson, *New Yorker*, 'The Unravelling - Letter from Libya', 23 Feb. 2015.

¹⁹⁹ Meliha Benli Altunışık (2013), 76.

²⁰⁰ 'Syria profile - Timeline', *BBC*, 24 Mar. 2015, Section March 2011; Katerina Dalacoura (2013), 76.

²⁰¹ 'Syria: The story of the conflict', *BBC*, 8 Dec. 2014, Section 'Peace Efforts'.

grounds of shared Shia religious sect, and militarily, economically and diplomatically supported by Russia and China.²⁰² Despite the claims for use of chemical weapons by Assad's forces in August 2013, the diplomatic support of Russia and China at the UN Security Council and other diplomatic forums has apparently paved the way for the survival of the Assad regime.²⁰³

5.1.3 Middle Eastern Security Complex in the Aftermath of the Arab Uprisings

The widespread unrest in the Arab world since late 2010 has irreversibly changed the Middle Eastern regional security structure. The former regional security structure was thereby subject to *internal transformation*, which was particularly through the change in the patterns of amity and enmity. Although boundary, anarchic structure, and polarity of the security structure remained the same in the aftermath of the uprisings, patterns of amity and enmity have been notably altered. More precisely, the Arab uprisings have prominently led to changes in the regional security structure in the form of *internal transformation* by altering the patterns of amity and enmity mainly through the following effects of the uprisings:

- Regime and government changes,
- Rise of non-state actors,
- Growing polarization of religious identities,
- Escalation of security threats such as human security, and
- Ongoing uncertainty and instability.

This section seeks to contextualize the change in regional security structure within the scope of the abovementioned developments. First of all, the spread of the uprisings has ended up with the replacement of the regimes and governments that belonged to the status quo ante by the new elected governments in several countries such as in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya. Regime and government changes have proved to bring the revision of the amities and enmities as the new governments in the abovementioned have been more likely to engage in different course of their amities and enmities than those of the former regimes. A second consequence of the Arab uprisings is the rise of new non-state actors affecting the patterns of amity and enmity in the region. In this context, Aras argues that while the non-state actors such as Hamas and Hezbollah could not have conformed to the changes in the region, the Kurds with their quasi-state settlements in the northern Syria such as Jazira, Kobani, and Afrin, and ISIL with its trans-border presence are of significance.²⁰⁴ Similarly, non-state actors have placed high pressure on the

²⁰² Moshe Ma'oz, 'The Arab Spring in Syria: Domestic and regional developments', *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict: Pathways toward terrorism and genocide*, 7/1 (2014), 52.

²⁰³ Henry Hogger, 'Syria: Hope or Despair?', *Asian Affairs*, 45/1 (2014), 6; Josh Rogin, 'NATO chief: Intervention just won't work in Syria', *Foreign Policy*, 29 Feb. 2012.

²⁰⁴ See Bülent Aras, 'Arap Baharı'nın Jeopolitiği', *Ortadoğu Analiz*, 6/64, September-October (2014b), 40.

regional system by disregarding the formal boundaries of the states in the region.²⁰⁵ The rise of radical non-state actors such as ISIL in Syria, Iraq, and Libya is also a clear example of the regional disorder and fragmentation during this period. The seizure of vast territory by ISIL over boundaries, brutal killings of thousands of people as well as widespread human rights abuses prove a serious threat to regional security and stability.²⁰⁶

The third aspect of changing patterns of amity and enmity is the growing polarization of religious and ethnic identities in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings, which reveals itself both at the inter-state and intra-state level. By the outbreak of the Arab uprisings, historical political competitions among the sub-state groups have transformed into “enmities” in Iraq, Syria and Libya.²⁰⁷ Among all, Syria has become the biggest arena for a power struggle based on strategic and religious accounts. Beyond the international division between Russia-led supporters of the Assad regime and the US-led supporters of transition, religious identities have become utterly important in the course of Syrian civil war. To some, it has become a regional balance of power of a fierce Sunni and Shia rivalry particularly in Syria and notably between Saudi Arabia and Iran.²⁰⁸ Accordingly, while some Gulf countries such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar have chosen to support opposition in Syria in order to bring them in power and mitigate the Iranian influence over the region, Iran has sided with Assad by delivering all necessary means, seeing Syria as its one last allies and area of influence.²⁰⁹ At the national level, Sunni majority opposes the minority rule of the Alawites, the sect to which Assad belongs. From this perspective, the civil war in Syria reflects a serious sectarian conflict among national and regional actors. A similar struggle also takes place in Yemen. The Houthis, which is a group of people who increasingly identifies itself through its Shia identity, aspire to control a significant part of Yemen, and thus to challenge legitimate government and gradually lead to power vacuum in the country.

The fourth factor leading to change in the patterns of amity and enmity is the emergence of security threats such as to human security. Intensification of violence against civilians and increasing extent of displacement, most prominently in Syria, can be seen as an example of this development.²¹⁰ In Syria where the effects of the changing security dynamics have been visible the most, nearly 200,000 people have been killed between March 2011 and April 2014, and more than 3.8 million people fled their country by February 2015.²¹¹ Growing threats to human security apparently relates to another remarkable factor affecting patterns of amity and

²⁰⁵ Murat Yeşiltaş (2014), 31.

²⁰⁶ See Ben Hubbard, Robert F. Worth and Michael R. Gordon, *New York Times*, ‘Power Vacuum in the Middle East Lifts Militants’, 4 Jan. 2014.

²⁰⁷ Murat Yeşiltaş (2014), 31.

²⁰⁸ Augustus Richard Norton, ‘The Awakened Arab World and its New Landscape’, *The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs*, 48/2 (2013), 65; Meliha Benli Altunışık (2013), 77.

²⁰⁹ Meliha Benli Altunışık (2013), 77.

²¹⁰ See Marc Lynch, ‘The Political Science of Syria’s War’, *Foreign Policy*, 19 Dec. 2013.

²¹¹ Human Rights Data Analysis Group, *Updated Statistical Analysis of Documentation of Killings in the Syrian Arab Republic* (2014), 1; UNHCR, *Syrian refugees - Inter-agency regional update* (2015).

enmity, which has been the deadlock in transition. This can be observed in Syria, Libya, and Yemen, given long-standing civil wars and violent struggles between regime forces and opposing armed groups. As long as these countries face clashes for control of territories by non-state groups, they are confronted more and more by security crises which have turned many of them into failed states –the unfolding case in Syria, Libya, and Iraq.²¹² In short, regime and government changes, emergence of new non-state actors in the regional political scene, sharpening religious struggle at the national and regional levels, emergence of possible threats to territorial integrity and human security, and still-continuing civil war and uncertainty in several countries have led to revisions in regional balance of power, compelling states and possibly necessitating revision as regards their foreign policies.

5.2 Implications of the “Source of Change”

In brief, the present chapter focuses on the source of change as the first step of the model for foreign policy change. The analysis starts with the argument that the change in the regional security structure is the single source of foreign policy change. The evaluations point out that the Middle Eastern security complex between 2007 and 2011 was of an intact environment which comprised boundary, anarchic structure, distribution of power, and patterns of amity and enmity. In this regard, it was analyzed as *maintenance of the status quo* during this period. In the face of the Arab uprisings, when a series of popular protests turned into violent clashes across the region, the Middle Eastern complex was claimed to be subject to a series of developments that concerned the essential structure of it. The empirical findings suggest that the effects of this phenomenon such as regime changes, the rise of non-state actors, growing polarization of sectarian identities, intensification of security threats, and continuing uncertainty eventually lead to a *change in the patterns of amity and enmity* in the aftermath of the mentioned uprisings. Analysis of this chapter suggests that this kind of change represents an instance of *internal transformation* of the security complex.

²¹² Murat Yeşiltaş (2014), 31.

6 Turkish Foreign Policy Leadership and Decision-Making

After the source of change, the ensuing step in the model is the intermediate step of leadership and decision-making. This section is primarily concerned with the foreign policy leadership and decision-making by researching identification of the foreign policy problem and decision unit dynamics particularly in the face of changes in regional security structure. Firstly, this chapter aims to explain the identification of a foreign policy problem as the initiating factor of decision-making process. Then, the formation of decision unit, the role of leadership and its foreign policy vision, and decision unit dynamics are taken a look at respectively. Within this context, decision unit is composed of whom, who makes the decision, what is the dominant factor in shaping the decision, and what are the dynamics that function the decision unit in the face of a regional structural change are important questions to provide an answer to. The section concludes with a brief presentation of the empirical findings.

Before moving on the empirics and findings, there are two important matters concerning the practicality. First of all, decision-making mechanism of Turkish foreign policy is one of the most ignored fields in FPA studies with respect to Turkish foreign policy. Most of the scholarly findings are limited with the determinative role of the civilian and political actors in decision-making, and the lack of knowledge is formerly addressed by a very few scholars such as Kanat.²¹³ However, an important topic is worth researching for despite the existence of very limited information given the highlight on it.²¹⁴ Since it is hard to draw an exact picture of the Turkish foreign policy decision unit, power of its members to shape decisions, and decision unit dynamics due to the lack of adequate level of common knowledge and scholarly findings, a serious empirical challenge is undertaken. This fact often urges to rely on own observations and indications while benefiting from the ones of other scholars and authors when available.

Secondly, the change in the regional security structure in the context of the Middle Eastern security complex in the early 2010s does not represent a single, particular event. Instead, it is a collection of events with expanding effects on a broad regional context as elaborated in the previous chapter. Since developments concerning the change in regional security structure have emerged episodically, one cannot simply explain one particular decision at a single given occasion and

²¹³ See Kılıç Buğra Kanat, 'Theorizing the Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy', *Insight Turkey*, 16/1 (2014), 67.

²¹⁴ Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba (1994), 6.

time while investigating Turkish foreign policy decision-making vis-à-vis regional structural changes. Instead, the decision-making functions in various occasions for various developments, and the overall foreign policy change originates as the sum of these various decision-making decisions. Since focusing on a single decision-making occasion is therefore futile in explaining the overall foreign policy change, and focusing on each and every decision-making occasion would be an impractical method, the focus should be inclusive and broad enough to cover insights from different occasions and developments concerning the aspects of the change in regional security structure. In respect to this, an examination of gradually evolving decision-making mechanism vis-à-vis regional structural change is considered fundamental.

6.1 Identification of the Foreign Policy Problem

Before the discussion on who makes the Turkish foreign policy decisions and what factors play the most important role in making decisions, this section primarily aims to discuss particularly how and why Turkish foreign policy-makers perceived the outbreak of the Arab uprisings as a foreign policy problem. When the Middle Eastern security complex was subject to early signs of internal transformation, the decision between two choices, either to continue with their existing foreign policies or to revise them, was inevitable for the members of the complex. Broadly, developments brought serious challenges not only to those who faced with popular unrest, but also to regional actors who had direct or indirect linkages with those countries and shared a common political and security environment.

Given its geographical proximity to the region as well as historical and cultural linkages shared, Turkey has been affected by the fallout of the mentioned phenomenon.²¹⁵ In the face of challenges and developments, existing political, security, economic, and cultural linkages of Turkey with the countries experiencing the events led to a dilemma for Turkey. Within this context, changes and challenges in the Middle Eastern security complex, particularly the changing patterns of amity and enmity, became apparent for Turkish foreign policy-makers in a very short time. In this respect, the events were perceived as *external shock* to Turkish foreign policy-makers at the beginning of events as Turkey was not a country directly experiencing the developments; but it was affected by their consequences.²¹⁶ The identification of developments brought by the Arab uprisings as a foreign policy problem by Turkish foreign policy-makers was evident since the beginning. Accordingly, the then-Foreign Minister Davutoğlu stated his remarks concerning Turkey's identification of this regional phenomenon as follows:

²¹⁵ E. Fuat Keyman and Sebnem Gumuscu (2014), 86.

²¹⁶ The term "external shock" is defined by Hermann as a primary change agent. According to him, external shocks are dramatic and large international events that cannot be ignored in terms of their visibility and immediate impact on the recipient. See Charles F. Hermann (1990), 11-12.

“[...] We are facing tough incidents that can be hardly solved during the times of crisis, each of which affects and triggers other [incidents]. A political earthquake is being experienced, and there will be aftershocks of this earthquake, there will be restoration process, there will be re-making process, and there will be process of exceeding people’s trauma.

We all need to determine from which faults such a political earthquake arises, and have to understand what consequences it results in. The results that a rapid reaction may result in ought not to lead to a situation like running back to a building that is collapsing. We need to read and evaluate correct.”²¹⁷

By the outbreak of the said uprisings, Turkish foreign policy-makers faced with two notable effects of them on the making of Turkish foreign policy agenda: Emerging security challenges and dilemma on the decision for foreign policy change. Firstly, the escalation of conflict and violence caused a significant impact on Turkey’s own security. Eruption of the violence in Syria led thousands of Syrian people to leave their countries, many of whom headed towards Turkey. The outbreak of such a disaster did not only bring a serious financial burden, but also led to the deterioration of the border security. Further, non-state groups emerging as governing entities next to Turkey’s borders, and intensification of clashes among rival actors in Syria put a serious challenge to Turkey’s external security policies. Secondly, the developments particularly in Syria, Egypt, and Libya with whom Turkey had formerly developed good neighbourly and regional relations have been more difficult to handle; thus, generated more attention for Turkish foreign policy-makers.²¹⁸ When the uprisings for the objective of transition from authoritarian and elite regimes to popular sovereignty took place across the region, Turkey had no choice other than either to support the existing regimes in sustaining their political power or to side with the popular demands for transition.²¹⁹ In other words, in the face of the mentioned uprisings, the dilemma to Turkish foreign policy-makers was whether to seek to preserve the status quo with existing regimes, particularly with those Turkey had maintained friendly neighbourly relations, or to support the popular demands for fundamental freedoms and rights and democratic governance. In sum, the changing nature of the regional security environment and emerging security challenges were quickly recognized as a foreign policy problem by Turkish foreign policy makers to be dealt with. It became evident that the pre-existing policies were thus put into a serious challenge by the emergence of this regional phenomenon.

6.2 Decision-Making Dynamics

²¹⁷ ‘Davutoğlu’ndan medyaya Ortadoğu dersi!’, *ntvmsnbc*, 2 Mar. 2011, para.6-7 [Own translation from Turkish].

²¹⁸ André Barrinha, ‘The Ambitious Insulator: Revisiting Turkey’s Position in Regional Security Complex Theory’, *Mediterranean Politics*, 19/2 (2014), 176.

²¹⁹ Zeynep Güranlı, *Hürriyet*, ‘Davutoğlu: Sıfır sorun politikası başarılı’, 22 Mar. 2013, para.7.

6.2.1 Turkish Foreign Policy Decision Unit

This section intends to explore the formation of the Turkish foreign policy decision unit within which foreign policy change has taken place. The decision-making in Turkish foreign policy was based on a *single group model* for major and politically important events, in particular from 2007 until 2014, which involves several actors such as the leadership, bureaucratic actors, and advisors. The foreign policy leadership was comprised by the then-Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan between 2003 and 2014 and Ahmet Davutoğlu who served as the chief foreign policy advisor to the Prime Minister between 2002 and 2009 and as the Foreign Minister between 2009 and 2014.²²⁰ In addition to these prominent political figures, a group of bureaucrats from the MFA and from other state institutions, parenthetically the latter became a member of the unit when necessary, as well as advisors to the then-Prime Minister apparently had involvement in the foreign policy decision-making process. Particularly in all the periods before, during, and after the Arab uprisings, the Turkish foreign policy decision unit remained the same in terms of the leadership and actors involved.

Within the Turkish foreign policy decision unit, Erdoğan seemingly played the leading role as the head of the executive throughout the period between 2007 and 2014. However, his lack of foreign policy expertise led to heavy dependence on expert advice for foreign policy formulation and decisions, which was primarily carried out by Davutoğlu from 2002 until 2014.²²¹ According to Beki, one of Erdoğan's former advisors, Erdoğan used to derive information and expertise concerning international security issues from three main sources: MFA bureaucracy, other bureaucracy and/or general staff, and advisors.²²² From this perspective, it can be assumed that the then-prime minister Erdoğan had multiple channels of information to fill the gap due to his lack of prior foreign policy expertise.

However, among other actors, Davutoğlu's influence was so high that he eventually became an indispensable figure for Erdoğan in foreign policy formulation and decision-making. In this connection, Turkish foreign policy between 2003 and 2014 was extensively fed by the intellectual backing of Davutoğlu. This fact was eventually acknowledged by *Foreign Policy* magazine, which introduced Davutoğlu as "the brains behind Turkey's global reawakening" in its 2010-2011 "Top 100 Global Thinkers" list.²²³ Consistently, there is a broad consensus in the academic circles on the view that Davutoğlu was the "intellectual architect" of Turkish foreign policy for a decade.²²⁴ Then-Foreign Minister Davutoğlu, who developed the theoretical and intellectual background for Turkish foreign policy and coordinated its implementation, is therefore argued to have the

²²⁰ Note that since August 2014, Erdoğan and Davutoğlu are the President and the Prime Minister respectively.

²²¹ Mustafa Aydın interviewed in Habibe Özdal, Osman Bahadır Dinçer and Mehmet Yeğin (eds.), *Mülakatlarla Türk Dış Politikası Cilt:3* (Ankara: USAK Yayınları, 2010), 25.

²²² *Gazete Vatan*, 'Başbakanın 7 Kişilik A Takımı', 29 Jun. 2009, para.17.

²²³ 'The FP Interview Mr. 'Zero Problems'' *Foreign Policy*, (Dec. 2010), 45.

²²⁴ See Bülent Aras, 'Davutoğlu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy', *SETA Policy Brief*, No.32 (2009), 3; Meliha Benli Altunışık, 'Worldviews and Turkish foreign policy in the Middle East', *New Perspectives on Turkey*, No.40 (2009), 173.

heaviest weight in making foreign policy decisions within the decision unit. In this respect, he was argued to gradually evolve into a *de facto* leader position in Turkish foreign policy decision-making, particularly from his appointment as the foreign minister in 2009 until 2014.

Although the intellectual architecture of Turkish foreign policy was largely based on Davutoğlu and his foreign policy vision, officials from foreign policy and other bureaucracies and advisors were also influential parts of the decision-making process. Concerning the function and role of the foreign policy bureaucracy, Aydın argues that there was a considerable consistency between the MFA bureaucracy and Davutoğlu.²²⁵ However, this consistency was led by Davutoğlu and his foreign policy framework, and MFA bureaucracy became a secondary actor in influencing the foreign policy decisions under the leadership of Davutoğlu in the decision unit. Similarly, the role of other bureaucracy and advisors was inferior to the then-Prime Minister Erdoğan.

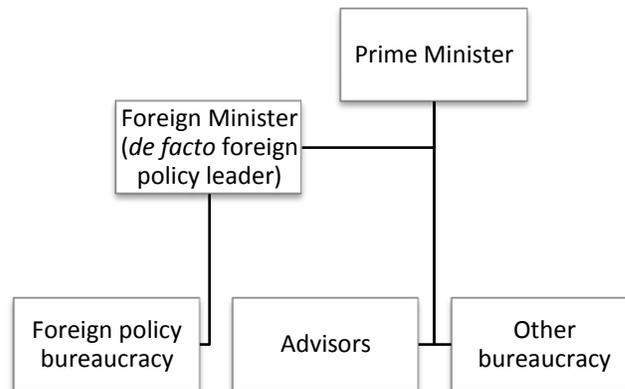


Figure 6 Turkish Foreign Policy Decision Unit in the Face of the Arab Uprisings

6.2.2 Turkish Foreign Policy Vision and Strategic Beliefs and Objectives

Since it would be quite time and resource-consuming to have a complete examination of the roles of all actors separately in the decision unit, Gustavsson offers that it is practical to focus on a more limited number of individuals that are assumed to have the greatest impact.²²⁶ Furthermore, with regard to Turkish foreign policy decision unit, there are inadequate information and findings on the roles and influences of the actors within the mentioned process. In this regard, the role of the *de facto* leader Davutoğlu and his foreign policy vision, which tended to influence decision unit dynamics most during and in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings, is deliberately prioritized.

The Turkish foreign policy decision-making in the context of the Middle Eastern security complex during the Arab uprisings cannot be solely explained by the circumstances in a way independent of strategic beliefs and objectives and “image” held by the foreign policy leadership. As mentioned earlier in the

²²⁵ Mustafa Aydın interviewed (2010), 26.

²²⁶ Jakob Gustavsson (1999), 84.

theoretical framework, foreign policy decisions tend to be shaped by general preferences, beliefs and biases of key foreign policy-makers to a greater extent.²²⁷ In this respect, foreign policy vision and strategic beliefs, objectives, and images covered within bear great relevance in making of the decisions in Turkish foreign policy in the context of the Middle Eastern security complex. Davutoğlu's influential book called *Stratejik Derinlik* (Strategic Depth) and his other scholarly works provide substantial insights concerning his strategic beliefs and objectives on Turkish foreign policy.

Davutoğlu starts his book by acknowledging the emergence of a new international political conjuncture in the post-Cold War era based on balance of power which brought a necessity to reinterpret Turkey's location in it.²²⁸ His foreign policy vision basically overemphasizes Turkey's geopolitical location and historical legacy as two vital concepts indicating its value in international politics.²²⁹ His strategic beliefs concerning Turkey's role are built on the view that Turkey is a *central state* thanks to its historical and geographical connections.²³⁰ The concept of *central state* here refers to a state actor geographically and geoculturally located at the intersection of self-contained regional systems.²³¹ According to him, although the geography of a country is a stable factor, diplomatic dimension of geopolitics is a variable which is dependent on changes in international power distribution.²³² He believes that Turkey's *central state* status alongside with its multiple regional identities allows for manoeuvring in several regions simultaneously and controlling an area of influence in its environs.²³³ Similarly in his view, Turkey can play an important geostrategic role thanks to its strategic location and control of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles.²³⁴ He also asserts that the circular zones of its land, maritime, and continental basins constitute the basis for Turkey's foreign policy strategy which aims at gradually extending its area of influence and strengthening its global positioning.²³⁵ In addition to its geostrategic location, he argues that Turkey's unique historical legacy and its historical and cultural ties with its contiguous land basins, i.e. the Balkans, the Middle East, and the Caucasus, are of high importance in the making of its foreign and security policies.²³⁶ In practice, the notion of Ottoman's historical and cultural legacy is particularly perceived as a useful factor in utilizing Turkey's active involvement in its neighbourhood.²³⁷ Given such considerations, it is believed to be a necessity for Turkey's central state position to provide security and stability not only for itself, but also for its neighbourhood.²³⁸

²²⁷ Margaret G. Hermann, Charles F. Hermann and Joe D. Hagan (1987), 322; Kenneth Boulding cited (2012), 5.

²²⁸ Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik: Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu* (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 76th Edition, 2012a), 74-76.

²²⁹ Ahmet Davutoğlu (2012a), 41.

²³⁰ Ahmet Davutoğlu (2013a), 82.

²³¹ Şaban Kardaş (2012), 3.

²³² Ahmet Davutoğlu (2012a), 116.

²³³ Ahmet Davutoğlu (2008), 78.

²³⁴ Stephen F. Larrabee (2010), 159.

²³⁵ Ahmet Davutoğlu (2012a), 118.

²³⁶ *Ibid.* 119.

²³⁷ Bülent Aras (2009), 7.

²³⁸ Ahmet Davutoğlu (2008), 79.

6.2.3 Turkish Foreign Policy Decision Unit Dynamics

This section primarily seeks to examine the questions which dynamics shapes decision-making and under which circumstances a decision unit comes up with a decision for foreign policy change. Given the fact that there is interplay between actors involved in the decision-making process, what dynamics play the decisive role is fundamental to be studied. Since the Turkish foreign policy decision unit was composed of members who shared similar preferences and orientations and had loyalty primarily to the unit, the decision unit dynamics is considered as based on groupthink. As put forward in the relevant chapter, in a decision unit based on groupthink dynamics, its members are most likely to avoid conflicts and build *concurrency* in line with the formerly-agreed foreign policy framework.²³⁹ In this connection, the Turkish foreign policy decision unit tended to make decisions through building concurrence to tackle problems arising from emerging regional developments.

The concurrence in the Turkish foreign policy decision unit towards the regional structural changes was primarily led by Davutoğlu and his abovementioned foreign policy vision based on strategic beliefs and objectives. To be more specific in the case of the Arab uprisings and changing regional security structure, it was led by the shared senses of *responsible state* and *order-instituting state* within the unit, both of which were influenced by the Turkey's aspired *central state* role. Firstly, according to Davutoğlu, being a responsible state requires the ability to shape the flow of the developments in its neighbourhood and to contribute to the resolution of regional and international problems.²⁴⁰ He argued that the challenging political transition process such as in the Middle East was "natural and inevitable", which therefore necessitated Turkey to develop an accurate understanding and strategies in order to deal with the changes.²⁴¹ The view that the transformation in the Middle East was inevitable and that Turkey needed to develop strategies to lead the transition as a responsible state was shared by the members of the decision unit, even at the early stages of the developments. Accepting Turkey's security interdependence with the region, the members of the Turkish foreign policy decision unit also agreed on Turkey's role of order-instituting state. This was accordingly reflected in Davutoğlu's strategic beliefs, stating that "Turkey should guarantee its own security and stability by taking on a more active, constructive role to provide order, stability and security in its environs."²⁴² From this perspective, Turkey's own security was linked to its ability of being an order-instituting state in the region. Considering such strategic views and linking them to the mentioned regional developments, in a single group decision unit based on groupthink, Turkish foreign policy-makers concurrently came up with a policy that emphasized to provide order and act responsibly in its regional security affairs.

²³⁹ Margareth G. Hermann (2001), 64, 69.

²⁴⁰ Ahmet Davutoğlu (2012b), 5.

²⁴¹ Ibid. 3.

²⁴² Ahmet Davutoğlu (2008), 79.

6.3 Implications of the “Turkish Foreign Policy Leadership and Decision-Making”

In short, this chapter starts with the argument that “leadership and decision-making” operates as the intermediate mechanism between the source of change and foreign policy change. The overall analysis suggests that it is Turkish foreign policy-makers as individuals that identifies the changes in the regional security structure brought by the Arab uprisings as a foreign policy problem and leads to a foreign policy change within a decision-making mechanism. Given its geographical proximity and linkages, it is argued that Turkey was affected by the challenges and developments in the region to a great extent. The findings point that developments were perceived as a foreign policy problem in the form of a challenge to national and human security as well as to the continuation of the then-existing foreign policies. Besides, it is acknowledged that Turkish foreign policy-makers had to opt either for backing the existing regimes and governments in sustaining their political power or siding with the popular demands for transition and regime changes when the Arab uprisings arose. With respect to the formation of the Turkish foreign policy decision unit, it is put forth that Davutoğlu eventually became the de facto leader in Turkish foreign policy decision-making as the most influential person in formulating and shaping the decisions. In this regard, his role as the de facto leader and his foreign policy vision are highlighted as the factor to influence decision unit dynamics mostly in the face of the mentioned regional developments. The analysis continues with the findings that Davutoğlu’s strategic foreign policy beliefs and objectives, which overemphasized Turkey’s geopolitical location and historical legacy as the two prominent indicators for Turkey’s position of “central state”, largely shaped Turkish foreign policy vis-à-vis the change in the regional security structure. Last but not least, within the decision unit that is composed of members sharing similar ideas and preferences, concurrence towards the change in Turkish foreign policy in the face of the Arab uprisings is claimed to be led by the senses of responsible state and order-instituting state, two concepts which are seen as the prerequisites of a central state.

7 Conclusion

The present study seeks to explain *why there is a change in Turkish foreign policy in 2010s in the context of the Middle Eastern security complex*. Within this scope, it carries both theoretical and empirical research objectives. The *theoretical aim* is to contribute to the study of FPA and particularly to the study of foreign policy change by presenting a functional alternative explanatory model for foreign policy change. Also, it intends to enhance scholarly literature on foreign policy change by combining general and middle-range theories from IR and FPA studies respectively. The *empirical aim*, on the other hand, is to contribute to the empirical study of foreign policy change by applying theoretical insights from relevant study fields to a case study. It also seeks to develop policy-relevant knowledge concerning the change in Turkish foreign policy and Turkish foreign policy decision-making. In answering the abovementioned research question, this study demonstrates that the change in the Middle Eastern regional security complex brought by the Arab uprisings, which was perceived and mediated by the Turkish foreign policy-makers within a foreign policy decision-making process, led to the change in Turkish foreign policy.

The empirical section is comprised of three successive chapters, namely “change in Turkish foreign policy”, “source of change”, and “Turkish foreign policy leadership and decision-making”. While foreign policy change is the dependent variable, source of change is held as the explanatory variable. Between source of change and foreign policy change, foreign policy leadership and decision-making operates as the intermediate mechanism. In relation to the explanation of the change in Turkish foreign policy in terms of outcomes, three types of change, based on Hermann’s typology, are suggested. Firstly, adjustment changes in Turkish foreign policy are argued to exist as a result of an increase in efforts in regional security affairs, and a change in the recipients of Turkish foreign policy. Then, it is discussed that there is a change in its program, given the introduction of coercive methods to the foreign policy instruments in addition to soft power. Lastly, problem and goal changes are presented. Human security and national security are explained to become prominent foreign policy problems for Turkish foreign policy-makers, and that the emphasis concerning the foreign policy objectives has shifted from “zero problems with neighbours” to regional application of “balance between security and democracy” policy.

With respect to the chapter on source of change, the essential structure of the Middle Eastern security complex before the Arab uprisings is described according to Buzan and Wæver’s Regional Security Complex Theory. After that, the development of the Arab uprisings is presented as it is momentous for identifying

the challenges and developments that might be the factors leading to a change in the structure. Subsequently, the aftermath of the mentioned events is analyzed through the elaboration of the changes in the elements of the Middle Eastern security complex. The findings suggest that there is a change in the *patterns of amity and enmity* due to the developments such as governmental and regime changes, rise of non-state actors, radicalization of religious identities, escalation of content and scope of security threats, and continuing instability and uncertainty. This change in the structure is claimed to refer *internal transformation* of the Middle Eastern complex.

Lastly, the chapter on Turkish foreign policy leadership and decision-making widely draws on the theoretical underpinnings of Margaret G. Hermann and others concerning foreign policy decision-making, and searches for the empirics on the relevant content. Turkish foreign policy-makers are argued to identify the change in regional security structure as a foreign policy problem in the presence of the emerging security challenges and dilemma as regards the decision for change in foreign policy. The Turkish foreign policy decision unit is claimed to be a single group decision unit in which then-Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu became the de facto foreign policy leader. The strategic beliefs and objectives as an influential factor for making of foreign policy change are explained to derive from Davutoğlu and his “central state” vision for Turkish foreign policy. Accordingly, Turkey was argued to bear strategically important role and duty due to its historical and geographical connections. Decision unit dynamics in the face of the Arab uprisings is put forth to be dominated by groupthink based on concurrence which are largely shaped by the shared “responsible state” and “order-instituting state” senses of its members.

Considering the theoretical insights that are utilized throughout the text and the generated empirical findings, an alternative model for foreign policy change particularly in regional security studies may be offered to similar studies. In this model, relying on Buzan and Wæver’s Regional Security Complex Theory, researchers may investigate a change in regional security structure as a source of change by analyzing its elements, viz. boundary, anarchic structure, distribution of power, and patterns of amity and enmity. At the intermediate step, foreign policy leadership and decision-making can be examined as a factor perceiving, analyzing, and mediating unit by benefiting from Hermann and Hermann’s approaches on foreign policy decision-making. The researchers may therefore focus on the questions of who identifies and makes the decisions for change, how and according to what circumstances they identify the foreign policy problem, what strategic beliefs, objectives, and foreign policy vision dominate, according to what particular dynamics the decision unit makes the decisions, and other existent questions. Finally, changes in foreign policy can be defined in conformity with Hermann’s model for foreign policy change in terms of outcomes, which is based on adjustment, program, problem and goal, and international orientation changes.



Figure 7 Alternative Model for Foreign Policy Change in Security Complex Studies

This study provides the abovementioned model by employing the empirical study of change in Turkish foreign policy in 2010s in the context of the Middle Eastern security complex. Although this is not to suggest that this is one single, perfect, or optimal way to study foreign policy change, it offers a functional combination of different IR and middle-range theories and explanations concerning both regional factors and factors relating to decision-making. It is found particularly useful to study foreign policy changes in the context of security complexes. However, the model is always open to contributions, revisions, and readjustments through application of any other theoretical insights and typologies, explanatory sources, and/or processes.

Concerning the implications of this study for FPA and foreign policy change, some recommendations for subsequent relevant studies can be brought. Broader similar researches are suggested to search for other possible international and domestic factors as explanatory factors on an outcome as long as they are clearly modelled and supported in the theoretical and methodological frameworks. Also, applying different theories from both IR and political science than the ones in this research may be quite explanatory for other possible variables and mechanisms. Furthermore, depending on the empirical case, other theoretical approaches relating to foreign policy decision-making such as domestic politics, bureaucratic decision-making, and learning theory may bear relevance to a greater extent in examining the intermediate mechanism. In addition, with respect to methods and material, conducting in-depth interviews with relevant officials on foreign policy decision-making are recommended. In its final words, this study remembers that all knowledge and all inference are uncertain, and open to discussions, contributions, and revisions.²⁴³ As a matter of fact, the study on the change in Turkish foreign policy and on the Turkish foreign policy decision-making require much more scholarly attention, and further studies are therefore called upon.

²⁴³ See Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba (1994), 31.

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