

TRANSITION FROM A DREAM TO A FAILURE: THE BEGINNING AND THE END OF THE CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN TURKEY

Hayalden Başarısızlığa Geçiş: Türkiye'de Çatışma Çözümünün Başlangıcı ve Bitişi

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ABSTRACT

The concepts of "conflict resolution" and "conflict analysis" have an important place in the peace studies literature. These concepts are also important in terms of ensuring and maintaining the national security of the state. When viewed in terms of concepts, the PKK and the Kurdish Problem, which Turkey has been fighting for many years by using hard force, has been tried to be solved by using soft power, especially after the AK Party's democratization movement. The main subject of this study is the conflict resolution process, which was tried to be implemented under the name of "Kurdish Initiative", then "Democratic Initiative" and then "Peace and Brotherhood Project" and the developments in this process, why the conflict resolution failed and the developments that followed. In addition, the reasons for the termination or failure of the process were tried to be explained. In this direction, the methodological details that make the background of the study meaningful are included. In this framework, an analysis was made on the changing actors on both sides and how the process deviated from its purpose in line with the wishes and desires of these actors. The political preferences of the parties, the changing balance of powers, the developments after the Arab Spring, the new opportunities gained by the Kurdish Movement and the PKK, and the uncertainties that have arisen in terms of Turkey are considered as the main dilemmas of the process. In addition, in the last part, what should be done in order for the process to be successful was discussed.

Keywords: Conflict Resolution, Peace Process, Terrorism, PKK

ÖZET

"Çatışma çözümü" ve "çatışma analizi" kavramlarının barış çalışmaları literatüründe önem bir yeri vardır. Bu kavramlar devletin ulusal güvenliğini sağlaması ve bunu devam ettirmesi bakımından da önemlidir. Kavramlar doğrultusunda bakıldığı zaman Türkiye'nin uzun yıllardır sert güç kullanarak mücadele ettiği PKK ve Kürt Sorunu, özellikle AK Parti'nin demokratikleşme hareketi sonrasında yumuşak güç kullanılarak çözülmeye çalışılmıştır. Öncelikle "Kürt Açılımı", ardından "Demokratik Açılım" ve sonrasında "Barış ve Kardeşlik Projesi" ismiyle uygulanmaya çalışılan çatışma çözümü süreci ve bu süreç içerisinde yaşanan gelişmeler, çatışma çözümünün neden başarısız olduğu ve ardından yaşanan gelişmeler bu çalışmanın ana konusunu oluşturmaktadır. Bunun yanında sürecin sona ermesinin veya başarısızlığa uğramasının sebepleri açıklanmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu doğrultuda çalışmanın arka planını anlamlı hale getiren metodolojik ayrıntılara yer verilmiştir. Bu çerçevede özellikle her iki tarafta değişen aktörler ve bu aktörlerin istek ve arzuları doğrultusunda sürecin amacından nasıl saptığı üzerine bir analiz yapılmıştır. Tarafların siyasi tercihleri, değişen güçler dengesi, Arap Baharı sonrası yaşanan gelişmeler ile Kürt Hareketi ve PKK'nın elde ettiği yeni imkanlar ve Türkiye açısından ortaya çıkan belirsizlikler sürecin temel açmazları olarak ele alınmıştır. Ayrıca son kısımda ise sürecin başarılı olabilmesi adına neler yapılması gerektiği üzerine tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çatışma Çözümü, Barış Süreci, Terör, PKK

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of conflict; opens up space for conflict management and conflict resolution concepts. While analyzing the peace negotiation processes, the concepts of the peace process are put forward in the context of conflict management and resolution. In other words, the analysis of conflict management and resolution, which is discussed in the conflict analysis and peace studies literature and cannot be conceptually defined on a common denominator axis, is important in addressing peace negotiation processes altogether. Domestic armed forces, which have increased quantitatively after the Cold War period, are also described as civil war or non-international armed conflict in the relevant literature, and express the armed conflict within the borders of a state, both the forces of that state and other separatist armed forces.

A conceptual confusion is also experienced in the peace studies literature in line with the different perspectives presented in the field of social sciences. On the other hand, it is discussed whether the concepts of conflict management and resolution are used as a heading, if it is used as a higher heading, which concept is the focal point or whether both concepts constitute separate phases from each other.

It should not be forgotten that internal security policies are important before external security policies and needed to be solved first in conflict zones. According to the concept of national security; it requires the development of national power and its use for the realization of national interests, and the determination and implementation of certain forms of action in accordance with international conditions. Within the concept of national security; there are national interests, national goals, national policy, national strategy, and national power. For this reason, the most important duty of states is to provide and protect national interests. Because national goals are outcomes that, if achieved, ensure the realization of national interests. National goals guide national policy. national targets; it generally encompasses economic well-being, political stability, social and industrial development, and security against encroachment and attack by another country.

There are many sources of conflict in Turkey today. The problems underlying conflicts and internal turmoil, the societies, geographical conditions and political environments exist with certain similarities and certain differences from region to region. But each conflict has its own local causes. Although generally placed at the door of "ethnic-Kurdish" insurgents, attacks, suicide bombings, civil rebellions and confrontations involving the security forces actually have a wide range of origins. Therefore the conflicts in Turkey and its impact on the country makes up the great majority of incidences of political violence for both today and in the past.

While national power is important for a state, internal terrorist organizational formations damage this power in order to weaken it. It is a fact that the biggest problem threatening Turkey's national security is the PKK terrorist organization. Since the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, we saw that the ethnic problem and the PKK problem need to be resolved. In addition to international peace operations, a number of policies need to be implemented in order to solve the problems and security problems within its internal borders. For this reason, new policies should be created with examples from the world and practices for conflict resolution should be made. Since it is a very important concept in internal security as well as external security, it needs to take steps to solve this problem by applying conflict resolution and tools to its own security policies.

Today, it is possible to say that there is a conflict based on ethnicity within the borders of many states. internal conflicts, the causes of conflicts and resolution methods, each of which is a separate study in itself, constitute an important part of the researches in recent years. Conflicts may arise when the minority ethnic group objects and these objections meet with violence in response to problems such as the unfair distribution of natural resources, the failure to grant cultural rights, especially fundamental rights and freedoms, and the exclusion of the minority ethnic group by the majority. While these conflicts sometimes take place between two or more ethnic groups, sometimes the state can be a party to the conflict. This situation causes conflicts to evolve to a different dimension. Internal conflicts emerge as a result of the ruptures experienced after a historical process. In addition, ethnic-based conflicts take a long time to be resolved or successfully terminated, as they are not conflicts that arise suddenly. The primary reason for this is that ethnic-based conflicts have a complex structure due to their reasons, especially in terms of the actors who are parties to the conflict. Important studies have been carried out for the solution of the ongoing and conflicting Kurdish problem in Turkey after 2002. However, responding to violence with violence by following more security-oriented methods in practice has transformed the problem into a more complex structure beyond solving it. In particular, the fact that one of the parties to the conflict was the state caused the problem to be experienced between the state and the minority ethnic group.

The aim of this study is to evaluate the "conflict resolution process" put forward in the context of the problem commonly referred to as the "Kurdish problem / PKK issue" today. In doing so, it is to examine using the perspective or one of the stages where conflict resolutions group conflicts, based on the prominent events that have occurred in the recent period and that we have included in the later stages of the study. In addition, the events that occurred in the transition from the conflict resolution process to disengagement process will be examined.

2. CONFLICT RESOLUTION AS A COMPREHENSIVE TERM

In traditional approaches, the conflict resolution symbolizes the process between the start of the peace agreement and the fighting or conflicting parties and the completion of the conditions of the peace agreement. Various conflict resolution definitions indicate the different areas of the activities that support international peace, but the examination of these definitions does not provide sufficient data at the point of understanding the meaning of the conflict resolution. However, as studies on the conflict resolution and experience with this is gained, the definition of this concept began to shape (Özerdem, 2013: 93-94).

The termination of the armed conflict is the basic purpose of a fair resolution and ensuring the security of the parties, not to cause a new hot contact. As Peter Wallensteen mentions for conflict resolution; The fact that the conflicted parties agreed to a settlement that solves the basic disputes, defines the existence of the parties as a process that all the mutual attacks ended (Wallensteen, 2007: 8). Therefore, the conflict resolution depends on an agreement that terminates armed conflict, internal confusion and dissolve the disputes. It requires mutual trust in the decision and validity of such an agreement with the binding nature of the parties. The resolution processes that no mutual trust are provided are effectively in the long term, although some time is effective. The conflicted parties will not lose the permanent nature of the resolution in cases where their own presence and confidence in each other.

There are four features of the conflict resolution approaches;

- ✓ The parties are striving together in line with cooperation in the resolution process. Cooperation can turn the conflict into a dynamic assured of joint earnings.
- ✓ The process is inclusive. The inclusive resolution process appeals to the interests and needs of all parties, give a result of the conflicted parties together.
- ✓ The part of the resolution process is managed by a stake-oriented approach that the parties are understanding to the basic interests of each other. The resolution provided by the opposite of one's own interests to the other makes it impossible for sustainable peace. The processes that the first positions referring the parties to the conflict are maintained and negotiated through these positions of the parties often fail. The resolutions that are removed from disputes are therefore generally provided by the processes that mutual concerns and interests are realized and the first positions of the parties reviewed.
- ✓ The methods and the resolution process implemented in the process are based on the result of peace achievement. The transformation of the conflict should not be violent. Transforming conflict into peace with armed power administration to peace can form the justification of resorting to armed power in the future (Sanson and Bretherton, 2007: 194-200).

The conflict resolution is a peaceful drib where the conflicted parties or actors are moved in the graceful relationship context and make the effort. With the central state of the ethnic separatist targeting terrorist organization, cooperation between the central state and the joint effort, but the organization may start with the termination of violence (Fisas, 2011: 90-92). The determination of the calendar in which the members of the terrorist organization will lay down their weapons and their compliance with this calendar are necessary for the progress of the process. However, conflicting groups often act to defend the interests of the organization rather than the ethnic group they claim to represent. Therefore, it is often compatible with maintaining its armed force and continuing the illegal activities it carries out to maintain this force. Finally, the process and outcome must be peaceful. It has been seen that a peaceful process is not possible between the organization, which tries to preserve its armed force and continues to carry out violent acts, and the state. For these reasons, terrorist organizations in some countries, such as Turkey, cannot be a party to the conflict resolution process. Terrorist organizations, on the contrary, hinder the solution process with their acts of violence. Ethnic terrorist organizations carry out more terrorist attacks as they begin to lose support within the element they claim to represent (Sandıklı, 2012: 400-401).

2.1. Tools Applied in Conflict Resolution

The leading methods used in conflict resolution internationally are the "Disarmament, End of the Armed Movement (Demobilization) and Reintegration - DDR" programs for those who have fought armed before (Özerdem, 2009: 12-13). In the reports on UN peacekeeping reform operations, disarmament programs are seen as the first stage of the resolution process, which facilitates the rapid resolution of the warring parties and reduces the possibility of resumption of conflicts. According to the UN Standards for Disarmament,



Demobilization and Reintegration, consists of four stages. These are; information gathering and operational planning, weapons collection, storage method and destruction (Özdem: 2013, 14).

As a result of disarmament, the opposing groups that settled into negotiations can at least take the first step to create a new path in the peace process by taking the necessary measures to prevent the sufferings of the past from happening again, by creating the common sense of the society. However, it should not be forgotten that every disarmament operation does not bring peace, it is only a step on the way to a solution, and since obtaining weapons in the globalized world becomes easier than laying down weapons, it is necessary to evaluate the next step well (Bercovitch and Jackson: 2009, 65).

However, it should not be forgotten that disarmament alone is not sufficient in the future of peace. Stating that the main thing is to disarm the heads, Prof. Dr. Alparslan ÖZERDEM stated the importance of disarmament as follows:

“When we look at the experiences of international disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, we see that it is not quite right to index the future of peace to the issue of disarmament. As we have seen in experience in other countries, the weapons collected when armed groups lay down are often either unwanted or defective weapons anyway. The number of weapons collected is as much as the tip of the iceberg, and it is not realistic to expect these armed organizations to give whatever weapons they have in such environments where the environment of trust is very fragile. In addition, rearmament will be the easiest thing when desired, especially in regions that have been affected by the conflict, have a certain war and weapons economy, and especially in hard-to-reach regions such as Southeast Anatolia or Northern Iraq. Therefore, disarming the minds in the long term will be more beneficial for security than collecting unwanted weapons in the near future” (Özdem: 2014).

Another step to be taken after disarmament is demobilization. The main purpose of this step is to register, count and observe the members and individuals involved in the conflicts and prepare them for discharge. This is also about obtaining the information needed for the next step, reintegration, and preparing them for this step. Since military symbols such as weapons, uniforms and rank are removed during the demobilization process, necessary steps are taken to meet the needs of the individual, to provide medical and psychological treatment, and to enable them to take part in the society again (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2007: 535-537).

Of course, the wishes of the individuals who participated in the conflict before being discharged must be met after they are discharged. Both groups have to give up their privileges and act under a common decision and title. If necessary, it is necessary to control the demobilized individuals in health, education and social areas and to work on the missing areas. It is also the controlled and lawful withdrawal of active combatants from the armed forces or armed groups. The first step of this is to gather in certain places, and the second step is to support them to reintegrate into society (TBMM, 2013: 144-145).

Reintegration as a result of conflicts is a difficult process. Because it is difficult for both the people and the conflicted party to reintroduce a group that has created a chaotic environment with conflicts and caused many deaths to the people of that country for years. Reintegration is to create an environment in which individuals in conflict feel themselves as part of society and in which society accepts them with common sense. It is a necessary process for conflict resolution and peacebuilding. There must be a sense of common trust in a region so that the re-emergence of conflicts and hostilities is not repeated (Özdem, 2013a: 18).

According to the international labor organization, there are some steps necessary for successful integration work. These are;

- ✓ Motivation and determination of individuals in conflict,
- ✓ Community support and acceptance,
- ✓ Facilitation of measures for income and job creation.

But besides the success of these matters, conflict resolution also has its challenges:

- ✓ Unity in multiculturalism and diversity is not easy. Cultures are dynamic and constantly changing.
- ✓ It is necessary to take into account the knowledge and culture of the local people. The difference from traditional resolution methods arises at this point.

- ✓ Peace building and peace support efforts of women, children and youth should be considered more centrally.
- ✓ Genuine dialogue processes are capable of establishing a bridge between the projects put forward.
- ✓ Diagnosing the design process of conflict systems; Equal emphasis should be placed on subjective aspects such as identity, fear and misconceptions, and objective measures such as land, resources and elite power-sharing.
- ✓ Religion plays an important role in peacebuilding and resolution of ethnic and social conflict. In both cases, it is necessary to pay attention to misperceptions that can cause conflicts.
- ✓ Tolerance, forgiveness, compassion, kindness and reconciliation are effective Human Rights Approach practices in this area. Conflict resolution can be made easier when common sense is provided.
- ✓ There is a need to define the parties, issues, relationships and resources well in the conflict and to focus on human and emotional aspects including the influence of resentment, gender, class, religion and culture. An incorrectly defined concept prolongs the resolution process (Wallenstein, 2007: 10-12).

Shortly, according to the United Nations standards for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, disarmament is defined as the collection, control and disposal of small and light weapons and the development of a responsible arms management program in the post-conflict period. However, demobilization is defined as a planned process by which the armed forces of the government, opposition or separatist groups are reduced or completely banned. Disarmed and reinstated ex-combatants should be placed in civilian circles. Reintegration aid, which is thought to improve the process, usually includes post-discharge adjustment, food aid, health and education support, and a monthly salary. Finally, reintegration is the process of integrating ex-combatants and their families into the political, economic and social life of civil society. These three actions are interrelated rather than sequential (IDDRS-UN: 2006).

Kofi Annan emphasizes the dependence between these sequential actions as follows (UN, 2008: 8);

"The process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration cannot be seen as a simple series of events. Rather, these activities form a continuum where their components intersect; they are interrelated and mutually supportive. The success of each step taken is important for the success of the process".

As it can be understood from this, the conceptualization of different phases and activities can be useful for academic purposes, but they are artificial in a wide framework. This is because not only demobilization and reintegration conflict with each other; on the contrary, their interdependence is vital to the long-term success of joint work in their definition and implementation and financing of plans (Berdal, 1996: 36). For example, while disarmament is usually carried out by a military force, demobilization and reintegration are mostly carried out by civilian actors, making the planning and implementation of each phase a responsibility that is carried out in isolation from other phases, as different types of actors are involved in each DDR phase (Spetch, 2003: 75).

3. CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND APPLIED POLICIES IN TURKEY

Turkey's fight against the PKK terrorist organization is divided into certain periods with significant differences in terms of their characteristics. In the post-1970 period, the fight against terrorism was designed only as an armed and military struggle against terrorists, and security-centered resolution options were developed, and it was thought that this problem could be overcome by using hard force without negotiation. In the second period, that is, after 1990, measures to prevent terrorism from a semi-military perspective were implemented, and fewer mistakes were made that the terrorist organization could use as propaganda material. The second period also points to a mentality transformation in which approaches to how to end PKK terrorism in the long run are considered. The third period that Turkey entered in the fight against terrorism in the 2000's was a period in which a multidimensional understanding of struggle began to settle. During this period, important steps were taken in line with the idea that the PKK terrorist organization issue should be resolved not only with the security forces, but also with social and political factors (Bal, 2012: 41-42).

Turkey has been going through a serious transformation since 2002 with the democratization operation. In this context, the emphasis on concepts such as "fundamental rights and freedoms", "multiculturalism" and "the coexistence of differences" brought along a clearer approach in the way the Kurdish problem is

handled. The AK Party has brought back the understanding that was tried to be implemented in the 1990s, but was hindered by terrorist activities and that distinguishes the Kurdish Problem and PKK terrorism from each other. In this sense, the first action taken was the government's approval of the law in 2002 allowing activities aimed at keeping Kurdish culture alive, including broadcasting in Kurdish from TRT, opening private Kurdish courses, publishing Kurdish books and Kurdish songs and speaking their own language (Efegil, 2008: 448).

The PKK terrorist organization, which entered a period of inaction for the purpose of recovery after the capture of Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the PKK. During these events they increased their violence actions in 2004 and tried to become politicized with its armed presence. But after these events PKK, lost their supporters with the democratization process that has progressed since the 2000's, and the investments made in the region, tried to regain its credibility with these acts of violence. Then PKK increased and resumed their armed actions, during these violent actions the AK Party government felt they need to develop new policies and make institutional arrangements in the fight against terrorism. In this context, the draft law envisaged some changes in the Anti-Terror Law was approved in April 2006. The purpose of the amendment in the law; It has been in the form of "to clearly reveal the distinction between ordinary citizens and terrorists and people who support terrorism, and to ensure that arrest, search, detention and their durations are up to EU norms" (Aytar, 2007: 4-5).

In this period, the government's policy regarding the Kurdish issue, which tried to carry out the fight against terrorism and democratization together, began to become clear. According to this policy, the first step is to disarm the PKK; in the second step, ensuring the economic and social development of the region; In the third step is aiming to make new constitutional arrangements to ensure individual rights and freedoms (Yayman, 2011: 51-53). As can be seen, the issue of combating terrorism has been discussed in the context of the resolution of the Kurdish problem.

The scope of the anti-terrorism policy, which is tried to be formed within the framework of harmonization with the European Union and democratization, has been determined as activating all tools to weaken the PKK. These tools can be listed as diplomacy, military operation, attempts to deprive the PKK of financial resources, and amnesty arrangements to prevent participation and support. According to this new penal code, especially in Article 221, a regulation has been made on the conditions under which organization members should not be punished. According to this article; "No penalty is imposed on the founders and managers who disbanded the organization before committing a crime in line with the purpose of the organization or made it disperse with the information they provided, those who left the organization voluntarily and surrendered without committing a crime, those who were caught without committing any crime, and those who provided information suitable for the dissolution of the organization or the arrest of its members (Türkiye Barolar Birliği, 2006: 561).

Thus, the method of combating terrorism has also been changed. As a result of the terrorist attacks carried out between April-May 2007, discussions of cross-border operations in the media and in this context, the pressure on the government increased. While preparing for the July 2007 general elections, the issue of cross-border operations was the most important issue on Turkey's agenda. After the elections, the diplomatic process was continued. Despite the tension created by the Northern Iraqi leader Barzani's statements targeting the Turkish Government's terrorism policy, the search for reconciliation with the Iraqi Administration continued. However, the Northern Iraq Administration was excluded from this process (Erkmen, 2008: 33).

During this period, the government also focused on cultural rights. State officials began to address the public in Kurdish during their visits to the region, Kurdish theater plays were allowed, concrete steps were taken on issues such as the establishment of Kurdology institutes and the appointment of Kurdish-speaking civil servants in the region. Nevertheless, the postponement of other measures, especially constitutional arrangements, that were thought to be taken for the resolution of the Kurdish problem, rendered the Government's efforts insufficient. In this regard, there was a general opinion that the Kurds are not satisfied with the government's policies and therefore the 29 March 2009 local elections were concluded in favor of the Democratic Society Party. However, we can say that the initiative is perceived positively by the public. In a survey study, 48.1% positive and 36.4% negative opinions were reported about the initiative (Efegil, 2009: 456).

The AK Party government, which tries to end terrorism and ensure democratization together, initiated a process called “Democratic Initiative” in July 2009 in order to strengthen unity and solidarity in the country, to take steps to meet expectations in the field of fundamental rights and freedoms, and to end the terrorism that has been going on for years. This new project, whose official name is “Brotherhood and Peace Project”, has been prepared for the citizens of the Republic of Turkey belonging to different ethnic origins to live together in peace and security, as can be understood from the word “initiative”. While cultural rights and socio-economic initiatives were on the agenda until the emergence of the project, with the Democratic Initiative, things to be done about issues such as education in mother tongue and constitutional citizenship, which the Government had previously shown reservations about, started to be discussed (Köse, 2017: 18).

The Minister of the Interior Beşir Atalay, announced the road map of the Democratic Initiative at the press conference he held on 30 July 2009. According to Atalay's statements, the project will consist of three phases as short, medium and long term;

In the short term, freedom to speak Kurdish, employing Kurdish-speaking citizens in government offices, changing place names such as districts, villages and hamlets with Kurdish or other names, and eliminating Kurdish name problems were aimed. In the middle period; It was aimed to liquidate the PKK, to reorganize Article 221 of the Turkish Penal Code and to find a solution to the unemployment problem. In the long run; By making a constitutional amendment, it was aimed to redefine the concept of citizenship, to bring freedom to the language of education, to protect cultural diversity, to strengthen local governments, to completely remove the obstacles in front of Kurdish publications, and to stretch the ban on Kurdish political propaganda (Efeğil, 2009: 457).

The democratic initiative process tried to answer the problems that occurred in people's minds with a report published by the government. According to this report, the unitary structure of the Republic of Turkey; The government especially emphasizes that the autonomy demand of the Democratic Society Party (and later the Peace and Democracy Party and lastly Peoples Democratic Party) cannot be accepted and the unitary structure will not be harmed.

While Ahmet Türk, Chairman of the Democratic Society Party, welcomed the Democratic Initiative, he did not find the current proposals satisfactory. The opposition parties' reactions to the Democratic Initiative are quite harsh. The most important point emphasized by the opposition leaders is that the project is “open-ended”, that is, “ambiguous” and therefore “dangerous”. In this context, opposition party leaders were skeptical of the democratic initiative and defined it as the division of the country by the government, and it was said that this process meant surrendering to the PKK (Parlak and Öztürk, 2015: 97-99). For these reasons, the government had prepared a handbook under the title of “Democratic Initiative Process” in order to explain to the public what the Democratic Initiative means. In the book, it has been tried to answer the questions that bothered the minds. Thus, it was aimed to clear up the confusion on the issues to which sensitivity was shown;

- ✓ Unitary structure of the Republic of Turkey: The government especially emphasizes that the Democratic Society Party demand for autonomy cannot be accepted and the unitary structure will not be harmed.
- ✓ The mother tongue-official language distinction is the official language of the Republic of Turkey and the language of instruction is Turkish. It is also wondered whether the project will damage this immutable quality. The government emphasizes that the official language and mother tongue are separate concepts and says that the use, learning and teaching of their mother tongue by citizens of different ethnic identities will not change the official language and the language of instruction. However, dialects that were forbidden in previous governments were allowed to be used.
- ✓ Imposition project discussion: The Democratic Initiative Project is considered as a project imposed by the European Union and the USA. On the contrary, it is argued that the project is a completely domestic and national project. The overlap of Turkey's interests with those of other countries, in other words, Turkey's stability and integration being desired by other countries in the context of regional and global balances is not considered an obstacle for Turkey to produce a national project.
- ✓ The problem of the addressee of the Democratic Initiative process: There is a perception that the addressee of the process is the PKK and the Democratic Society Party, and that this means making

concessions to the terrorist organization or a certain group. The government states that the only interlocutor of the process is the public, and underlines that the PKK cannot be considered as interlocutor. In addition, it is explained that the project is not only about the Kurds, but in a broader sense, it serves democratization.

- ✓ Öcalan's pardon and counter-terrorism issues: The handbook clearly states that it is not possible to pardon or retrial Abdullah Öcalan. It was also stated that the process will not cause a step back in the fight against terrorism and that military operations will continue (AK Parti, 2010).

3.1. The Beginning and Course of the Conflict Resolution Process

After 2009, a new era has been entered in the framework of counter-terrorism and government policies. Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the PKK Terrorist Organization, prepared a "road map for peace" and then the prime minister of the time, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, first voiced the Kurdish Problem and announced that he had started the Kurdish initiative, which would later continue with the "Resolution Process". In this context, efforts were made to get some of the PKK-affiliated terrorists out of prison with partial amnesty. In addition, the Turkish names in the cities and rural areas were changed and the old Kurdish names were given back. Finally, with the opening of TRT Ses, a media channel was established in their local language and arrangements were made for expanded rights based on local governments (Jacoby and Özerdem, 2013: 89-90).

Even though such activities were carried out towards the resolution process, 34 terrorist organization members entered Turkey through the Habur border gate from the Kandil and Mahmur terror camps on the Iraqi border. Calling themselves the "Peace Group", these terrorists later read articles declaring their various demands and wishes. Again in the same period, the representatives of the PKK terrorist organization abroad made an effort to bring these demands and requests to the international arena. However, during the resolution process, the PKK continued to make propaganda for the terrorist organization and recruit members outside the border. In addition, the PKK has published statements that threaten Turkey's security in its discourses within the country. For example, Murat Karayılan, one of the founders of the PKK, declared that "the PKK's actions will increasingly continue from now on and the only solution is democratic autonomy". Later, in an interview he gave to the BBC, Karayılan publicly stated that "the PKK can lay down its arms under the supervision of the United Nations, and for this, Turkey has to declare a ceasefire and accept the PKK's terms". However, despite all this, the state continued its activities with the aim of solving the Resolution Process and the Kurdish Problem (BBC, 2013).

With the words of the senior executives of the organization, 2010 has become the period from the dialogue process to the negotiation process. In particular, efforts to legitimize and politicize disintegrating terrorist activities continued in this period as well. As a result of the events in the neighboring regions of Turkey in 2011 and after, the possibility of conflict that may come from the region and outside the borders, causes a perception of threat to Turkey's security. Especially with the Arab Spring, the dragging of Syria into civil war, as in other Arab countries, in March 2011, caused a power vacuum on Turkey's southern border. And in order to fill this power vacuum and to establish a Kurdish state in this region, the PKK's Northern Syrian organization, namely the Syrian political arm PYD (Democratic Unity Party) and its military arm YPG (People's Protection Union), emerged (İçişleri Bakanlığı, 2017: 6-9).

21 March 2013 the date when Nowruz happened, has been accepted as the unofficial starting day of the Peace Process and the "Resolution Process". Abdullah Öcalan's letter praising the peaceful and democratic solution of the Kurdish Problem was read by Sırrı Süreyya Önder during the Nowruz celebrations in Diyarbakır. In addition, in this letter, it was stated that the armed elements would be left completely and their rights would be demanded in the political environment, and that they would begin to withdraw from the border. Following Öcalan's letter, the PKK declared a unilateral ceasefire on 23 March. The withdrawal of PKK elements from Turkish territory began in May of the same year. Only a very limited part of PKK elements withdrew from Turkey (DW, 2013).

However, over time, the parties accusation of not taking a step towards the process and the differences in the aims of the parties in the explanations about the process led to discussions that the targets were not clear and unclear, and therefore contradictions emerged. The developments that led to these discussions can be listed as follows:

- ✓ Despite the state's requirement for the PKK to lay down arms and leave the borders, the PKK did not lay down its arms and ceased to withdraw from the border, stating that the state did not provide legal guarantees,
- ✓ Despite Öcalan's statement that goals that would harm the integrity of the country were abandoned, the PKK and BDP's statements regarding the declaration of democratic autonomy,
- ✓ Despite the PKK's declaration that it is a party to the negotiation in order to ensure that the Kurds obtain fundamental rights and freedoms, and the state allows education in the mother tongue in private schools and the establishment of Kurdish television channels, the PKK explains that the desired result will not be achieved if Öcalan does not leave Imralı,
- ✓ While Öcalan stated that first a law should be passed for the PKK to come down from the mountain and that he should finally be in contact with the outside, Murat Karayılan, the leader of the PKK's armed wing, made statements that no conditions were set for the withdrawal, except the absence of military operations.
- ✓ In addition, in response to Öcalan's demands, Kurdistan Communities Union (KCU) Co-Chair Cemil Bayık first requested that Öcalan's prison conditions be improved, that his rights be guaranteed by the constitution, and that he demanded a third party in the negotiations (Akbaba, 2013).

However, it is important to clearly state the objectives in the negotiation processes. In negotiations, which have a dynamic structure, the objectives are not expected to be static. However, at the same time, the conflicting goals of the parties harm the progress of the negotiations. Moreover, negotiations should not be used for political purposes. In other words, it is an important element that negotiation is not seen as a political material. Otherwise, the negotiation is stuck between the excitement of gaining votes or the fear of losing, preventing it from going to the next level. In a sense, it is important to keep political accounts separate from the resolution process (Arıboğan, 2013).

In this direction, the government stopped the military operations and tried to follow a conciliatory path. The formation of the "Wise People Committee" (WPC) took place. An attempt has been made to prepare the community for changes in course of action and direction. The main purpose of WPC is to share the details of the Resolution Process with the public and to increase the support of people in the resolution process. On April 3, 2013, then Prime Minister Erdoğan appointed a commission of 63 people (41 men and 12 women) as Wise People. The WPC has worked intensively for more than two months all over Turkey. 7 groups from the WPC worked in 7 different geographical regions of Turkey (CNNTURK, 2013).

WPC was planned as a civic initiative composed of prominent public artists, writers, academic staff, NGO leaders and activists supporting the resolution process. The Commission worked as a consultation mechanism trying to understand people's expectations from the Resolution Process and recorded their reservations and criticisms. The Commission enjoyed wide public visibility during its mandate. These 7 established WPC groups presented their reports on the solution process to the prime minister, and some of these reports were shared with the public (Democratic Progress Institute, 2013: 11-12).

However, despite WPC, the resolution process was not sufficiently introduced to the community. Therefore, a negative aspect of the resolution process is that the representatives of the opposition parties in the parliament were not included in this process and the government used this process as a propaganda tool for itself. For all these reasons, criticisms were made about the inclusiveness and transparency of the resolution process. On the other hand, during the resolution process, KCU and detainees were released from prisons. Even this situation was perceived as a vote propaganda, although an atmosphere of hope prevailed in the eastern and southeastern parts of Turkey, suspicion and reluctance prevailed in the rest of the country. The main reason for this was that not everyone could be included in the process. Nevertheless, thanks to the solution process, even for a short time, tourism and other economic activities have increased, especially in the eastern and southeastern Anatolian regions of Turkey (Köse, 2017: 21).

It is necessary to re-evaluate the way in which the solution process tried to be implemented should be implemented, by analyzing Öcalan's meetings reflected in the press along with the letter Öcalan sent during the Nowruz celebrations, and the radio speeches of Murat Karayılan, the Chairman of the KCU Executive Council. Öcalan's letter mostly reflects the most appropriate view on behalf of Turkey. However, the lack of information about the PKK's disarmament in the letter's discourse raises some question marks. In

addition, the analysis of the radio conversations made by Murat Karayılan showed that the main terrorist cadre of the PKK did not intend to lay down arms yet and the terrorist organization tried to increase its demands and gains for the release of Öcalan (Sandıklı, 2013: 9-10).

3.2. Weakening of the Conflict Resolution Process

If we look at the main reasons for the failure of the resolution process: The expectations of the Kurdish National Movement increased continuously throughout the resolution process, and it was very difficult for the Government to meet these expectations. However, it was a negative development for the AK Party that it received a lot of criticism within the framework of international relations as a result of the Syria policy followed by the AK Party, especially after the Arab Spring. However, Erdogan, who was prime minister at the time and became President after 2014, was held responsible for his policies and was criticized more intensely for his stance against the Arab Spring. The fact that the (Democratic Union Party) PYD/YPG is the only actor fighting against DAESH and the Al Nusra Front, which threatens the region by taking advantage of the power vacuum in the Syrian Civil War after the Arab Spring, and especially being supported by Western countries, has increased the self-confidence of the organization. In addition, the fact that it was seen as legitimate in its activities as a result of the support made to the PYD strengthened the stance and enthusiasm of the PKK. While the image of the AK Party government towards the West was gradually decreasing, its image was increasing due to the fact that the PYD and PKK acted as an “antidote” against DAESH. The Peoples Democratic Party (HDP’s) success in the 2015 elections, which constitutes the political dimension of the terrorist organization, has also increased the PKK’s self-confidence (Köse, 2017: 37).

There are many interrelated reasons among the reasons for the failure of the "Kurdish Initiative" and the “resolution process”. Especially after 2014, there have been ups and downs in Turkey’s national politics as a result of the Gezi Park events, the 17-25 December trials, FETO. In addition, the uncertainties in the region due to the Arab Spring, the conflicts and rivalries between the Kurdish National Movement and the top cadres of the terrorist organization played an important role in ending the Resolution Process. Some successes have been achieved in both the Kurdish Initiative and the Resolution Process. However, the goals of the implemented policies in terms of long-term disarmament or providing a long-term solution to the Kurdish Problem and integration efforts in Turkey could not be achieved in terms of these processes. Especially after the Arab Spring, due to the civil wars in both Iraq and Syria, this “Kurdish Problem” has turned into a regional problem rather than a local one, and it has become increasingly difficult to solve this problem only with Turkey’s political efforts. Another important shortcoming here is that international actors have not provided enough support to Turkey in solving this problem. In such resolution processes, the needs of a third actor or party in both mediation and problem solving are needed in great importance (Sert, 2020: 21-22).

However, in addition to these shortcomings, there are also some national shortcomings. These are briefly; The fact that Turkey’s conservative base, which has a large majority, is not fully ready for the process, has turned into a situation that does not support empathy and integration. This led to an increase in nationalist movements and caused the Kurdish Problem to be seen as a threat again in the national sense. In addition, the perception that the solution process has already disappeared as a result of the fact that young people in the political wing of the PKK terrorist organization were at the forefront with their anti-government views in the Gezi Park protests emerged.

Afterwards, as a result of the developments in the Middle East, the ongoing civil war in Syria and the emerging security threat, the ease of the organization to acquire weapons in this region due to the lack of authority, and the increase in its self-confidence due to the places it has seized in the region and the activities it has done, turned it back into the border. The PKK’s new demands due to the increase in the political expectations and targets of the organization, especially due to the armament and self-confidence it gained, caused the attitudes of the nationalist groups and right-wing parties, which had not already shed light on the solution process, to harden. The failure of the organization to realize the demands required for peace and the change in the balance of power between the government and the organization in the “Resolution Process” were the first factors for the failure of the solution process. In addition, during the process, the actors accused the other group of not sticking to their promises, as a result of the fact that the basic wishes and desires of both groups were not sufficiently successful due to the fact that a third observer actor from the outside, especially from the states that had been successful in the resolution processes, did

not act as a mediator. Normally, the solution process should be implemented by establishing empathy and spreading over a long period of time. However, the solution process that was tried to be made here was poorly planned and rushed and used as a demonstration area, and for this reason, it transformed into a short-term process (Çelik, Çelikhan, & Balta, 2015: 13-14).

An incompletely planned solution process was tried to be completed immediately. As a result of the unsuccessful implementation of the integration process and the failure to keep the promises, the process entered a period of slowdown. However, the main factor that ended the solution process was the complete withdrawal of PKK members from the borders and the fact that the PKK members in the cities were not disarmed. Disarming is easy; but it is easier to get good weapons again. In fact, due to the suspension of the operations against the terrorist organization during the resolution process, the organization came to a state of recovery and resorted to the means of acquiring weapons instead of disarmament.

After the developments, the ringleader Murat Karayılan stated that the call made by Öcalan would be followed and it was announced that the PKK declared a ceasefire after 21 March. However, although the PKK announced that it had declared a ceasefire, this did not happen. In order to carry out the activities of the organization, the youth structuring in the cities continued and established the so-called public order unit YDG-H. In addition, it continued its weapons and ammunition storage activities. Looking at these domestic developments, it is known that the ceasefire, which has been going on since 2013, ended with the martyrdom of two police officers in the Ceylanpınar district of Şanlıurfa on July 22, 2015 by the PKK. At the same time, this date was the date when the resolution process ended (Bayramoğlu, 2016: 27-28).

4. CONCLUSION

Problems in Turkey's domestic politics, uncertainties in neighboring regions, especially in the Middle East, the growing strength of the PKK's Middle East structuring, the YPG and PYD, and the rivalry and debates between the leading cadres within the KUH were also influential in the failure of the process. The partial successes of the two processes cannot be denied, but the processes did not achieve their expected goals of a long-term ceasefire or, more ambitious, a sustainable solution to Turkey's Kurdish Problem. Unlike the 90's, the "Kurdish Problem" has become a regional problem, especially due to the business wars in Iraq and Syria, and there has been an invisible resistance against solving this problem only with Turkey's initiative. International actors did not support Turkey to solve this problem with its unilateral initiative. As a result, Turkey preferred to lead the Resolution Process on its own initiative, but the lack of international support for the process was one of the shortcomings of the process.

When we look at the examples of the solution process in the world, we see that there are very few resolved processes. The biggest reason for this is the thought that the solution processes will take place immediately, however, a generation must pass so that the empathy system between the opposite poles can be established. Of course, another important factor is that the state mobilizes all the means in the regions where the terrorist organization is concentrated, and eliminates the education and employment problem of that region.

After the end of the Resolution Process, the PKK changed its activities, means and targets according to the situation, conditions and time, turning it into a surprise action situation. Although the terrorist organization Maoist adopted a leftist and ethnic thought, it continued its activities not only in the countryside but also in the cities, giving an eclectic image as a target and method. On the one hand, the message that the state is weak is given through activities such as raids on public institutions and police stations, and suicide attacks; On the other hand, illegal reactions were tried to be provoked. At first, armed attacks, then suicide attacks with the increase in their examples in the world, and then "popular uprisings" were tried to be raised by increasing the idea of politicization.

In this context, power maximization through defense investments and alliance building will not be enough to protect Turkey's national interests in the long run. It is possible for the PKK to receive support from third-party states, especially against DAESH. At this level, however, when deciding whether the PKK should resort to violence, new research shows that both governments and armed groups design their strategies after considering expected third-party support. Therefore, the solution of the PKK and the Kurdish problem is an important part of a grand strategy based on democratic initiative. Broader democratic reforms that span all segments of society will also help bridge the gap of opinion between domestic and foreign policy. Ankara can more easily pursue an ambitious and securitization-oriented foreign policy strategy by reviving Turkey's image as a democratic power in the Middle East. Its status as a

regional/middle power will also be better recognized and supported by the international community through a consolidated democracy.

The end of the resolution process led to an increase in suicide attacks carried out by the PKK in Turkey. Since 2000, the PKK terrorist organization has carried out 13 suicide attacks targeting the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia regions. As a result of these attacks, 73 of citizens lost their lives and 601 of citizens were injured.

The suicide attacks of the PKK terrorist organization were mostly carried out in the rural and mountainous regions of the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolian regions of Turkey, as stated in its ideology. While the first 5 of the attacks took place between 2000 and 2012, the last 8 of them occurred between 2015 and 2016 after the end of the Resolution Process, which is an important factor in showing how big the threat size is. The PKK struggle, which was carried out with a realistic perspective before the AK Party government, firstly transformed into a more neo-liberal level within the framework of EU harmonization laws. Thus, soft power elements began to be used instead of hard power elements. However, the failure of the "Resolution Process" and the AK Party government's growing distance from the EU and the West caused some changes in Turkey's foreign policy practices. Especially after the Arab Spring, due to the realist attitude towards the region and its policies to gain regional power, it has caused the failure of the former foreign policy idea, zero problems with neighbors. After this situation, Turkey went from zero problem policy to zero neighbor situation. The developments have led him to take a tougher stance in order to ensure his own safety. In this process, he went back to the beginning by revealing the perception of insecurity in the realist approach and again resorted to the use of hard power by saying "The end justifies the means" in ensuring state security.

The most important purpose of the cross border operations (Operation Euphrates Shield, Operation Olive Branch and Operation Peace Spring) carried out within the framework of hard power in terms of combating terrorism is to weaken and eliminate the PKK, whose presence in the national rural areas has been weakened in Turkey, also in the regions beyond the borders. These operations, implemented in terms of counter-terrorism, are important to eliminate threats to Turkey's national and international security. As a result, if a terrorist organization has a "safe zone" within the territory of another country, just outside the borders of a country it threatens, there will always be the thought of terrorist organizations getting stronger and continuing their activities, no matter how much national security is ensured.

Since the end of the 1980s, the mountainous terrain in northern Iraq has provided this "safe zone" for the PKK in many ways, especially in education, shelter, finance and treatment. Therefore, in order to eliminate threats to security and to successfully conclude the fight against terrorism, neutralizing the organization in such regions both inside and outside the country appears as a strategic goal. On the other hand, there is always a situation where the PKK terrorist organization, which is a chronic threat, will recover and continue its suicide attacks. Especially if relations with neighboring states are damaged, there is always the possibility that these states will harm Turkey by supporting the PKK or terrorist organizations. This situation justifies the feeling of distrust towards the cross-border states in the realist perspective.

Another important situation is the danger that the PKK will act with the PYD in the Middle East and this time turn its target back to Turkey. Although cross-border operations are aimed at creating a security corridor in Northern Iraq and Syria, it is highly likely that the PKK will try to fill the power vacuum in the region. In order to eliminate this terror problem, Turkey has done what is necessary to protect the state borders and individuals, which is the sole duty of the state, by using hard force. However, public diplomacy and integration are also needed in order to get rid of threats to security. In this way, participation in a terrorist organization will be prevented. Because if integration is not achieved, these organizations will become stronger again and pose a threat to security.

As a result, many factors such as the Kurdish and PKK problem, identity and ethnic problems, segregation within the country, xenophobia, the over-strengthening of NGOs and associations with state support have directly or indirectly affected Turkish foreign policy and security. As a result of the failure of the resolution process against the Kurdish problem and the PKK, and even the transformation of this problem into a larger one with the activities carried out, the PKK's "ditch" incidents in some cities of the East and Southeast and the PKK's settlement in Northern Iraq and Syria. caused. In this process, there has been an increase in suicide attacks against Turkey. In addition, during the security operations carried out by Turkey, it has led to a deterioration in relations with at least one state from many regions. On the other hand, in terms of

regional security, the fact that the USA did not establish military relations with Turkey in order to eliminate DAESH and instead established close military relations with the Kurdish elements in northern Syria, namely the PYD / YPG, distanced Turkey from the USA and the West.

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