



India- Turkey Bilateral Relationship: An Analysis Of The Impact Of President Erdogan's Triumph In 2023 Election

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Abstract:

The primary objective of this scholarly investigation is to meticulously examine the potential ramifications that may arise as a result of the electoral triumph of Recep Tayyip Erdogan in the year 2023 within the geopolitical landscape of Turkey, specifically with regard to the intricate dynamics of the bilateral relationship shared between Turkey and India. Since the year 2003, Erdogan has emerged as a prominent and influential persona within the realm of Turkish politics, renowned for his resolute and commanding approach to leadership, as well as his adherence to nationalist principles. The ramifications of his recent electoral triumph have engendered considerable intrigue regarding their implications for Turkey's foreign policy, particularly within the framework of the Turkey-India bilateral alliance. The study utilizes a qualitative research methodology, characterized by a comprehensive analysis of scholarly literature, news publications, and official communications from both nations. This scholarly article delves into a comprehensive examination of the fundamental constituents that underpin the bilateral interactions between the nations of Turkey and India, which includes multifaceted dimensions such as political, economic, and cultural aspects. Furthermore, it assesses the prospective ramifications of Erdogan's triumph on each of these spheres. Initially, it is worth noting that Erdogan's triumph has the potential to significantly bolster his authority within the Turkish political landscape. It is conceivable that Erdogan's perspectives on the Kashmir issue, the Indian Muslim community, and the Palestinian situation could potentially exert an influence on Turkey's foreign policy vis-à-vis India. Furthermore, it is worth noting that there has been a substantial increase in trade and investment between the nations of Turkey and India in recent years. Nevertheless, the triumph of Erdogan has the potential to engender a state of economic ambiguity within the confines of Turkey, thereby exerting an influence on the realm of bilateral trade and investment, as opined by esteemed economic scholars. In conclusion, the robust intercultural and interpersonal exchanges have significantly bolstered the bilateral relations between Turkey and India. Nevertheless, it is imperative to acknowledge that Erdogan's domestic policies, which espouse the principles of Turkish nationalism and conservative ideologies, possess the potential to exert a transformative influence on the intricate fabric of Turkey's social and cultural dynamics. The triumph of Erdogan has the potential to significantly reshape the dynamics of Turkey-India relations. However, it is imperative to acknowledge that the ultimate trajectory of these relations will be contingent upon a complex interplay of both domestic and international factors. The study posits that it would be prudent for Indian policymakers to diligently observe Turkey's foreign policy trajectory under the leadership of Erdogan, while simultaneously undertaking proactive diplomatic efforts to

foster a constructive discourse. This approach is deemed necessary to safeguard the preservation of longstanding bilateral relations and the protection of shared interests, thereby averting any potential discord that may arise.

KEYWORDS: Türkiye-India relations, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Turkish nationalism, Middle East, south Asian region, economic relations, cultural relations.

1. INTRODUCTION

In light of the successful outcome of the 2023 presidential and parliamentary elections, it is noteworthy that the AK Party and its allies emerged triumphant, securing a substantial 323 out of 600 seats in the initial round of voting on May 14. Consequently, President Erdogan has effectively fulfilled his commitment to ensuring stability by attaining control over both the legislative and executive branches of the government. Recep Tayyip Erdogan has emerged victorious in Turkey's presidential election for the year 2023, thereby prolonging his tenure into an unprecedented third decade, notwithstanding the formidable opposition he encountered, which posed the most formidable challenge of his illustrious political trajectory. As per the pronouncement of the esteemed Supreme Election Council, it has been determined that President Erdogan emerged victorious in the Turkish presidential race, securing his position through a runoff election wherein he garnered an impressive 52.14% of the total votes cast (World, 2023). In the wake of his resounding triumph in the Turkish presidential election of 2023, President Erdoğan has garnered felicitations from esteemed leaders spanning the globe, including the likes of Russian President Vladimir Putin, United States President Joe Biden, French President Emmanuel Macron, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, German Prime Minister Angela Merkel, and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. In this context, I shall expound upon the significance of this triumph in the realm of international politics, elucidating its potential ramifications on the intricate tapestry of Turkey-India relations (India T. T., 2023). The matter that spontaneously arises for contemplation is whether President Erdogan shall engage in a reassessment of his foreign policy. According to Dr. Omair Anas, an esteemed Assistant Professor at Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University in Turkey, it is highly unlikely that President Erdogan will alter his policies, given the extensive modifications he has already implemented. During a preceding era, Turkey was commonly characterized as having a pro-Western orientation, a disposition that has since been relinquished. Instead, Turkey has shifted its focus towards the regions of the Middle East, Central Asia, South Asia, and East Asia, exhibiting a diminished emphasis on European nations. Furthermore, Turkey has assumed the role of a prominent figure within the Muslim world, perceiving itself as a leader in this domain. Furthermore, in the midst of his electoral campaign, Erdogan was observed articulating his determination to emancipate Turkey from the shackles of reliance on European nations.

Turkey has, in the era of President Erdogan, significantly broadened its diplomatic objectives and pursuits, encompassing a wide range of regions including the Mediterranean, North Africa, West Asia, the Caucasus and Central Asia, the Horn of Africa, and the Red Sea. In doing so, Turkey has strategically positioned itself within the evolving global landscape, thereby establishing a multifaceted framework for its aspirations. In recent times, he successfully addressed a momentous quandary between Azerbaijan and Armenia, which had persisted for a considerable duration, thereby establishing himself as a notable ally of Russia. Furthermore, it is worth noting that Turkey, with its formidable stance, has assumed a pivotal role as a mediator of utmost significance amidst the protracted conflict between Russia and Ukraine (Serhan, 2023). Furthermore, he assumed a pivotal position in the process of Sweden and Finland's integration into NATO, strategically employing it as a trump card to assert his astute leadership within the realm of the Western hemisphere. In spite of Turkey's status as a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ally, President Erdoğan expresses a desire to maintain a cooperative relationship with Russia. This inclination stems from his observation that European nations tend to exert greater influence and engage in less collaborative efforts, a circumstance that presents various advantageous prospects. This statement evidently pertains to Erdogan's nascent political trajectory, during which he exhibited a proclivity towards American and European ideologies. It is worth noting that during this period, he demonstrated a discerning cognizance of the fallacious nature of such assertions. In the next 5 years, it is anticipated that the rapport between Erdogan and Putin shall experience an unprecedented augmentation, (Anas in his scholarly work titled ("Is India-Turkey rapprochement in the offing?" (2022). Moreover, it appears that Turkey's robust affiliations with Qatar are poised to expand even

more, as President Erdogan endeavors to bolster relations with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) amidst Ankara's deepening rapprochement with Riyadh and Abu Dhabi. Henceforth, it is the conviction of the Turkish populace that Mr. Erdogan shall exhibit greater efficacy in this domain, owing to his superior acumen in matters of international relations and statesmanship. Through a comprehensive analysis of diverse media outlets across the globe, it becomes evident that Erdogan has effectively propelled Turkey onto the international platform, as substantiated by the discernible prominence accorded to this nation in numerous headlines and news coverage. Undeniably, a plethora of both commendable and lamentable rationales underpin this assertion; nevertheless, it is unequivocally evident that Turkey has ascended to a position of utmost significance, rendering it an indispensable entity within the global arena. Devoid of the indispensable presence of Turkey, our operational capacities in numerous nations, such as Azerbaijan, Syria, Libya, and various others, would be severely compromised. Given the prevailing conditions, it is imperative to acknowledge the heightened significance of Turkey's geographical location. Furthermore, it is noteworthy to mention that Turkey has redirected its attention towards the region of Central Asia, owing to the fact that the nations residing within this geographical area are widely acknowledged to possess Turkic roots. In recent years, there has been a notable surge in the recognition and examination of Malaysia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and various other economies of smaller scale (Milliken & Cafiero, 2023).

2. Objective of the Study

The objective of this investigation is to elucidate the underlying purpose.

1. To undertake a comprehensive analysis of the ramifications resulting from Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's triumphant electoral conquest in the year 2023, specifically in relation to the intricate dynamics characterizing the bilateral relationship between the nations of Turkey and India.
2. To acquire comprehensive knowledge regarding the bilateral trade and investment between India and Turkey.
3. To acquire knowledge pertaining to the burgeoning influence of Turkey-India within the realms of the Middle East and South Asia as a formidable force on the global stage.
4. In order to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the intricate web of historical and cultural interconnections, one must delve into the depths of knowledge and explore the multifaceted tapestry that binds societies and civilizations together.

3. METHODOLOGY

The present work, within the realm of social science, constitutes a concerted effort to conduct a thorough examination of potential ramifications in order to generate and scrutinize theories via data analysis pertaining to the forthcoming 2023 electoral triumph of Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Turkey, specifically with regards to its impact on the diplomatic relationship within Türkiye and India. Extensive scholarly inquiry has been conducted utilizing secondary sources such as newspapers, magazines, and the Internet.

4. INDIA-TURKEY RELATIONS AFTER ERDOGAN'S VICTORY

In the initial analysis, it is imperative to acknowledge that Turkey occupies a strategic position at the confluence of Asia and Europe, endowing it with a pivotal role as an observer of the region's capricious geopolitical landscape. Moreover, Turkey assumes the mantle of an economic hub, facilitating the exportation endeavors of various nations, particularly serving as a gateway to access the lucrative European Union market. The bilateral rapport between the nations has predominantly exhibited amicability and reciprocity, punctuated by sporadic instances of discord arising from Turkey's endorsement of Pakistan and its pronouncements pertaining to the Kashmir issue. Notwithstanding their disparate historical trajectories, demographic compositions, economic structures, and societal constituents, Turkey and India exhibit a multitude of shared attributes. The Turkish people exerted a notable impact on various aspects of India's cultural landscape, encompassing its linguistic fabric, societal development, artistic expressions, architectural achievements, as well as sartorial and culinary traditions (Mitra, 2023). In an interview broadcasted on The Lallantop, Dr. Omair Anas, an esteemed assistant

professor at Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University, expressed his perspective on the significance of President Erdogan's triumph and its implications for India. Dr. Anas posits that Turkey once considered a Western nation, is presently liberating itself from the grips of Western influence by virtue of its own power and population. This newfound autonomy, coupled with Turkey's pivotal regional position, renders it a highly influential entity capable of affecting a substantial number of individuals. Consequently, Dr. Anas contends that India stands to gain immensely from forging robust bilateral relations with this emerging nation, thereby presenting a golden opportunity for mutual benefit (Anas, Impact of Erdogan's Victory on India, 2023). Indeed, it is veracious that numerous endeavors have been undertaken to preserve equilibrium pertaining to these matters from the antecedent period. However, one must ponder upon the feasibility of achieving such equilibrium when both nations harbor substantial political discordance with regard to matters of foreign import. In the year 1994, a bilateral agreement was reached between the nations in question, wherein it was mutually decided that Turkey would abstain from raising the Kashmir issue, while India would refrain from engaging in discussions regarding the Cyprus issue. Regrettably, this previously established compromise has recently been breached. It is worth noting that diplomacy often operates on the principle of reciprocity, wherein concessions are made by both parties involved. Presently, this principle holds significant relevance as trade dealings between the two nations have surpassed the noteworthy sum of 12 billion dollars. Consequently, India has ascended to the position of Turkey's second most prominent trade partner, trailing only behind China. This development carries considerable weight and warrants due attention. The current state of trade relations between the two nations is highly commendable, with promising prospects for the resolution of various other pertinent matters in the near future. Consequently, we can anticipate a significant colloquium wherein the respective leaders shall convene, fostering optimism that these pertinent matters shall be expeditiously addressed. In the interim, the diplomatic relations between Delhi and Ankara experienced a decline as Turkey aligned itself with Pakistan on the contentious matter of Kashmir during its discourse at the United Nations General Assembly (Marjani, 2022). According to Gokhan Cinkara, a distinguished Turkish political scholar affiliated with Turkey's esteemed Necmettin Erbakan University, it was posited earlier this year in the esteemed publication, of the Times of India, that President Erdogan of Turkey might embark upon a fresh and unprecedented phase in the bilateral relations with India during his forthcoming term. This anticipated development is believed to be primarily driven by the persistent political instability experienced by Pakistan, a neighboring nation.

5. HISTORICAL ASPECT OF INDIA-TÜRKIYE RELATIONS

In the year 1212, the esteemed Chola Emperor of Tamilakam graciously granted a colony to the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum, a distinguished Turko-Persian dynasty, in the esteemed town of Koothanallur. The Rowther community, which predominantly speaks the Tamil language, can be traced back to the ancestral roots of Turkic merchants, as documented in the scholarly work on India-Turkey relations in the year 2023. Turkey and India share a profound historical connection, as evidenced by the exchange of diplomatic delegations between the Ottoman sultans and the Muslim rulers of the Indian subcontinent in the years 1481 and 1482. The Sufi ideology propagated by the esteemed Mevlana Jelaluddin Rumi found profound resonance within the Sufi traditions as well as the Bhakti movement prevalent in the Indian subcontinent. It is worth noting that the Turkish language and the Hindustani language exhibit a notable degree of lexical overlap, as elucidated by Andrabi in 2014.

The medical expedition to Turkey in 1912 amidst the tumultuous Balkan Wars, led by the renowned Indian freedom fighter Dr. M.A. Ansari, epitomized the most contemporary historical nexus between the nations of India and Turkey. During the 1920s, India lent its support to both the establishment of the Republic of Turkey and the Turkish War of Independence. Following the culmination of the First World War, Mahatma Gandhi, a prominent figure renowned for his advocacy of nonviolent resistance, expressed his personal dissent against the prevailing inequities inflicted upon the nation of Turkey. In the year 1960, the inaugural Prime Minister of India, the esteemed Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, embarked upon a historic journey to the nation of Turkey, thereby becoming the first-ever Prime Minister to undertake such a diplomatic visit. Following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Turkey and India embarked upon a concerted effort to enhance their bilateral ties and foster diplomatic relations on the international platform. The esteemed Turkish Prime Minister, Turgut Ozal, embarked upon a diplomatic journey to the illustrious nation of India in the year 1986. In a reciprocal

gesture of goodwill, the distinguished Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi, graced the land of Turkey with his presence in the year 1988 (India E. O., 2017).

Subsequently, in September 2003, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee embarked upon a visit to Turkey with the noble intention of fostering a renewed and constructive trajectory for the bilateral ties between the two nations. During the diplomatic encounter, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and the esteemed Strategic Research Center of Turkey's Ministry of Foreign Affairs directed their attention towards fostering bilateral trade and cooperation, with the ultimate aim of augmenting their respective economic resources. Furthermore, it was mutually agreed upon by both parties to establish a committee of esteemed individuals at the highest echelons of authority, with the purpose of addressing and mitigating the deleterious effects of the prevailing violence. In recent times, the enhancement of bilateral relations has been facilitated through reciprocal visits undertaken by the esteemed leaders of both nations. These encompass the diplomatic sojourns of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to the Indian subcontinent in the year of our Lord 2008, as well as the esteemed Turkish President Abdullah Gül's consequential visitation in the year of our Lord 2010, as meticulously documented by Sirin (2023).

The esteemed Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, actively engaged in the G20 Summit held in the illustrious city of Antalya, Turkey, during the dates of November 15th to 16th in the year 2015. The esteemed Indian Prime Minister engaged in a diplomatic rendezvous with his Turkish counterpart, President Erdoğan, amidst the auspicious gathering of the Summit. The esteemed Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu embarked upon a diplomatic sojourn to the nation of India, spanning a duration of two consecutive days, commencing on the 18th and concluding on the 19th of August in the year 2016. Throughout the course of the journey, representatives hailing from both ministries engaged in a collaborative effort to formulate a strategic plan, commonly referred to as a road map, which delineates the path forward for fostering mutual cooperation in the times to come. The esteemed Foreign Minister Cavusoglu also endeavored to arrange a meeting with the distinguished Vice President Pence. In the wake of the unsuccessful coup d'état in Turkey on August 29, 2016, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi promptly reached out to President Erdoğan in a display of unwavering support for the nation and its esteemed leadership (Gujrati & Uygun, 2020). On the auspicious day of September 5, 2016, the esteemed President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the distinguished Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi engaged in a profound discourse amidst the grandeur of Hangzhou, China, on the sidelines of the esteemed G20 Summit. On the auspicious day of October 4, 2016, in the vicinity of the esteemed 26th Universal Postal Union Congress held in Istanbul, an esteemed rendezvous took place between Shri Manoj Sinha, the distinguished Minister of State for Communications, and Mr. Ahmet Arslan, the esteemed Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs, and Communications. During the month of November in the year 2016, Mr. Lutfi Elvan, the esteemed Minister of Development, undertook a visit to the Minister of Home Affairs. This visit took place during his attendance at the prestigious Asian Ministerial Convention on Disaster Risk Reduction 2016 (AMCDRR 2016) in the city of New Delhi. On the fourth day of December, in the city of Amritsar, the esteemed Foreign Minister Cavusoglu delivered a discourse of great significance at the Sixth Ministerial Summit of the Heart of Asia Process, which pertains to the affairs of Afghanistan (Trigunayat, 2022).

The bilateral relations between Turkey and India constitute an autonomous institution wherein both parties are tasked with the direct oversight of one another. The impetus for fostering bilateral relations should stem from the convergence of perspectives, prioritizing the recognition of shared viewpoints rather than accentuating disparities. Turkey has hitherto extended its backing for India's observer status within the esteemed Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), alongside India's coveted membership in the esteemed Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). In addition, it is worth noting that Turkey has consistently demonstrated unwavering support for the enlargement of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Consequently, India's call for reform resonates profoundly with the overarching sentiment espoused by the esteemed Turkish President, encapsulated by the maxim that the world transcends the influence of a mere quintet of nations (Bayram, 2022).

6. INVESTMENT AND BILATERAL TRADE BETWEEN INDIA-TURKEY

One must acknowledge the enlightening facet of the bilateral association, which lies in the realm of economic and commercial collaboration between the nations of Turkey and India. In the year 1973, a momentous accord was reached, wherein the establishment of an esteemed India-Turkey Joint Commission on Economic and Technical Cooperation (JCETC) was solemnly agreed upon. Additionally, a bilateral trade agreement, symbolizing the mutual commitment to commerce between the two nations, was also duly signed during this epoch. As per the stipulations outlined within this Agreement, it is duly noted that the Joint Committee on Economic and Trade Cooperation (JCETC) convenes in a rotational manner, alternating between the sovereign territories of India and Turkey. The convocation of the tenth Joint Committee on Economic and Trade Cooperation (JCETC) session, under the joint leadership of the esteemed commerce ministers of both nations, transpired in the esteemed city of New Delhi during the month of January in the year 2014 (Cyrill, 2022). In the fiscal year 2015-2016, India engaged in bilateral commerce amounting to a substantial sum of USD 4.9 billion. This figure includes the exportation of various commodities valued at an impressive \$4.14 billion, as well as the importation of goods worth a noteworthy \$776.94 million. It is an indisputable fact that the aforementioned figure experienced a decline of 27% in comparison to the overall sum of global commerce, which amounted to a substantial USD 6.8 billion during the period spanning from 2014 to 2015. In the year 2022, there has been a notable expansion in the realm of commerce between the nations of India and Turkey. This growth has resulted in a significant increase in economic interaction, with the total value of trade surpassing the substantial sum of USD 12 billion. It is evident that India's involvement in Turkey's economy has experienced renewed vigor in the recent past, as highlighted by Banerji (2022).

The esteemed Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas, embarked upon a journey to the illustrious city of Istanbul, spanning from the 9th to the 12th of July in the year 2017. His purpose was to partake in the distinguished 22nd World Petroleum Summit, an event of great significance in the realm of global energy affairs. Shri Pradhan engaged in deliberations with Energy Minister Berat Albayrak on the periphery of the Meeting. In April of the year 2000, a protocol was duly established to formalize the practice of conducting Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) at the esteemed Secretary level. The most recent series of consultations took place in Ankara on the 17th of April in the year 2015. The Foreign Office Consultations presided over by the esteemed Joint Secretary/Director General, were convened in the city of Ankara on the auspicious date of November 28, 2014. The third meeting of the Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism was convened in Ankara on March 11, 2015. The esteemed Turkish Naval Ship TCG Gediz graced the cities of Mumbai and Chennai during the dates of April 20th to 23rd, 2015, and July 2nd to 4th, 2015, in a display of maritime diplomacy and cultural exchange. During the period spanning from August 22nd to August 26th in the year 2015, esteemed delegates hailing from the prestigious National Defense College embarked upon a visit to the nation of Turkey. The INS Trikand gracefully made port in Istanbul during the period spanning from October 4th to 6th in the year 2015, as documented by India E. O. in 2017.

As per the esteemed Central Bank of Turkey, it has been observed that Indian enterprises have made noteworthy investments amounting to approximately USD 126 million in the prosperous nation of Turkey. Conversely, Turkish investments in the vibrant land of India have reached a commendable sum of USD 210.47 million. The cumulative foreign direct investment (FDI) influx from Turkey into India, spanning the period from April 2000 to September 2022, amounted to a sum of US\$ 216.11 million. This figure positions Turkey within the lower echelon, specifically the 46th position, in relation to FDI equity inflows. According to the report provided by the Indian Embassy, it has come to light that Turkey has made a substantial investment of \$223 million in the nation. Numerous Turkish enterprises have established collaborative partnerships with their Indian counterparts in order to engage in strategic investments within the Indian market. Engineering Procurement and Construction (EPC) endeavors encompass the involvement of Turkish entities that actively engage in the capacities of engineers, technical consultants, and constructors, respectively. As per a news release issued by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs in June 2022, it has been observed that Turkish enterprises have been actively engaged in India's infrastructure and engineering domains. Conversely, Indian enterprises have been making notable strides in the automotive, pharmaceutical, and information technology sectors of Turkey (Foundation, 2023). Indian enterprises may strategically leverage Turkey as a pivotal gateway to access the European Union, Central Asia, and the Black Sea Region, alongside the burgeoning prospects

emerging in the Middle East. Conversely, Turkish enterprises have the opportunity to actively participate in India's endeavors pertaining to infrastructure and logistics, all the while capitalizing on the nation's ambitions in the realm of manufacturing by establishing a robust production hub within its borders. The domains of construction, medical tourism, and automotive components exhibit considerable potential as viable avenues for Turkish investment within the Indian market. The Turkish Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TICCI) is associated with the esteemed Turkish business association TUSKON. TICCI diligently upholds its presence in the prominent metropolitan regions of Bangalore, Chennai, New Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, and Mumbai. The primary objective of TICCI is to establish meaningful connections among enterprises, with a specific focus on facilitating export activities, fostering collaborative endeavors, and nurturing mutually beneficial partnerships. The esteemed organization known as the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the renowned TICCI (Foundation, 2023).

7. INITIATIVES FOR HUMANITARIAN AID

As per the report by Anadolu Agency, it has been brought to light that Turkey, in response to the oxygen crisis during the Covid-19 pandemic, extended its support to India by providing essential medical assistance. This assistance encompassed a substantial quantity of 50,000 boxes of pharmaceutical pills, 50 ventilators, 630 oxygen tubes, and 5 oxygen generators. Ibrahim Altan, the esteemed director-general of the Turkish Red Crescent (Kızılay), eloquently expressed that India, with its benevolent gestures during the tumultuous periods of the Balkan Wars and the War of Independence, has consistently exhibited unwavering support for our nation. This poignant statement alludes to the enduring bond of camaraderie that has been forged between the distinguished nations of Turkey and India. Nowadays we are bestowing assistance upon them.

In the wake of the seismic events that transpired on the 6th of February, 2023, in the southern region of Turkey, the nation of India embarked upon a noble endeavor known as "Operation Dost," or "Operation Friend" in the vernacular. This commendable humanitarian initiative entailed the deployment of search and rescue teams hailing from India's esteemed National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), alongside the establishment of a mobile field hospital facilitated by the Indian Army. A fleet of six C-17 military aircraft was effectively deployed to facilitate the transportation of a contingent comprising more than 250 proficient Indian personnel to the nation of Turkey. These individuals fervently engaged in search and rescue endeavors and proffered medical assistance via a self-sufficient mobile medical facility that possessed the capability to perform critical life-saving surgical procedures.

Operation Dost emerged as one of the pioneering international humanitarian endeavors to promptly reach the esteemed nation of Turkey. Amidst these arduous circumstances, India, in a display of unwavering solidarity with the Turkish populace, dispatched medical apparatus and relief provisions to Turkey. The seismic event in question, widely regarded as the most severe, resulted in an officially documented loss of human life amounting to 59,259 individuals. This unfortunate toll was distributed as follows: 50,783 casualties within the geographical boundaries of Turkey, and an additional 8,476 fatalities within the neighboring nation of Syria. Ever since the seismic event that transpired in Antioch during the year 526, this particular earthquake, which presently pertains to the geographical region known as modern-day Türkiye, has inflicted a greater number of casualties upon humanity than any other natural catastrophe on record.

8. CONCLUSION

In light of the recent re-election of President Erdogan in Turkey, it appears that India may encounter considerable challenges in fostering improved bilateral relations with Turkey by relying solely on pragmatic and commonsensical approaches. The task of normalizing diplomatic relations between India and Turkey poses a formidable challenge, primarily stemming from Turkey's unfavorable disposition towards India on the matter of Kashmir. However, the attainment of this objective necessitates a strategic alignment with Turkey's objectives and political aspirations, even if it entails a transient revitalization or moderation thereof. Indeed, it is a formidable task to surmise that the amelioration of relations between Turkey and India shall transpire amidst the ascendancy of his adversaries. However, it is plausible that such a development may be anticipated, albeit with

diminished tension, even in the absence of Ankara relinquishing its overtly pro-Pakistan position. Turkey holds significant geopolitical significance owing to its strategic geographic positioning, serving as a pivotal conduit connecting the continents of Asia and Europe. This is further accentuated by its burgeoning youthful populace, which adds to its overall importance. In succinct terms, the augmentation of Turkish-Indian commercial ties would undeniably yield substantial advantages for both nations. Nevertheless, the global decline in trade and commerce was predominantly a matter of great apprehension. Both the nations of Turkey and India have ascended to the esteemed ranks of the G-20, demonstrating their collective commitment to fortifying their economic bonds. These two nations, with their discerning vision, have astutely recognized the vast potential for augmenting bilateral trade and fostering increased investments. It is evident that both India and Turkey exhibit a genuine inclination to capitalize on the prospects presented by trade, commerce, and investment. One could posit that the interconnection has inherently acquired a dynamic momentum in terms of trade and commerce, and there is a foreseen trajectory toward its elevation to a more advanced stage in the forthcoming times. In conclusion, it is imperative that India and Turkey cease their propagation of divisive geopolitical rhetoric if they aspire to foster a harmonious and mutually beneficial partnership. It is imperative for India to adopt a stance of neutrality with regard to the ongoing conflicts in Cyprus and Nagorno-Karabakh. Simultaneously, it is advisable for Turkey to exercise restraint in its efforts to advocate for the Kashmir issue on global platforms, and instead focus on autonomously managing its bilateral relations with both India and Pakistan. Once trust has been established, it is imperative for India and Turkey to foster a more profound level of economic involvement, employing both bilateral and multilateral approaches. This strategic endeavor will serve to fortify India's connections with the Middle East and South Asia, thereby facilitating reciprocal market access for both parties involved. By adhering to the secular principles espoused by the esteemed figures of Gandhi and Ataturk, this collaborative alliance holds the potential to engender enduring tranquility within the region.

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