

## PROTOCOL

Welcome

### Voswinckel

In my capacity as Chairman of the Körber Foundation and on behalf of ex-President von Weizsäcker, who will not be arriving in Istanbul until this afternoon, I would like to welcome you to the 109th Bergedorf Round Table.

I will begin by saying few words about the Bergedorf Round Table as this is the first time that many of you will have taken part. Our forum is sponsored by the Körber Foundation, a politically and economically independent body which was founded in Hamburg in 1959 by the entrepreneur Kurt A. Körber as a non-profit-making institution. On his death in 1992, Körber left the whole of his estate, including the Körber AG engineering company, to the Foundation which now plays an active role in a number of areas, not the least of which includes several projects involving relations between Germany and Turkey.

The Round Table is not a vehicle through which the Körber Foundation pursues any political goals of its own. We do no more than provide the conference table around which we can bring together people from different political, scientific, economic and journalistic backgrounds in the hope that the open debate which ensues will contribute to the solution of problems and conflicts and promote peaceful co-existence.

This is the first time since it was founded more than 35 years ago, that the Bergedorf Round Table has met in Turkey. The choice of this venue and of our topic reflect the significance we attach to what is an important element in the transformation which has been taking place in European and international political development since the end of the East-West conflict. The disappearance of the border which previously separated different ideological systems has fundamentally changed the world and its perspectives on the future and the effects of this change are not limited to Germany and its immediate neighbours.

Anyone who has been a close observer of Istanbul over the last five years will have recognized the new impetus which the city has been experiencing. It is in the process of assuming, once more, its role as a crossroads in the region, a role which it had previously played for many centuries. Today, we can again describe it with complete accuracy as the metropolis on the Bosphorus.

The development which Istanbul is undergoing also reflects, of course, the changes taking place in Turkey's international role. The country which was once NATO's south eastern bastion is now in the process of determining its place in a wider regional, political and economic context whilst at the same time striving to maintain the international relationship it has already established. With this backdrop in mind, it is obviously somewhat more than happy coincidence that the Bergedorf Round Table has chosen to follow its meetings in Jerusalem and Moscow with this meeting in Turkey.

In the light of the circumstances which pertain today, no institution which regards a critical analysis of and intellectual comment on the multifaceted process of European development as one of its primary functions, can avoid casting its glance beyond the narrower perspectives of the European context. Any glance in Turkey's direction shows it to be a country in which many of the strands of international development cross and these strands, each in its own way, are of vital importance for the future of Europe.

In this context, Turkey is a major factor for European development and this remains true irrespective of the sometimes difficult relationship with the European Union. Indeed, Turkey's international situation lends a number of new facets to this relationship which will need to be considered in any decision on Turkey's future role in and for Europe.

I now invite Herr Gasteyer, who has been a colleague at sessions of the Bergedorf Round Table for many years, to lead the discussion and I would like to thank him for his willingness to guide our deliberations.

## **Gasteyger**

I am aware of the gravity of the task you have given me and I would like to thank you all the more for the confidence you have shown in entrusting it to me.

Coming from Switzerland, I tend to see my role as that of a hotelier responsible for ensuring the smooth running of the event and the wellbeing of the participants. The title of the excellent film about Turkey "Let there be Light", might serve well as a leitmotiv for this conference. It provides us with a reminder of the complexity of the aspects and confrontations which face us here in this country and therefore also at this conference.

Turkey's significance for Europe, for the Atlantic community and for its complex relationship with the rest of the world is a matter of European politics and a matter for European consideration as to where, for example, the borders of Europe lie. This very question was, incidentally, the theme of a session of the Bergedorf Round Table which took place in Warsaw two years ago: "To what extent should and must Europe open up toward the north east and the south east?"

Turkey is in many respects a world of its own. Herr Stürmer began his introduction to the Round Table conference on the Middle East in Jerusalem, which Herr Voswinckel mentioned a few moments ago, with the words: "So much history and so little geography." in the case of Turkey, "So much history" is undoubtedly true but that would leave us with, "So much geography." As the International Herald Tribune once so aptly put it: "Turkish foreign policy is a 360-degree nightmare." It is an advantage and a disadvantage at the same time. It is an advantage because Turkey can draw on its immensely rich history and all that that entails in terms of the cultural charisma and the political independence inherited from its Ottoman and Kemalist identities.

The undoubted disadvantage lies in the fact that this same charisma and this multiple identity engender little understanding among non-Turks. In other words, we are not always able to perceive Turkey as she would expect or as she might deserve. Perhaps we do not always take the trouble to do so.

With this in mind, I look forward to a dialogue here which will be both self-critical and fruitful and one which is not based on the presentation and defence of opposing viewpoints - the Turks against the rest. In our democracies there is, thank God, no unified "Turkish front" and anyone who casts a glance toward Ankara will find clear evidence, albeit sometimes worrying, that in today's Turkish democracy very different opinions about topics which are central to politics are being expressed - opinions on the country's internal situation as well as on its future role in Europe, in the Middle East, in relation to the neighbouring countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and in the world as a whole. I am sure that we can expect a debate which will be as lively as it is fruitful.

I would now like to welcome the three speakers who will be making brief statements as introductions to the debate. First of all, Mr İler Türkmen, the former Turkish Foreign Minister and Ambassador, will present his views on Turkey's internal and foreign policy. He will be followed by Mr Morton Abramowitz, a former US Ambassador to Turkey and other countries and presently President of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington. Finally, we will hear from Herr Hans-Ulrich Klose, Vice-Président of the German Bundestag, who has taken a special interest in Turkish affairs for many years.

## **Türkmen**

May I first say that it is a great privilege for me to attend this important gathering organized by the Bergedorf Round Table. I think it is a splendid idea to have a conference on Turkish geopolitics in a place overlooking the Bosphorus, the geographical and historical symbol of the complicated and fascinating geopolitics of Turkey.

The fundamental changes in the global and regional balance of power, the new political alignments in Europe, the emergence of new states in Eurasia, the reduction of Russia's political and military might and the evolution in the Middle East since the Gulf War have considerably affected the geopolitical environment of Turkey. How many of these changes, except those concerning the former Warsaw Pact countries, can be considered as durable in the medium and long term is of course questionable. But as things stand at present, the new international environment has influenced Turkey's role in the Balkans, the Black Sea, the Caucasus, central Asia and the Middle East.

These far-reaching developments have occurred at a time when Turkey is not only engaged in a tough struggle against a large-scale terrorist threat but when it is also going through a prolonged period of unstable and ineffective government, a stalemate in parliament and political life and a serious political and social cleavage. These things have constrained Turkey's ability to seize opportunities to develop coherent and cohesive policies and to conceive a long-term strategic vision. Turkey's policy throughout this period has manifested itself in the form of impulses and reactions to events and developments - some of them, no doubt, wise and appropriate but others ill-advised, contradictory and counterproductive.

The collapse of the Soviet Union, while enhancing the strategic and political superiority of the West, has nevertheless created new centres of volatility and tension, notably in the Balkans and in the Caucasus. Since the Middle East is also traditionally an explosive area, Turkey finds itself in a situation in which to the west, to the east and to the south it adjoins areas of instability and ongoing or potential conflict.

The post-Cold War era does not call for any substantive change in the basic orientation of Turkish foreign policy in particular towards Europe. The new factor in Europe is the acceleration of unification and integration movements which will also encompass eastern European countries. This will result in new additions to the European Union. As far as Turkey is concerned it is inconceivable that she will alter her basic aim of becoming a full member of the European Union, too. One should not forget that this Western orientation predates even the Republic of Turkey. The policy of the Ottoman Empire during the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century was also oriented towards the West. The Ottoman Empire was a European power and a member of the Concert of Europe. It will be a historical irony if Turkey is now kept outside Europe - and Europe means, today, the European Union.

Economic, political and security relations with Europe far outweigh the relations of Turkey with other regions and countries and the present and potential involvement of Turkey in the Middle East, the Caucasus and central Asia is in no way incompatible with the membership of Turkey in the European Union. It is a contradiction in terms to speak of alternatives for Turkey.

There is no doubt that Turkey, with its present economic and fiscal policies, could immediately join the European Union. But this is not the issue. The political objections raised to Turkey's addition to the European Union look like pretexts rather than fundamental reasons. What are these objections? The Cyprus issue? But the Gibraltar issue was not resolved when Spain joined. And the Irish problem did not prevent the UK from joining the European Union. The Cyprus problem existed when Greece joined. Furthermore, there is no doubt that any clear sign that Turkey will join the European Union, will create a new atmosphere more conducive to the settlement of the Cyprus problem.

Another objection: The policy towards the Kurdish terrorists. The repression of Basque terrorism did not prevent Spain from joining the European Union. On the contrary, this helped the eradication of the terrorist movement to a great extent. And then one might ask which European country would tolerate an armed movement threatening its territorial integrity.

To take a third objection - human rights. Well, there are in fact many things to do in this field. But so much has already been done, too. In particular, the acceptance of the compulsory jurisdiction of the European Court on Human Rights and the right of individual complaint. Thus, it is obvious that the democratic process in Turkey, despite periodic difficulties and challenges, is irreversible and that the increasingly influential civil society is as demanding as the European Union on human rights issues in the country itself.

Is Turkey's population any impediment because of the freedom of movement that Turkish manpower will enjoy in the European Union? It should not be forgotten in this respect, that what is considered today a liability, can become an advantage in the future and that capital investment can, to a great extent, limit the flow of people. On the other hand, it has been established that the birth-rate in Turkey is falling rapidly. This has already contributed to a reduction in the rate of growth of the population.

Finally, is the real objection religion and culture? Turkey is a secular state and despite challenges will obviously remain so. Why should Christianity and Islam still be regarded as two antagonistic religions and cultures? The addition of Turkey to the European Union will permit Europe to achieve a more universal cultural synthesis and to project a less exclusive image.

To come to the other regions. Turkey cannot but be deeply interested in the Balkans. The stability of this region affects Turkey and in addition there are considerable Turkish minorities in practically all the Balkan countries as well as peoples with which Turkey has strong historical and cultural ties. There are millions of people originating from the Balkans in Turkey and they express their views vigorously. The formulation of policies on any of the problems of the Balkans is therefore a delicate process.

Turkey should nevertheless endeavour to pursue a policy which will not be perceived as antagonistic to one of the parties. It certainly is doing the right thing by participating in the multilateral peacekeeping efforts.

A new and crucial dimension of Turkey's foreign policy is the Caucasus and central Asia. The countries of central Asia were never part of the Ottoman Empire but relations go further back in history. History, language and culture, including Islamic culture, represent strong bonds between Turkey and most of the countries of these regions. More than 60 million people there speak various dialects of Turkish. Some of them are abandoning the Cyrillic alphabet imposed by the Soviet system, for the Latin alphabet. This would facilitate even further educational and cultural cooperation between Turkey and those countries. Turkey offers these countries access to the Black Sea and the Mediterranean for the export of rich gas and petroleum resources. Turkey, with its secular constitutional system also provides a good example for these countries which have no tradition of fundamentalism and are concerned by it.

There was, throughout the history of Turkey during the late Ottoman period and later, a romantic current of Pan-Turkism and Pan-Turanism but this tendency was never supported by Kemal Atatürk. The line laid down by Atatürk should continue to hold now also and, indeed, the policy of the government at present is not based on any far-fetched idea of uniting all the Turkish-speaking peoples under the leadership of Turkey. In any case, the central Asian states are very sensitive on this issue, and some casual statements in Turkey which could be interpreted as a revival of the Pan-Turanist dream have backfired. Some non-official attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of some of those countries have also been condemned by the countries concerned.

What is legitimate for Turkey is to try to establish in the future a partnership on an equal basis with those countries, either individually or collectively if they can, which represents a more integrated structure. On a bilateral basis, Turkey has granted credits totalling 1.5 billion dollars to these countries. The volume of commerce between them and Turkey has also risen rapidly and is now over 600 million dollars. Turkish construction companies have undertaken projects totalling 5 billion dollars. Turkey's efforts in the education sector in the Caucasus and central Asia have been substantial. 8000 scholarships have been granted for university studies in Turkey. On the other hand, Turkish foundations have opened more than 100 schools attended by some 20 000 students.

Turkey is also encouraging a greater interest by the European Union and NATO towards these countries. They are now members of the Atlantic Cooperation Council and of the Partnership for Peace. With the enlargement of NATO in Eastern Europe, the central Asian countries might now feel more insecure. They might fear that this enlargement could mean a free hand for Russia in extending its domination, or its dominating influence, over the Asiatic ex-Soviet republics. And if in the future, NATO is extended to any of the western ex-Soviet republics, they might feel even more vulnerable. At present they have no security guarantee whatsoever. And Russia is not their sole concern. They are also concerned about China with which they have long borders. They also feel vulnerable because of the developments in Afghanistan and the policies of Iran.

One of Turkey's initiatives in the new geopolitical configuration has been the development of Black Sea economic cooperation with the purpose of expanding economic relations, developing joint technical and scientific projects, monitoring and controlling pollution and encouraging tourism and cultural exchanges. There is some logic behind this initiative. The participating states represent a region of 330 million people and a vast territory endowed with rich natural resources. However, although this Black Sea economic cooperation has proved a useful forum for the member countries, it has not yet succeeded in engendering a functioning and operational cooperation.

When we approach the Middle East in the context of the new geopolitics of Turkey, we have to include Iran and Afghanistan. The developments in Iran have, of course, a direct bearing on Turkey but both Iran and Afghanistan are in a position, equally, to influence events and developments in central Asia and the Caucasus.

To take Afghanistan first. This is a country which has been a bone of contention between the two superpowers and which is now primarily a bone of contention between regional powers. In Afghanistan proper, the group that opposes the fundamentalists is made up of the Uzbek, Turkmen and Kirghiz peoples who correspond to 20 per cent of the population. Pakistan, which strongly supported the Taliban and now seems to have lost control over it, would like to have in Afghanistan a government which will be, if not subservient, at least very friendly in order to make sure that the gas from central Asia will transit through Afghanistan to Pakistan. Some multilateral companies are probably supporting this approach.

Iran, on the other hand, would like the natural gas to transit from its territory. It hopes therefore to have a friendly government in Kabul or if this is not possible, a continuation of the present chaotic situation. In the context of central Asia and the Caucasus, Iran has endeavoured to present itself as a channel linking these countries to the global markets. It is trying to undertake infrastructure projects in the energy and transport fields which will reinforce its central role. It is also their ambition to participate extensively in the development of oil and gas resources recently discovered in the Caspian Sea. In this it has been frustrated by Azerbaijan because the large Azerbaijan minority in Iran means that Iran's perception with regard to Azerbaijan is, to say the least, tainted by suspicion.

Iran has also tried during these last years to develop its political and socio-economic relations with Armenia in order to make Armenia very dependent on Iran. Within this framework, Iran is planning a road infrastructure which will enable Armenia to reach international markets through Iran.

But apart from its central Asian and Caucasian dimension, Iran is an important actor in the Middle East. It is strongly against the peace process and can project its influence through Hezbollah and other fundamentalist groups. Its rivalry with Iraq and the Gulf countries will continue.

As far as Turkey is concerned, it should be remembered that despite an ever present rivalry between them, the two countries have been able to have a stable relationship for centuries and have, in some periods, cooperated actively and developed a friendship. The establishment of a fundamentalist regime in Iran has increased the misunderstandings and difficulties between the two countries - all the more so as there is a strong suspicion that Iran is supporting the Kurdish terrorists by giving them asylum and freedom of action in the operations they are mounting against Turkey.

Of course, Iran is also concerned by any movement toward independence among its own Kurds. But this is an old game, specifically between Iran and Iraq. You support the separatist Kurds of the other country but suppress them at home. Whatever the rivalries, the different ambitions and the different political regimes between Turkey and Iran, the two countries have no other choice but to find a modus vivendi which will enable them to cooperate as well as to compete. Personally, I think we in Turkey should be very careful not to exacerbate our divergences with Iran.

In the Middle East proper, or rather in the Near East, the situation does not lend itself to easy solutions. As far as the peace process is concerned, the vital element - which means peace between Israel and Syria - seems very much like stalling for a very long time. President Assad has probably not yet come to the conclusion that he is bound to gain more than he will lose by concluding peace with Israel. He is probably not ready to lose Lebanon where the present situation is so profitable for Syria, not only politically but also economically. And then of course, he must be thinking that the importance of Syria will diminish considerably once a peace agreement is concluded.

As far as the Israeli-Palestinian component is concerned, this also looks very much blocked for the time being. There has not yet even been a beginning made on the crucial issues of the final status of Jerusalem, refugees and borders. Also, an agreement between Syria and Israel is not necessarily in the best interests of the Palestinians. It might have, as its result - and not for the first time - the abandonment of the Palestinians to their own destiny.

With regard to Turkey's position in the Middle East, what is primarily important for her are her relations with Syria, with Iraq and with Israel. With Syria, Turkey has the problem of the open and extensive support given to Kurdish terrorists and the question of the waters of the river Euphrates. The two are, to a great extent, linked together. If Kurdish terrorism is curbed in Turkey to an extent which renders the support of Syria marginal, Syria might perhaps change its position.

Iraq is a country with which Turkey has traditionally had good and mutually profitable relations. The Gulf War has created a situation in which Turkey has quite wisely taken a clear position against Sadaam. Turkey will be well advised to continue its solidarity with the countries who were allies during the Gulf War and abide by the Security Council resolutions.

The situation in northern Iraq is obviously of tremendous importance to Turkey. Turkey has participated in the implementation of the flight exclusion zone. It is also taking part in the discussions held to achieve an agreement between the rival Kurdish factions. It is in the interests of Turkey to ensure that at least one of those factions is against the PKK, which is the case right now. The present situation allows Turkey to operate against the PKK in northern Iraq but it should not be forgotten that in the past such operations have been undertaken with the consent of Sadaam Hussein. When, in the future, a central government re-establishes its authority over northern Iraq, Turkey will not have a problem with that.

Regarding relations with Israel, there is no doubt that the interests of Turkey and Israel converge to a certain extent. The fight against terrorism is one example as is the general security and balance of power in the middle East. The bilateral military cooperation which has been established recently should be unobjectionable but it should not, in my view, be carried out with such glaring publicity. The idea of strategic cooperation between Turkey, the US and Israel seems to be premature and too irritating for the Arab countries. In any case it is not easy to see how such cooperation can be justified when the US Congress is preventing the delivery to Turkey of the frigates and helicopters she has purchased. In the future, if peace becomes a reality, cooperation with the Arab countries will be extremely important for Turkey. A delicate balance between relations with Israel and those with Arab countries should be maintained.

### **Gasteyger**

Mr Turkmen has just provided us with a very impressive overview of Turkey's foreign political situation.

We now look forward with great interest to hearing about the American view of the situation from Mr Abramowitz.

### **Abramowitz**

I very much welcome the opportunity to participate at this conference. It is an outstanding gathering on an extremely important subject. For me personally, as an ex-American ambassador, it is always a great pleasure to be back. Turkey has been for me an endlessly fascinating country.

I have been asked to talk about the American view of Turkey's role in the region and I would note, as Ambassador Turkmen has done that Turkey is involved in many, many regions and indeed it is one of the few countries in the world that is not yet a major power, which has a role and an impact on so many regions.

Let me first make some points about perspective and then go on to characterize briefly my views of US Government thinking on this subject. Let me say I have been out of the US Government for 7 years and I express my own perspective on what the US Government is doing. I feel totally unconstrained.

Most foreign policy issues in the United States and perhaps in all democracies are elite ones. And Turkey is particularly so in the United States. There is little public interest in Turkey other than in tourism. The last time I can recall that there was a large and positive American public response toward Turkey was right after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and at the beginning of the Gulf War with Mr Özal's closing of the Iraqi-Turkish pipeline and subsequently the use of bases for the air war against Iraq - actions which were not particularly popular in Turkey at that point, especially among the political opposition. There is little about Turkey in the newspapers although the "New York Times" has finally opened a bureau in Turkey. The advent of the Refah-led coalition has led to a little more interest in Turkey on the part of the American press.

The American elites are divided on Turkey. Greek and Armenian groups are politically important of course, and deeply interested in certain regional issues. But also from time to time, they make Turkey a general target. They are effective in getting their views across and also in influencing US Government action on certain issues. For example, we probably have more American ambassadors per square foot working on the Cyprus issue than in any other region of the world. I would note that certain European countries seem to be following that example.

The Turks have no such lobby. There are few Turks in the United States and this disparity regularly convulses people in Turkey - particularly on the issue of the supply of military equipment. There are influential Jewish elements devoted to Israel who see Turkey as a major friend and an increasingly important ally in the Middle East. They are deeply encouraged by recent trends in Israeli-Turkish relations and they also make their views known in the United States.

There are influential human-rights groups who focus on Turkey's internal events and not on its foreign relations or its role in the world. They tend to see Turkey in terms of systematic police torture, extrajudicial killings and repression of Turkey's Kurdish population. They are increasingly critical of what they see as the rhetorical posture of the United States' Government on human rights, in Turkey as much as in China, and they object to the US Government's acceptance of the Turkish position that the Kurdish problem is synonymous with the PKK. Human rights groups usually join with Greek and Armenian participants in trying to prevent military sales to Turkey.

Then there are the defence industries who see a congruence between their sales of military equipment and a national security interest of the United States in Turkey. They are probably Turkey's most effective political support in the United States but not always successfully in terms of US Government approval of the sales of military equipment.

Then there are the small number of Turkish specialists outside the US Government who stress Turkey's importance to the United States and see its potential as well as valuing its democratic development and its post-World War II role, but who remain concerned about Turkey's long-term political vitality. They are the least influential of the elites. With important exceptions of having to balance matters of equity and pragmatism with domestically sensitive political subjects such as Cyprus, the US Government basically has, I believe, a fairly free hand in shaping its policy approach toward Turkey - particularly if it does not involve money, although, the US Government has annually sought to find resources for Turkey in a diminishing and precarious international budgetary account.

For the past eight years I have closely watched US policy toward Turkey first as a participant and, for the last six years, as an onlooker. There has always been strong, high-level support for Turkey, particularly in the State and Defence Departments, for its role in NATO and in most regions. The American catechism, and I believe this generally reflects the attitude of the US Government, is that a "... stable, secular and increasingly democratic Turkey..." is a continuing, profound foreign policy interest of the United States and the United States' Government tries to reflect that approach in most of its dealings on Turkish-related issues, although not always successfully.

This has led to some interesting tactical divisions between the United States and Europe such as on the first large-scale Turkish incursion into northern Iraq. At that point, Secretary of State Holbrooke took a strongly positive stance toward that incursion which was directly opposite to most European Governments' postures at that point. On the present, perhaps larger-scale incursion, as far I can see, the American Government approves it although I am not quite sure what the European responses have been.

Operationally, this attitude of strengthening America's Turkish tie has not always been easy. In Mr Özal's time there was much talk of a strategic partnership but this became a rhetorical term with mostly ritualistic consultative forms. Neither the US nor Turkey was prepared, after the Gulf War, for what might have been a major aspect of "strategic cooperation" in the Middle East - the obvious place for US-Turkish cooperation after the fall of the Soviet Union - but both countries for political reasons, did not want to pursue that posture.

Despite an amazing Turkish school of thought that still sees the United States as trying to dismember Turkey, the fact is that the US Government constantly looks for ways to strengthen Ankara and to support its efforts externally, although many Turks would not agree with that statement. The effort is usually called in the US "finding a Turkish policy" because of the instabilities of Turkish domestic politics. Indeed, there are few major countries, that high-level American officials so often wring their hands about as frequently as Turkey and its internal weakness. That hand-wringing has increased greatly in the past year with the arrival of a Refah government.

In fact, a friend of mine was sitting next to Secretary Albright at dinner and asked what her principal concerns were at present. She said they were NATO expansion and its ultimate treaty ratification and when asked what else, she said Turkey.

Setting that stage of the official mind-set, which I think is extraordinarily positive toward Turkey at high levels, let me briefly review some American perspectives on Turkey starting with the Middle East.

The principal background aspect is that Turkey is of course bordered by three very difficult states - "pariahs" is the term usually employed by Americans. Turkey has major problems with two of them and the US has problems with all three. For the US, having a westernizing, democratically-oriented country like Turkey aligned with the West in this area, has been a major stabilizing element and it would be a great political disaster if that were to change. A major concern which the Turks have and which the US shares is to enable Turkey to maintain a strong military posture vis-à-vis those three countries.

In all these countries, the US and Turkey have differences which both countries I think try to limit. The US and Turkey have an obviously different posture on Iran which was accentuated by Prime Minister Erbakan's early travels. Turkey has an important economic state as a close-by neighbour. This state may become a difficult problem, if Turkey's energy dealings with Iran collide with American legislation. The US has been trying hard, I believe, to avoid that.

Both countries share a deep dislike for the Assad government although they will not put it that way publically. Turkey's most immediate interest is to reduce Syrian support for the PKK but the US has limited its efforts on Syrian support of the PKK because of its concern for the Middle East peace process.

The US has tried to cooperate closely with Turkey vis-à-vis Iraq and has tried to suppress differences because of Turkey's great concern over the PKK's use of Iraqi territory. There are concerns about Sadaam. Many in Turkey oppose him, but there are also many in Turkey who are quite prepared to live with him. Some Turkish quarters would like to see him return to ensure and to preserve Iraqi unity. Whatever they may say publically about the Kurdish security area and Iraqi Kurdish autonomy, Turkey would like to see it ended. The US does not want that as long as Sadaam rules. In certainly wants to see Sadaam go but it does not know how to accelerate his departure. We has a disastrous episode a few years back in terms of a CIA-promoted action. We would be loath to see the Kurdish security zone disappear without the creation of an Iraq without Sadaam.

My own view is that here, we have increasingly bowed to Turkish wishes. Mr Perry virtually abandoned the Kurds two years ago and we have tried to play a minor mediating role between the two Kurdish factions. This issue, I believe, is going to have some real surprises in the future.

The US is pleased to see the great expansion in Russian-Turkish relations. Many are concerned about the strong mutual antagonism that exists in both countries. In the former Soviet Union, certainly the Caucasus and central Asia, the US has seen Turkey as an important constructive factor in often heavily Moslem areas, in fostering the independence of and strengthening very precarious states. Both the US and Turkey had illusions early on about Turkey's potential influence in the region but have come to accept that Turkey's role in the area will be more modest. It has nevertheless been useful and will continue to be useful along the lines which Ambassador Turkmen pointed out. The US has also been concerned not to increase Russian suspicions that we were trying to alienate the Russian role or Russian participation the area. The US, of course, has been in the forefront in the effort to get a Turkish pipeline route for the energy resources of the Caspian.

On Greek-Turkish relations, let me just say, that the US generally tries hard to balance the domestic political realities with maintaining the important perception of impartiality necessary to maintain Turkey's confidence in any peace process. Turkey's support is obviously essential for a solution to Cyprus and the Aegean. The US feels in a unique position to play such a role both bilaterally and in NATO and to try to prevent Greek-Turkish differences from exploding into violence. We generally believe that Turkey would welcome a Cyprus solution.

In the Balkans we do not see Turkey's interests as great - probably not as great as Ambassador Turkmen said, but that can be argued. The US shares a similar perspective with Turkey on what happened in Bosnia although a segment of Turkish public opinion was deeply disappointed with the approach to Bosnia during the Bush era and the early Clinton years. We welcome Turkey's participation in the NATO forces in Bosnia and in helping with the equip-and-train efforts to improve Bosnian forces. But we do not look for an increased Turkish role in the Balkans and we discount the likelihood of a wider Bosnian war - that is, a wider war in the Balkans encompassing outside forces.

As for NATO - as its role has diminished, so has Turkey's importance in this regard and this is probably the central political change from the past 40 years. The expansion of NATO will make out-of-area activity even more difficult for NATO, and Turkey will not be able to rely on NATO if it runs into difficulty with its southern neighbours although it will almost certainly receive the support of some NATO countries, including the United States. The US would strongly oppose any Turkish use of the NATO expansion process in order to try to get into the EU.

Finally, in the case of the EU and Europe, the US is deeply concerned about the events of the past year and the seemingly apparent hostile drift within Europe away from Turkey. This has disturbed us greatly - particularly in Germany. The US sees the integration of Turkey into Europe as a principal foreign policy goal and a key to Turkey's long-term internal stability and political development. We have supported and continue to support Turkey's ultimate entry into the EU. This policy is, of course, ""cost-free"" for the US since we are not in the EU and do not have a voice in determining the question of Turkey's admission. It is, nevertheless, a deeply-felt wish at the highest levels of the US Government.

### **Gasteyger**

To begin with, I would like to take up just one point from Mr Abramowitz's very stimulating remarks and that is that the delicate nature of the domestic situation in Turkey, which Mr Turkmen has also

mentioned, is a major complication for American policy on Turkey. We will, therefore, need to ask ourselves about the degree to which Turkey's insecure domestic situation, which makes it in many respects unpredictable for outsiders, might engender uncertainty in the approach adopted by those powers which number among Turkey's friends.

### **Klose**

I speak here today as someone who has taken a very special interest in German-Turkish relations for a long time. Indeed, I have to be interested and not least of all because my electoral constituency in Hamburg has a significant Turkish minority. Almost 35 % of the people who live in the same area of the city as me are Turks and although most of them can vote neither for nor against me at elections because they do not have German citizenship, I have an obligation to take a close interest in their affairs. After all, the problems of the Turkish residents in this part of the city also have a bearing on the Germans who live there. However, I do not want to get into that here.

Equally, I do not intend to contribute to the more or less abstract discussion about Europe's borders or to pursue the question of whether Islam is or can be a European religion. As far as the latter is concerned, it is sufficient to point out that there are now around 20 million Moslems living in Europe most of whom are immigrants and some of whom are converts to Islam. These people practise their religion in a way which is immediately recognizable, both visually and audibly, and there is no disputing the fact that the Germans have still to get used to the call of the muezzin. But, so far, this has not led to any serious problems.

The thing which obviously worries many people in Germany is the sporadic and brutal implementation of Islam as a tool for political ends. Of course, this is a worry which is shared by everyone who values freedom, democracy and the rule of law and this includes most Turks - or at least those whom I know personally and respect. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that political, extremist fundamentalism has cast a further cloud over the already confused image of Islam which the average European has. It awakens fears which, unfortunately, have political ramifications.

However, my primary standpoint - which is perhaps a little unusual for a German politician - is interest-oriented and it is particularly concerned with the economic and security interests involved in the situation. And here, looking from the German and the European perspective, I come to a quite definite conclusion: Since the end of the East-West conflict, Turkey's strategic importance has, if anything, increased. Because this is the case, we are extremely interested both in seeing Turkey's internal situation develop along a democratic and stable path and in restoring cooperation with Turkey to the excellent level which we previously enjoyed for so long.

Without doubt, the security situation has improved dramatically since the end of the East-West conflict. The danger of global conflagration has passed. The Warsaw Pact has been disbanded and the enemy, the Soviet Union, has disappeared from the scene. The enlargement of NATO and the European Union now offers a great opportunity for all the European states to come together within the same system of security and cooperation. Our Turkish friends will certainly understand why we, the Germans, are particularly inspired by this vision.

It is in order to achieve the sustainable stabilization of this situation that not only Germany but the whole of Western Europe has a keen interest in pursuing a policy of partnership with Russia. We are all convinced that security in Europe can be achieved only with Russia and not against Russia. On the other hand, sensible politics must also provide for the possibility that our efforts in this direction might fail. Russia is still powerful militarily and it has massive resources at its disposal.

At the same time, however, it is a country which is having to grapple with enormous problems and this means there is a high level of instability and, to a certain extent, unpredictability. How are we, for example, to interpret the latest warning that Russia will never, under any circumstances, tolerate the inclusion of any of the states which issued from the break up of the former Soviet Union in NATO? At all events, at a time when structures are collapsing or are still in the initial stages of reforming, it would seem to me advisable to foster those partnerships which have already proved their reliability. And this is particularly the case with Turkey which, as a member of NATO, never failed to demonstrate its dependability as a partner during the times of the Cold War.

I would emphasize again, that Turkey's strategic importance has, if anything, increased. This applies, for example, with regard to the Caucasus and it extends into central Asia - as Mr Turkmen and Mr Abramowitz have already mentioned. In addition, Turkey also has a role to play as a stabilizing regional power within a region which is greatly troubled but which is also extremely important for the

West. The West must support Turkey in this role in order to ensure that she is able to perform it effectively.

Today, Turkey is both a bridge and a buffer. It has access to the water and is very close to the oil resources. That is why our American friends are so often at pains (as we have just heard) to remind the Europeans that Turkey must be accepted as a European partner and supported. As much as I believe this to be right for strategic reasons, I would nevertheless mention that the directness with which the Americans state their view, sounds a little confusing to German and European ears.

Whenever the question revolves around Turkey's membership of the European Union, most of the Turkish politicians I know express their support for Turkish entry with great emphasis and conviction. The fact that they sometimes do so in a way which smacks of a demand does not always make the task any easier for us. Of course, not everything which European politicians sometimes say about Turkey is positive. And the thing which irks me is that the strongest political force in Turkey at the moment, the Refah Party, is against membership of the European Union or, for reasons stemming from the coalition, votes only half-heartedly in favour of it - and even then, their support is conditional on terms which we could never accept. To put it bluntly, the present political constellation in Turkey is in no way favourable to their prospects for entry. When all is said and done, what kind of Turkey would be joining the EU and with what aims?

As far as the conditions for Turkish membership are concerned, it cannot be stressed strongly enough: Every new member joins the Union as it is at present. That means that the standards which apply today have to be met. The European Union is essentially a legal framework within which differing legal actualities cannot exist side by side. This also applies, incidentally, to the question of human rights. In Turkey's case, there are also the additional difficulties of its disagreements with an EU member, Greece, on the one hand and of the Cyprus conflict on the other. And here, Mr Turkmen, I find the comparison with the Gibraltar conflict, even with the best will in the world, is only halfway valid. I do believe, however, that solutions can be found for these two special problems and that the European Union and the USA should and could help here.

When could Turkey become a member of the European Union? Almost a year ago I said in Ankara and also here in Istanbul: All of the applicants - and there are more than ten already - cannot be accepted into the European Union at the same time. That is impossible both for organizational and for financial reasons. From the German point of view - and I repeat, we are talking about interests here - the accession of our immediate neighbours Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary undoubtedly takes precedence. That may be disappointing for Turkey but it would surely be acceptable to her to have the prospects for accession clearly stated. And I would now make a strong and unequivocal plea for that clarity to be established.

I believe that what I am saying here represents the majority position within the SPD. I am not so sure about the position of the other parties in the German Bundestag. The general mood has become somewhat confused. Perhaps Herr Schmidt and Frau Vollmer can clarify the respective positions of the CDU/CSU and the Bündnis 90/Green parties on this.

### **Gasteyger**

If I understand you correctly, Herr Klose, this conference is now expected to take on the additional task of helping the German Bundestag to achieve a certain degree of clarity in its position with regard to Turkish entry into the European Union. We shall see whether we can manage this.

Before I open the floor to general discussion, I would like to ask Secretary of State Öymen to give us his position on our topic. I know that you will not be with us for the entire length of the conference. I also know that you have great influence on Turkish foreign politics, so we will be listening to your statements with special attention and interest. Thank you very much in advance for sharing your views with us.

### **Öymen**

I am glad that this well-known Bergedorfer Gesprächskreis is involving high-level personalities in debates on important issues of our time. They generate new ideas and they sometimes challenge existing stereotypes. That is why we are particularly happy that this conference takes place here in Istanbul right now.

On the issue of Turkey's strategic location and the stabilizing role it plays in a sensitive region, there has been much discussion but now the issue has a particular importance due to the major

developments in Europe, in the Balkans, in Russia, in the Caucasus, in central Asia and in the Middle East. Mr Turkmen, our former foreign minister, has already given an excellent overview on all that.

I have been in the job as Undersecretary of State in the Foreign Ministry of Turkey for the last two years and have survived five governments. But I can tell you that I have not received any instruction from any government, including the present government, which departs from the basic lines of our foreign policy which is based on Ataturk's principles. That is why you can be sure that there is a continuity in Turkish foreign policy which is based on Ataturk's principles. That is why nobody should expect major changes in the basic orientation of our foreign policy. We should not forget that the Iranian Ambassador and three Iranian consuls general have been asked to return home during this government in Turkey. So, one should not overestimate allegations that there may have been basic changes in Turkish foreign policy orientation.

In Europe, as we are all aware, the institutional framework of our European cooperation is changing. I served in the Council of Europe some years ago and there we had eighteen members. Today, the Council of Europe has forty members. Previously, it had been unthinkable that countries like Russia and eastern European countries could become full members. Now next week Russia and NATO are going to sign a historic agreement. This would also have been unthinkable a few years ago. So the political environment in Europe is changing fundamentally.

Let me make some remarks about the enlargement of NATO, the European Union and the WEU in order to clarify Turkey's position. We believe that the future European architecture will have political but also economic and security dimensions. Therefore we cannot think about any one of these dimensions in isolation - and this interconnection is not a Turkish invention. It has already been mentioned in NATO enlargement documents and it was indeed implemented a few years ago when Turkey was refused the status of full membership in the WEU. The only argument at that time was that Turkey was not a member of the European Union.

Why was that linkage established? After all, the European Union and the WEU are not completely congruent. Today, five members of the European Union are not members of the WEU. And in the past, the United Kingdom was a member of the WEU without being a member of the European Union. When we asked why the connection had been established, the answer was that, in the future, there should be a congruence between these organisations so there should also be a parallelism in the membership.

You are asking us to support the enlargement of NATO. We are in favour of that and we will support it. But, facing this, you should not tell us that the European Union's doors will be closed forever with regard to Turkey's membership and that Turkey will be excluded from the European family of tomorrow although it still has to support NATO enlargement and consequently EU enlargement and WEU enlargement.

While former Warsaw Pact countries will be involved in NATO, European Union and the WEU, Turkey is not integrated in the European family. This is a picture which no Turkish government and no Turkish parliament can accept. This is the reason why our parliament has refused to ratify our association agreement with the WEU during the last three years. When Secretary General Solana visited Turkey, we explained this to him very clearly.

Therefore, let us think together about the future of the European family and let us not close the doors to the Turkish nation. There are good reasons why you should accept Turkey as a full member in these organisations.

As you know, we have been a member of NATO since 1952. I remember that there was a lot of reluctance to accept Turkey as a full member of NATO in 1952. But meanwhile everybody knows that we became a loyal ally and we have made a by no means modest contribution to the alliance. Today we see some reluctance to accept Turkey in the European Union. We believe that Turkey's full membership of the Union will serve the best interests of both. Therefore, we need objectivity and a constructive approach on this matter.

I should tell you that we were a little surprised by the statement issued after the meeting of the leaders of the Christian Democratic Parties in Brussels on 4th of March which stated that Turkey should never be a full member of the European Union because the European Union is a "civilization" project - as if Turkey were somehow outside "civilization".

What have we been doing in this country in the last 150 years or, more specifically, since the foundation of the Republic in 1923? We have reorganized and reshaped our society in order to share the same political values, the same human values. Ataturk himself said that there are several nations,

but only one European civilization - and Turkey is part of that civilization. This has been our motto for 70 years or more and so we are a little surprised to learn that some European politicians consider Turkey to be a member of another world. That we are not!

Others said that the European Union was an organisation of Christian countries. Therefore, there is no place for Turkey as an Islamic country, as the President of the ECD group said in so many words.

We were more positively surprised two weeks later in Apeldoorn, where all the foreign ministers of the European Union countries stated just on the contrary that they accepted Turkey's full membership in principle. We were even more pleased on 29th of April when the Turkey - European Union Association Council formalized this position as official European Union policy. So, that means that there are less reasons to be reluctant on NATO enlargement provided that the official views expressed in Luxembourg are translated into facts and concrete measures will be implemented toward achieving Turkey's full membership.

We are also pleased to have been invited to the meeting in Amsterdam on the 27th of June together with other applicants. This is a step forward in the right direction and we consider that the Dutch presidency has done a lot of good work on this point.

What has been agreed by all 15 nations is that: a) Turkey is entitled to and eligible for full membership, b) Turkey has fulfilled some of the conditions for full membership. We are working to fulfill all the conditions. But we do not accept the third point stating that since Turkey has to still fulfill some conditions, in the foreseeable future Turkey cannot become a full member. I am sorry to say that we totally disagree with this.

If you ask us to fulfill some conditions then it is our job to do it. The earlier we succeed the bigger our chances are. If we do not succeed it is our own fault. But we don't understand you saying that Turkey cannot be a full member in the foreseeable future. When we compare Turkey with other candidates, we have a lot of positive points - economically, politically and so on. There have been comparative studies by international organisations and international experts and the results show that Turkey is among the best in comparison with other candidates.

Just to give you two figures. First the increasing real gross domestic product (GDP). If you take the year 1989 as one hundred, Turkey's level is 126 whereas the average of the Union is only 110. None of the applicants can reach our figure. Poland, for instance, is the closest with only 98. In gross fixed investments, again we are better than all other applicants. On real exports of goods and services only Poland is one point above Turkey, but we are better than the rest. On real imports it is the same picture. On gross debt percentage as a function of GNP, again Turkey is among the best together with Poland. So, if we use the same yardstick, we will see that Turkey's position is not worse than that of any other candidate. Therefore, we are expecting you to be a little more forthcoming and to give us a chance to take the challenge.

As far as human rights are concerned, we know that we have a deficit. Even if you did not remind us about it every day in your press or in your statements, we know it and we are taking measures. Both the present and previous governments in Turkey have made tremendous changes in our legislation and in practice. We passed an important law in parliament two months ago and we are now preparing the last most important law on freedom of expression after which, practically, our legislation will be very much the same as Western European legislation, and comparative studies confirm this. We have established a high-level committee to supervise all the legislative and practical measures to be taken to close the gap. I, myself, am a member of this group together with the undersecretaries from the Interior and Justice Departments. For the first time we have instructed state inspectors and governors to verify and check all human rights allegations and we already have positive results.

Concerning human rights we ask you to use the same objective yardstick as with other countries. We should not base our assumptions on allegations but on concrete evidence. For some years now we have acknowledged the decisions of the European Commission on Human Rights and the individual right of petition to the Commission and we have had over 500 applications. In only 10 cases, so far the European Commission found Turkey guilty. Some countries have had more applications.

If we take the reports of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, we will find that the last report is very positive on Turkey. They refer to some irregularities here and there and these we readily accepted. I do not say that we have no deficiencies but we are doing everything possible to correct them. It would make no sense for any Turkish government to sacrifice Turkey's reputation just to protect one or two policemen who have violated human rights Or who have committed criminal actions. So you may be sure that in the field of human rights we will continue to make progress.

Furthermore, two other issues have been raised as impediments to Turkey's full membership. One is our relations with Greece. The other is Cyprus. On these issues, all parties should work together, and Turkey strives to be flexible.

This coming Monday, I am going to Athens to talk with my colleague Mr Papandreou and with Mr Pangelos and other Greek personalities. This will be the first visit of a Turkish undersecretary to Athens in the last 18 years. It means that we are making progress! By working together, our governments have managed to establish a sort of "group of wise-men" to discuss the problems between Turkey and Greece and to make balanced, non-binding recommendations. In Cyprus, again, we have encouraged Denktash and Klarides to come together and probably they will resume their talks in June. They were not able to conduct these talks in the last 2.5 years. So, things are moving in a positive direction.

What we expect from you is to encourage Turkey to continue its efforts. Exaggerated criticism from your side will not help us to solve our internal problems or our problems with the rest of the world. We are confident that such meetings may be helpful in generating new ideas.

### **Gasteyger**

I find your remarks very encouraging and believe that they demand serious consideration, Mr Oymen. On the one hand, this applies to your report about all that Turkey has done over the last few years - particularly in the field of human rights - in order to improve its domestic situation. These measures, of course, have a positive effect on Turkey's foreign relations. On the other hand, however, we must also take serious account of your advice to encourage Turkey more often rather than criticizing her. Your remarks highlight the tensions which result from the differing and sometimes even contradictory expectations which your country has of us Europeans - and, presumably, of the Americans - and which we, for our part, have of Turkey. Essentially, this is a positive and encouraging situation because it means that we all have a positive basic approach to our relationship. Each of us assumes that we can expect more good than bad from our relationship with the other. Unfortunately, the opposite is usually true.

I would now like to invite a representative from our common neighbour, Russia, to take the floor - Mr Khamidulin.

### **Chamidulin**

I am referring to a relatively vast area of the world, with which Turkey is connected not only and not exactly geographically but rather through multiple and interlaced historic, ethnic, cultural, religious, economic and other links. This region, in addition to Turkey itself, includes the Balkans, the Black Sea area, the eastern Mediterranean, the Caucasus and the Middle-East.

This region has been and still is at the centre of attention of major world powers. This attention is, of course, due to its important geo-strategic situation at the watershed not only of three parts of the world (Europe, Asia and Africa) but also of civilizations, cultures and world religions. This location obviously determines the multifactorial nature of the social processes and development involved as well as their unpredictability, the high risk of conflicts and accordingly, the volatility of the regional situation.

Changes are taking place here through a painstaking process and they are accompanied by profound economic and socio-political upheaval, internal and ethnic conflicts, the majority of which remain unresolved. At the same time, it would seem that the most dangerous part of the crisis has already passed and a number of serious conflicts have progressed from the sphere of direct confrontation into a political phase. The latest example of this is the decisive and positive progress made on Chechen settlement in Russia.

Having overcome the most difficult stage of transformation, we are approaching the formation of a new architecture for a regional structure which is void of ideological confrontation but which nevertheless still incorporates elements which could allow ethnic and confessional collisions with the economic rationale. The important characteristic feature of this new architecture is the absence in the region of one or several clearly dominant powers and this lends a new urgency to the objective of developing structures for cooperation as the only reasonable alternative to widespread confrontation.

The main result of the above-mentioned transformations for Turkey itself has been the change in the country's role in the region. Having lost in many respects its situation as the main NATO outpost near the USSR's southern frontiers, Turkey has tried to perceive its natural function as that of a "bridge" between western and post-Soviet space, particularly with regard to the states of central Asia and the Caucasian region as well as those of the Middle-East. The so-called Turkish model of a secular,

social-state system and a market economy has been presented with Western support to the new, independent states as an acceptable option for their development.

I am convinced that the role of Turkey cannot be considered separately from its relationship with Russia, particularly if we take into account that our countries have been neighbours for over five centuries and during that period have accumulated enormous experience of co-existence and interaction.

Regrettably, inside and outside Turkey there are forces which would like to drive Russia back from its traditional position in the southern CIS states and to elevate the Turks to the role of a newly-arrived "big brother" of sorts. We believe that this concept is clearly a destructive one. It is well-known that Russia has broken away from a paternal approach towards the republics of the former USSR and has firmly embarked upon the path of equal partnership with the sovereign states within the CIS framework. At the same time, our country had and has traditional interests in these states which cannot be ignored.

The priority task for Russian policy in the CIS in general and in the Trans-Caucasian area and central Asia in particular, is to establish a zone of peace, good-neighbourliness and cooperation. Besides, it does not wish for the restoration in any form of imperial traditions. Our relations with the new, independent states have been established on an equal, friendly, mutually advantageous and purely pragmatic basis which takes into account the interests of all the others. Our interaction is being developed along the lines of a restoration of the economic links which were formed throughout the many centuries during which a common economic system existed. It is based on the maintenance of security and stability within the CIS and along its borders and on the protection of the rights of the Russian-speaking population which is as large as 10 million in the southern countries of the Commonwealth. Within the framework of this strategic policy, we are trying to cooperate with all states including Turkey.

I am convinced that attempts to "oust" or "replace" Russia can only cause greater instability in this very vulnerable region. Moreover, recent years, to my mind, have demonstrated that this task is probably beyond Turkey's power - both from the viewpoint of its financial and economic potential and of its own internal problems.

Certainly, there are forces which would like to take advantage of the complex internal situation in Turkey and the growing influence of Islamists, to provoke a confrontation with Russia in the CIS countries. However, we believe in the common sense of the politicians in Ankara. The history of Russian-Turkish relations vividly demonstrates that it was precisely through mutually beneficial cooperation that our countries managed to achieve impressive results while rivalry only weakened both Turkey and Russia, thus seriously undermining regional stability.

Russian-Turkish relations have deeply-rooted traditions. We have something to value and preserve. The two countries have a similar geopolitical situation - both in Europe and in Asia - on the main transcontinental transport routes. But indeed, it is even more significant that both Russia and Turkey represent the links which connect and consolidate areas containing various world religions as well as different cultural, ethnic and civilization traditions. It is these factors which underlie the existence of the multiplicity of similar, national roots which the Russian and Turkish peoples share and, correspondingly, their tolerance and similarity in all the best aspects of their national characters. All these factors provide a natural and firm basis for constructive interaction between Russia and Turkey.

In general, we are satisfied with the dynamism of Russian-Turkish relations. For example, in the last two years the volume of official mutual trade has increased from 2.2 to 4 billion dollars. It has nearly doubled. If one takes into consideration the unofficial, so-called "shuttle" trade, which is estimated at approximately 5 billion dollars, as well as construction contracts and tourism, then the overall volume of our economic cooperation exceeds 10 billion dollars. Thus, Russia and Turkey have become priority trade and economic partners for each other.

It is precisely in the development of this comprehensive cooperation between our countries, which might elevate Russian-Turkish relations almost to the level of a partnership, that we see the future for strengthening regional peace and stability. This task has become even more important in the light of the fact that Russia and Turkey, as a result of the above-mentioned transformations, have become the two major and most influential states with the greatest potential in the region.

Wider perspectives for Russian-Turkish cooperation have been opened up by Black Sea Economic Cooperation which has spread beyond the geographical boundaries of the Black Sea basin.

The recent vigorous development of integration processes and mutual "overlapping" of membership in integration groups (in addition to BSEC, Greece is a member of the EU, Turkey of ECO, Russia of the CIS) seem to be opening up perspectives for the formation within the Euro-Asian region of a single area for cooperation on integration. The guarantee for reliable security and stability in the region lies, to our mind, in mutually beneficial economic cooperation rather than in the balance of power.

At the same time, the status of the Russian-Turkish relationship which has been achieved does not fully match its enormous potential. In some areas the degree of interaction is obviously below our present-day requirements. Therefore we advocate the expansion of contacts between our countries in every way possible and we feel it is essential to encourage in every possible way business, humanitarian, interconfessional and other contacts which will strengthen the fabric of cooperation and complementarity.

In conclusion, I would emphasize that everything seems to indicate that Turkey has significant potential for consolidating its position as an influential state which is striving to play its role as an "oasis of stability and peace" in a vast and very turbulent region. However, the realization of this objective will depend on how balanced and far-sighted the policy of the Turkish leadership will prove to be in the relationship first and foremost with its neighbours as well as on how it manages to resolve its own internal problems in a civilized way. If convincing progress is achieved along these lines, it is certain that many interesting components of the contemporary Turkish experience - namely in the areas of economic modernization and the development of the model of a secular state in an Islamic country - will exert a positive international influence.

### **Utkin**

Having had 27 wars with Turkey, and having helped present-day Turkey into existence in 1923, I suppose we could claim to have some experience, both good and bad. And today, strange as it may seem, Turkey and Russia have reached a kind of parallel stage in our development.

Firstly, we both feel indignation at not being admitted "to the West", and secondly, we have special feelings towards our relatives, new and old. Turkey has somehow unexpectedly found five new brothers in central Asia and the Caucasus and we have lost 25 million Russians along our frontiers. We are also both Eurasian countries with big Moslem populations. Turkey with 60 million Moslems, and Russia with 20 million Moslems.

It seems to me that the West supposes that with the passage of time, Turkey and Russia will reach a certain level, they will become more civilized and then they may enter Europe. This approach by Westerners means that you are alienating Turkey and Russia.

From the Romanovs in Russia and the supporters of Atatürk in Turkey through to the Gorbachevians in the Russia of 1991 and present-day pro-Western elements in Turkey, it has always been the "higher" strata of the populations in Turkey and Russia - the intelligentsia and the elite in these two countries which have loved everything "Western" and have been the best friends of the West. The bulk of the population has no idea what the West actually is. The situation is the same in Turkey and Russia.

My point is that with the passage of time, the best friends of the West in Russia and in Turkey will lose their position. The trend is already evident. Look at the elections in Istanbul and Ankara and the new government. The same is the case in Russia. The first wave of pro-Westerners, the Kozirev tide, has gone. It is only by admitting these countries to the "West" that an anchor can be provided which will allow them to see the real fruits of Western civilization, to be together, and to find a real source of modernisation for their cultures and peoples. If this does not happen, the world will be very different. Turkey will follow a path as the most developed Islamic country and Russia will be isolated with its 27,000-or-so nuclear warheads and its legacy from the old Soviet world.

So, the vital point here is not to concentrate on "polishing up" Turkish society and Russian society but to recognize that the impetus of the pro-Western drive which emanated with Atatürk and Gorbachev is beginning to flag. Russia and Turkey are in a crucial period where we are on the verge of being left to our own means and devices and I feel that Russia and Turkey are in much the same boat.

The haughty stance adopted by many Westerners does not even offer us the chance to dream of being part of the process. NATO for us is the same as the European Union for Turkey. Personally, I do not understand why Russia cannot be part of the NATO organisation. And for Turkey, with its "Gastarbeiter", the experience of being in the heart of Europe without being part of it, must be similarly incomprehensible.

## Birand

I want to join Mr Utkin on what he has been telling us. I think Europe has a Turkish problem and has to decide what to do with Turkey. Public opinion is fed up with so many changing conditions. During the USSR period we were seen from a different angle. And then suddenly, at the beginning of the 1990's the list grew. Europe, up to one point, used Greece to make life difficult. But now Mr Pangalos has used very good tactics to change the policy so that now, Germany is in the forefront. Before, Germany was happy enough to have Greece trying to stop Turkey.

Europe has a Turkish problem. You have to solve it among yourselves. Are you going to accept it in the Western European Union or the European Union whilst it is not so important? It might happen in ten years time or 15 years - because we all know that, today, if you invite Turkey to get in, Turkey cannot. So let us be serious about it and make a decision.

If you don't decide, I can go even further than what Mr Utkin said. I can foresee the two outsiders, Russia and Turkey, joining forces and becoming a strong bloc in this region. You should consider the possibility of a Turkey, which has been kicked out of and kicked around in Europe, finding an interesting client named Russia. We could do good business and if we joined forces, I think we would be looked at from a very different angle.

If you leave Turkey out, of course it will be much more difficult to solve the Cyprus problem, the problem of relations with Greece and the human rights problem, and you will be giving a great advantage to Refah. Indeed, today, they are delighted to see all the messages coming from Europe. Refah has not moved a finger (what Mr Öymen said is true). They did not need to instruct the Foreign Ministry on what to do or what not to do. There was no need for that because the Europeans were doing their job.

But Turkey also has to decide what we are going to do. I mean we cannot sit on these problems and just say we are trying our best. Of course we are trying our best. But our best is not important. I think Turkey has to decide what to do with Cyprus, with the Aegean and with Greek-Turkish relationship. Public opinion is fed up with all these issues. We are making improvements, that is for sure. But the mentality is still there and it is very difficult to change the mentality. We have to do something.

So, we have two possibilities. Either we get Turkey in and have it our way or we can leave Turkey out. Some of us will be sorry, but it is not the end of the world.

Finally, I have a question for Mr Khamidulin. Is Turkey still viewed sceptically in Moscow because they believe its trying to create intrigue among the Moslem community in Russia? And why has Moscow started to play to some extent with the PKK? I know it is not a major issue for Moscow but what is going on? Are you giving us a signal to say "Look, if you touch the Chechens or the others, we will touch the PKK"? That is a question, to which we would appreciate a reply.

## Öymen

Mr Birand asked whether we are ready to join the EU? My answer to that is that we are ready to join the Union today. We have already accepted the challenge presented by the Customs Union which none of the other applicants have accepted so far. We believe that we have nothing to be afraid of. So, each step forward will be beneficial for Turkey and will create no big problems for us. We are ready to accept the challenge presented by the European Union and the *acquis communautaire* tomorrow morning at 9.00 o'clock.

## Füller

We have heard some very excellent presentations about the continuity of Turkey's views in the world. I concur with these elements of continuity but would like to look at the problem from the other point of view and to discuss some elements of newness and change because it is sometimes harder to see elements of change than it is to see continuity.

Internally, Turkey is undergoing extraordinary change in many key areas. I consider that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was one of the greatest men of the 20th century. Without him there would be no modern Turkey. He set Turkey on a foundation for future development that is a model for most developing nations in the world and few leaders in the developing world have been able to match Atatürk's accomplishments. Nonetheless, it was a role that was essentially based on principles created for the period which Turkey was passing through and for nation-building. Some of those conditions now have changed. Therefore, I think the reinterpretation of the Atatürk legacy is one of the important new elements of Turkey's development today.

Secondly, Turkey is coming to recognize its character as a multicultural, multi-ethnic state. It is learning to cope with this reality but it will bring considerable changes, and I would suspect even legal changes, in the character of the Turkish state. The Kurdish problem will be solved within the contemporary borders of Turkey but nonetheless it will bring new challenges to Turkey's own self-image.

Thirdly, there is the Islamist factor. We see all over the world the growth of Islam in politics. Much of this is quite negative but I think it is also unavoidable. The critical question is not whether Islam is good or not in politics but simply how this problem will be handled tactically. And the handling of this problem is very, very important for the future. We have the example of Algeria which is probably the perfect model of how not to handle the question of Islam in politics. So far Turkey is handling this problem with a certain degree of wisdom but the problem is still an intense one.

Let me say too, that I am not singling Turkey out in discussing both the Kurdish ethnic problem and the Islamic problem because these are problems facing much of the world. The challenge of handling minorities besets most states and I think Turkey has a better chance of solving this satisfactorily than many other states in the region that I can think of.

A further element is that the role of Turkey's domestic factors are now much more important in its foreign policy than ever before. This represents trends of democratization within the country. New elements and new social classes are coming into existence; and this is indeed part of the strength of the Islamists in representing new social classes through democratization.

We are looking at a Turkey that offers great hope for the future. I think Turkey is better equipped to handle its problems of minorities and especially the Kurdish minority and the Islamic problem than almost any other state. But the Turkey we have known for 70 years is gone. There is a new Turkey underway in developing both geopolitically and domestically. It will be probably more difficult to deal with in some respects. It has stronger interests of its own than ever before which means it will come into a certain degree of friction with both Europe and the United States in certain areas.

On foreign policy, I was interested in the remarks of Mr Khamidulin. I think it is the central Asian and Caucasian states themselves that in the end will have to decide the relative role of Russia, Turkey, India, China, Pakistan and Iran and the West in that area. It will not simply be one state deciding how this question will be resolved by fiat.

### **Gasteyger**

We really are dealing with a "new Turkey" and we must go into the question of what this actually means, and which problems and prospects it involves, in more depth.

### **Boidevaix**

Mr Turkmen and Mr Öymen have given a very impressive presentation of Turkey's role in this part of the world. Turkey really is a very significant factor for the stability of this region.

I am primarily concerned with Turkey's relations with the European Union. I understand the Turkish arguments in this context very well. That is why I am pleased that Turkey has been invited to the EU-summit in Amsterdam. I believe that Turkey must be very closely informed on current developments in the EU.

If Turkey wants to become a member of the EU then of course we must talk about the preconditions. This is an extremely complicated question in view of the widely differing nature of the conditions which are being put forward in this respect. I have just taken part in a meeting in Vienna with representatives from Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic at which we tried to clarify the conditions for their membership which arise from the Treaty of Maastricht. They were really quite surprised when they realized the complexity of the task which faces them.

Another question is how the members of the EU themselves see the future of the Union. This concerns, for example, the organization of the institutions - an aspect which will play an important role at Maastricht II. But that will not be the end of the process and I am sure that further summits will follow - Maastricht III and IV - the results of which we cannot predict at all. It is however already certain that Germany and France will have to work together closely in order to push the European idea forward. I believe that these two countries bear a special responsibility following the reunification of Germany which created a new impetus for the process of European unification, not least as far as the extension of the European Union is concerned.

It is also clear that it would be very difficult to develop a common European concept in the sphere of security and defence without Great Britain. And we are all agreed that the so-called "acquis communautaires" must be maintained and that monetary union should be introduced. However, we do not yet know how many countries the Union will finally embrace even though the necessity of extension remains undisputed. It will certainly not take place all at once but will have to be a step-by-step process. The question of how to proceed with Turkey during this process in the foreseeable future is justified.

All of these factors must be taken into consideration when the present members of the EU deliberate on the future of Europe. The Europe which exists after extension will probably be much more flexible and it will presumably encompass a wider range of differences. With this in mind, we ought to think carefully about Turkey's role and position in the extended Union. There will undoubtedly be a degree of differentiation but the Europeans must demonstrate as much coherence as possible.

### **Rühl**

How might the relationship between Europe, and in particular the European Union and the European NATO states, and Turkey be developed for the future? I would like to make three points.

Firstly, on the question of a common strategy for determining political, economic and military objectives. If Europe is serious about developing a common foreign and security policy - and this is something which, up to now, has never gone beyond the initial stages - in order to secure European interests in the world on a strategic basis, then it is absolutely clear that it cannot be achieved without either Great Britain or Turkey. That means that any European policy which does not include the active participation of Great Britain as a member of the EU and of Turkey as an associate partner with the secure prospect of membership in the EU, would be doomed to failure from the outset. The European heads of government must state this absolutely clearly and they must make it the basis for their policies. If this does not happen, we can simply forget about a common foreign and security policy and about developing the Western European Union as the link between NATO and the EU and instead, devote ourselves to the concept of a wider European free trade zone. In that case, we would have no need for a European Monetary Union either.

If, however, European Union is to encompass the question of war and peace in the twenty-first century, as the German Federal Chancellor expressed it - and I will leave open the question as to whether this is a meaningful prospect in historical terms and what political ends it might serve - then it is undoubtedly meaningless to want to define the future of Europe solely by monetary means whilst relegating the question of security to the sidelines. That would make it essential, in a world of continual change, to draw Turkey as close as possible to the EU as a partner in alliance; to offer her full membership of the WEU and to keep open her prospects of joining the EU at some point in the future which today is not predictable - but not "ad calendae graecas" at that!

My second comment concerns the question of resolving conflicts in Europe. Here, we are talking about containing and bringing an end to conflicts such as those between Greece and Turkey in the Aegean and the Cyprus conflict. Apart from a few rhetorical shows of strength, the European Union, which is striving towards a common security policy, has so far remained remarkably passive in this regard. But, in the long run, semantics are no substitute for policies and joint communiqués cannot take the place of joint action. It remains to be seen which common policies the governments of the EU will manage to create here.

Thirdly and finally, there is the relationship with the United States which, as we have heard from Mr Abramowitz, has a strategic interest in Turkey as a partner. I believe that Europe, as a partner of the United States, must play its part in underpinning and complementing this strategic interest.

### **Gasteyger**

We note with interest, Herr Rühl, your choice of the expression "ad calendae graecas" in connection with Turkey's prospects for joining the EU. This opens up wide and, in terms of time, unlimited horizons - not least of all in respect of the Greek neighbour who was, albeit indirectly, referred to. Later on, we will be asking Mr Veremis for a Greek view on that.

### **Schmidt**

In its relations with Turkey (and these have not been without their tensions over the last few months) Germany must take account of two factors. The first is foreign and security policy and the second is the fact that for us, any discussion about Turkey is also an internal political issue.

I would quote just one rather delicate example: The nephew of the present Turkish Prime Minister, Mr Erbakan, heads an organization in Germany known as Milli Görüs ("National View") whose aims are in no way compatible with the maintenance of public order in Germany. I quote this simply to illustrate that everything which goes on in Turkish internal politics manages to find its way into German internal affairs. And it is this which leads me, like Herr Klose, to recognize the absolute necessity of taking a keen interest in Turkey.

With regard to foreign and security policy, I would emphasize that our interest in integrating Turkey in the European structure remains undisputed. This fact seems to have lost some of its clarity in the light of the energy which has been expended by all sides, including the United States of America, on medial skirmishes. Of course Turkey no longer plays the same role in guarding NATO's flank which it played during the Cold War. And, when I look at the Black Sea Cooperation initiative or at the approaches toward central Asia, Turkey's new role in foreign politics still seems somewhat unclear. But what is completely clear is that Turkey still has, as it has always had, an important function to fulfill both in terms of its influence in the Asiatic region and as a part of Europe.

The current difficulties with the conversion of the Association Agreement of 1963 are in my view to be attributed to Turkey rather than to Europe. We should, therefore, make it clear that whilst Europe has a lasting strategic interest in Turkey, Turkey also has to meet certain conditions if she wishes to become a member of the European Union.

I believe that this necessitates the following political steps: First, the Europeans must finally honour the financial obligations to Turkey which arise from her membership of the Customs Union. Secretary of State Öymen was one of the promoters of the Customs Union and I can well understand his disappointment at the European Union's reluctance in this matter so far. At the moment, only the EU is profiting from the Customs Union.

Secondly, I am in favour of Turkey's full membership in the Western European Union despite all the difficulties and reservations which still face the Franco-German objective of medium-term integration of the WEU as a defence and security element in the European Union.

Thirdly, in the field of economic cooperation, we must find suitable intermediate stages which will allow Turkey to make a gradual approach toward European integration. Monetary union will certainly be a very, very far-distant goal for Turkey. I would remind you that the very first Özal government set itself the ambitious task of substantially reducing inflation and all the subsequent governments have felt obliged to pursue this aim - so far, without success.

### **Öymen**

Mr Schmidt, you spoke about a nephew of Mr Erbakan. Several political leaders in the world have several nephews and I can recall some examples in England and other countries. I do not believe that we should judge the petitioners according to the performance of their nephews. In any case, speaking as a former ambassador, I do not believe that this particular nephew represents the majority of Turks living in Germany.

### **Vollmer**

Secretary of State Öymen and Mr Turkmen have both asked what the European's reservations about Turkey's membership of the EU really are. They emphasized Turkey's dependability in foreign affairs and pointed out that this must be of great value to Europe. We have also heard that Turkey's economic performance figures are better than those of many of the other countries wanting to join the European Union.

In view of all this, I would share any supposition you might have that the European reservations are based not in these areas but on concerns connected with matters of civilization. And it is exactly these concerns which you are attempting to allay by pointing to the developments which Turkey has undergone in this field over the last 70 years. My impression is that, in the final analysis, people in Europe have no faith in the coexistence of different cultures and civilizations.

On top of this there is the complex of internal political problems with which we are faced - Herr Klose has already alluded to this. Nowhere in Europe has there been any success in developing and realizing a workable model for peaceful, civil coexistence with Islam. The French/Algerian experience does not exactly serve as an encouraging model - and I hesitate even to mention the example of Russia and its Moslem peoples. But the most worrying example must be Bosnia and the failure to allow Islam a permanent place in Europe there.

In Germany, I recognize our own failings on the domestic political front. In particular, there has been no consistent policy on integration which might have enabled those immigrants who were willing to integrate to do so. One consequence of these failings has been the re-ethnicization of the Islamic minority in Germany although other factors may also have played a role.

But what is the situation in Turkey itself in this respect? Does Turkey have a better integration policy? I am sure that Atatürk's achievements cannot be valued highly enough but what about the present situation here? I know from Turkish friends of mine that some people welcomed the Erbakan / Refah government because they believe it might provide an enlightened Islamic political approach acceptable to the Europeans. However, this hope does not yet seem to have reached fulfillment even among you. I would be very interested in hearing more in this regard.

Time and again I hear Turks saying: "Don't worry, we won't become a second Algeria." Then comes the explanation: "After all, we have an enlightened, civilized military which would prevent that sort of development." But that explanation does nothing at all to allay our fears. For us, a military solution on those lines means nothing more than the danger of increased immigration by those very same Islamists. Our worry would then be that Islamic fundamentalist activity in our cities would increase and, as a result, the process of promoting civil coexistence and secularization and cooperation, which are so important to us, would suffer even more. For this reason, what we would hope to see is the development of mutual confidence and cooperation within Turkey itself so that we can then learn, from your experience, how to deal with these problems in our own countries.

### **Sommer**

In Goethe's times in Germany, we might have heard the sentiment: "On Sundays and Holy Days I know of nothing better than to talk of war and the cry of battle whilst far away in Turkey the peoples clash in combat." That those times are long gone is, of course, quite apparent from our discussion here. Today, Turkey is seen much more as a bastion of Western values against Islamic fundamentalism, as an outpost of democracy and as a stabilizing factor in the region.

Herr Schmidt is quite right to emphasize that we must take a keen interest in everything that goes on here because it affects us directly. Today, the great majority of the three million Turks in the countries of the European Union live in Germany. There are around 2.3 million Turks in Germany. We first invited them to our country three decades ago as Gastarbeiter and, as time passed, their families have joined them. 60 % of them have lived in Germany for more than ten years, 50 % for more than 15 years and 25 % have been with us for over 25 years. For many of them, Germany is their sole homeland but it is a country which still refuses to make them Germans. I am nevertheless convinced that in time, the Turks in Germany will become German Turks and ultimately Turkish Germans.

I am, however, primarily concerned with the fact that domestic political events in Turkey have a direct impact on German society and we are obviously extremely interested in ensuring that Germany does not become an extension of the battlefield on which domestic disputes are fought out, whether these be between Kurds of different hue or between Kurds and Turks. If we, ourselves, are to make progress in developing into a multicultural, multi-ethnic society, then surely we have the right to expect that Turkey adopts the same approach in its dealings with its own minorities.

Of course, we are also very keen to see Turkey overcome its economic and social problems - not only so that it is able to join the European Union but, also to ensure that the unrest which stems from its social situation does not infect our own society.

And not the least of our worries concerns Turkey's continued existence as a secular state. We have overcome Christian fundamentalism in our own countries although this was, I admit, a process which took centuries. Nevertheless, we do not now want to have it replaced by Islamic fundamentalism.

However, like Frau Vollmer, I find no great reassurance in the fact that it is the army which is seen as the guarantor for the maintenance of secularism. Even under the terms of the constitution, the military is still the final political authority in this country. The principle of civilian control is hypothetical at best. I believe that Turkey must give serious consideration to reducing the role of the army if it wishes to join the European Union, which is something I would greatly welcome.

### **Türkmen**

First of all, I want to take up the point raised by our German friends that they do not want Germany to become the extended battlefield of domestic dispute in Turkey. I think that this is a very legitimate concern and I think that it would not be in the interests of Turkey.

But this battle fighting is a two-way process. It is exported from here to Germany and then it is imported from Germany to Turkey also, because in Germany, the extreme political movements find a better environment to exercise their activities. Money is coming to the PKK from Germany, from the Kurdish activists in Germany. And also, money is coming to the Islamist political activists in Turkey.

So it is a two-way thing and the best solution, not in the short term perhaps, but in the medium and long term, is really the integration of these people into German society. I do not believe that they do not want this. Make them German citizens. I do not believe that they do not want it. I am sure they want it. If some people do not want it, I am sure their children would like it.

### **Klose**

I fear that is a grand illusion, Mr Turkmen. It has become more difficult to integrate the third and fourth generations of young Turkish people in Germany than it was to integrate the second generation. And the validity of this fact which we are experiencing today has, by the way, been confirmed by a study carried out at the University of Bielefeld.

### **Türkmen**

What about those who have become German citizens? Have they integrated?

### **Klose**

Some.

### **Türkmen**

Well, at least some have. If you can integrate 50 % of them, it will be a plus.

We have spoken here of the role of the army and I think that there is a contradiction there. Nobody wants fundamentalism in Turkey to expand but neither does anyone want intervention by the army. But the historical experience in Turkey has proved that the army does not intervene until it is forced to intervene by the momentum of society itself. So I do not think that the army will ever intervene unless there are conditions which would render any other solution unthinkable.

### **Bagci**

I would like to assuage Theo Summer`s fears and say that I am convinced that democracy in Turkey rests on a solid foundation. We are not drawing a comparison with Europe here. It is primarily a question of the extent to which the other countries in the Near and Middle East will undergo a process of democratization similar to that which has taken place in Turkey. The important thing is that the West should demonstrate that it has a great deal of understanding for Turkey. The USA is in favour of closer relations with Turkey for strategic reasons. In the same way, the Europeans should show support for Turkey`s efforts to promote secularization and democracy and they should make it possible for Turkey to join the European Union if it is able to meet the norms. I believe that the Europeans should take a leaf out of the Americans` book and should change their attitude toward Turkey fast instead of waiting until changes have been instituted in Turkey before making us welcome in Europe.

### **Horstmann**

Europe is in the process of reorganizing itself politically and the picture which this presents today appears within the framework of interaction between the OSCE, NATO, the Council of Europe, the European Union and the Western European Union. In addition, there are also regional institutions such as the Baltic Cooperation Council or the Black Sea Cooperation. In other words, the political reality of Europe is by no means the same thing as the European Union.

Since its foundation in 1957, the European Union has been extended four times: 1973 (Denmark, Great Britain, Ireland); 1981 (Greece); 1986 (Portugal, Spain); 1995 (Finland, Austria, Sweden - Norway, as you know, finally decided against entry). Each of these extensions involved a great amount of energy and effort. They all involved long negotiations and in some cases there were transitional periods which lasted for years in order to ensure that the stability of the Community would not be endangered and in order to facilitate consolidation in depth.

In 1993, the European Council in Copenhagen set the future agenda for the European Union and this was confirmed at subsequent sessions of the Council. The present agenda covers internal reform and

yesterday, 23rd May, a special meeting of the European Council was convened in Nijmegen charged with, among other things, preparing the meeting of the European Council in Amsterdam in June.

In Copenhagen in 1993, Turkey was expressly mentioned in connection with the Customs Union. At the same time, the ten central and eastern European states which had come to a so-called "Agreements with Europe", were requested to prepare for negotiations on entry. It remains to be seen how far we will get with these negotiations by the end of the year.

Thus, the European Union is presently faced with a unique and historic challenge which exceeds anything we have experienced in the Community in the past. Understandably, no unanimity on the details of the scenario for expansion has yet been achieved. What is undisputed, however, is that the European Union in general, and Germany in particular, has a strategic interest in bringing Turkey ever closer to the EU as part of a gradual process. The Council for Association stressed this interest yet again on 29th April 1997 by declaring that entry could be considered under the terms of the Association Agreement and in line with the position, supported by the Council, which was expressed by the Commission in 1989.

It is now the task of all those involved to do their own, specific homework. Secretary of State Öymen confirmed this earlier on Turkey's behalf. On the other hand, I can do no more than warn against overloading the agenda as this would endanger the stability of the process of European unification.

### **Öymen**

Mr Horstmann reiterated the German position and we were very glad to hear it again. Here, I would simply refer to Mr Kinkel's comment about Turkey's full membership of the European Union on his last visit to Ankara. He said that their approach would be fair. We ask for nothing more and nothing less than fairness in this question.

### **Kramer**

This continually repeated expression about the "immense strategic significance of Turkey for the future shape of Europe" is rapidly becoming an empty, rhetorical phrase - probably because it provides a convenient means of avoiding the extremely difficult political problems involved. What does the assertion that Turkey is strategically important for Europe actually mean in concrete terms? Of course Turkey plays an essential role in matters affecting stability, order and peace in the European area, whatever the individual factors involved might be. But, in concrete terms, what stability, what order, what peace are we talking about? Up to now, the European side has hardly developed any concepts at all on this.

For example, how far have we got with a European policy on the Kurds which is not only limited to Turkey but encompasses the whole region? After all, the Kurdish problem is not exclusively, perhaps not even primarily, a Turkish matter. Or again, what European policy concepts do we have on the question of water resources in the Near and Middle East? Or: What strategic concepts have the Europeans developed on Cyprus in order to ensure that the island's membership of the European Union will not endanger peace, stability and order in the eastern Mediterranean? And where are the European policy concepts on the Caspian region? Does Europe have an interest in the energy reserves in this region and, if it does, how is that interest to be realized?

Turkey certainly has an important role to play in all of these areas. But the European pronouncements on these issues would be a lot more convincing if the Europeans developed their own strategic concepts on them with which Turkey could get to grips. That would make it possible to establish the extent to which interests coincide and the points at which they diverge.

Secretary of State Öymen has quite rightly asked for clarification on Turkey's position within the "convoy" of candidates for membership - and I interpret the statements made at the last session of the Council for Association to mean that Turkey is now included in this convoy. If this is indeed the case, I would greatly welcome it if the European Commission were to issue a new advisory guideline for Turkey in the near future which makes Turkey's position clear. Mr Öymen has already made Turkey's view of its own position abundantly clear. It is now up to the Europeans to clarify their own position on Turkey's candidature in terms which go beyond general pronouncements.

### **Gasteyger**

You have certainly posed some very significant questions, Herr Kramer. What indeed are the European concepts on the issues you have touched upon? These are issues which go far beyond Turkey itself. In one respect, one might even be tempted to ask whether the debate on the relationship

between the EU, or Europe as a whole, and Turkey might not require us to think much more honestly and fundamentally about the kind of Europe which we are talking about and aiming to achieve and, in the final instance, the kind of Europe which we wish to establish as a politically plausible power.

### **Kühnhardt**

Valid as it may be, criticism of the European failure to develop political concepts is not sufficient in itself to help us find a new perspective on Turkey's role within the whole region. We urgently need to achieve a European-American-Turkish balance within this complex of relationships. There are problems of perception and mutual reproach based on stereotyped concepts on all sides. Whilst American discussion is essentially concentrated on strategic questions, the Europeans tend to perceive Turkey in the light of domestic political considerations and Turkey, it seems to me, is overly concerned with the issue of EU membership.

The German debate on Turkey, I believe, is dogged by two flaws. One is strategic, the other is intellectual. Whilst Herr Schmidt has said that even after the end of the Cold War, Turkey still remains important, I would emphasize strongly that Turkey has become even more important - especially for a country such as Germany as well as for the European Union. How can we hope to maintain the wealth and stability of our own region without Turkey which holds a key position, for example, with regard to the vast oil reserves of the Caspian Sea? No one in Germany seems to recognize this with the necessary degree of clarity.

But apart from this strategic element, there is also an intellectual flaw and this involves the question of fundamentalism. The arguments underlying the intellectual debate in Germany involve sweeping generalizations which are worrying. Things now seem to have reached the point where our own increasingly laical approach toward spiritual-political affairs makes it more and more difficult for us to come to terms with the phenomenon of religion. This is particularly apparent in our dealings with Islam.

For example, whilst the French Revolution unleashed a wave of radical laicism in France in 1789, religion returned to France in the 19th century and the political Catholicism was born which, in essence, has remained alive in Europe up to the present in the form of Christian Democracy. It would never occur to any of us to say that some sort of Christian fundamentalism was being practised through politics. That was not the case in the 19th century and it was not the case during the times of Adenauer, Schuman and De Gasperi.

But when it comes to Turkey, which really is the only secular country in the whole realm of Islamic culture, we (particularly in Germany) are only too ready to trot out the spectre of fundamentalism and to tar Turkey, Algeria, Iran and other countries with the same brush. And then we are surprised when our people express concern and ask whether Turkey might not really belong to this other civilization.

Islam has been a reality in the Balkans for centuries and that reality is part of European history. Anyone who says that Islam should keep out of Europe is, in effect, demanding the extraterritorialization of those of our fellow citizens who are of the Islamic faith. In Europe, very profound discussions are going on about the things which hold our society together and one of the aspects of this discussion is the productive role of religion and its significance for the pluralistic, secular world. The same discussion is going on in Turkey today and it is just as legitimate. A path between authenticity and modernity is being sought everywhere in the world. But we tar Turkey's efforts in this direction far too quickly with the brush of fundamentalism.

This intellectual short-sightedness does not only affect our image of Islam, it colours our policy toward Turkey as well as the domestic political debate on the subject of Turkey within Germany.

### **Veremis**

I realize that the expression "ad calendas graecas" was invented before the European Union but it has been used, I think rightly so, for Greece's reluctance to have Turkey in the European Union. I am happy to say that this is not the case anymore. It has dawned on our leadership that having Turkey as a full member of the European Union may in fact alleviate some of the problems we have had with Turkey all along. This is however not perhaps the case with the entire community. In other words, I think we should address the problem of the full accession of Turkey instead of just giving her compensations here and there in place of the full acceptance that the Turks want. I think they pursue this because they want to belong to the European family. They will not settle for less.

However, the major impediment is not culture, if I may enter the line of argument of Samuel Huntington, but a very important item in full accession which is the freedom of movement of labour in the labour markets of Europe. And we should have the honesty to point out that this is the major

impediment to the full accession of Turkey. I personally do not believe it is an impediment which cannot be overcome but I think it should be addressed as such.

As far as culture goes, we live in a multicultural world. We are very quickly adopting other peoples' ideas. Religion has been relegated not to a secondary position in society but

certainly to a private position. It has ceased to be what it used to be in the previous centuries - a major question in society - and it should not be invoked as an alibi for blocking anyone from full accession if he meets the other standards of Europe - the standards that we have all met, or will have to meet, in order to get in. And let us make that very clear instead of using other criteria as a possible alibi for keeping someone out. I think there has to be a kind of veracity in facing the issue.

### **Robins**

Of course, it is very attractive to concentrate on the grand issues, these Huntington issues of clash of civilisations. But what about trade, what about foreign direct investment? Surely these are the "quiet" things, the things we don't notice. But they are the real things that bond us together, that integrate us, that create sinews and the Customs Union, perhaps not in the short time but in the longer term, will continue to do that as well.

So let us not neglect the real cement of this relationship. It is not a sort of "all-or-nothing" relationship. If we are talking about Turkish membership of the EU sometime after 2010, then let us talk about what the EU will look like in the year 2010 and afterwards and let us think about and imagine how Turkey will fit into that. It seems to me that the larger the European Union becomes, the more differentiated it is likely to become. And then one can start to think about how Turkey will fit into a differentiated European Union.

So let us be calm, let us think about trade, about economic ties and let us think long-term. Let us be imaginative, let us not be too hung-up on the "today" and "tomorrow" of the relationship.

### **Cavanaugh**

I would like to follow the British pragmatism with an American comment. Around this table it increasingly sounds as if people are defining "being Western" as being a member of the European Union. My country, to this point, has no intention of joining the European Union but we certainly regard ourselves as Western.

No doubt it is important for Turkey to be tied to Europe, but I think it is a mistake to say that if it is not fully embraced by the Union then it is not "Western". And I think it is equally a mistake to say that if Turkey is not immediately accepted, it is going to join Russia in some new bloc. I think there can be no doubt about Turkey's "Westemess". The question is simply one of how they are to be integrated into this economic and political circle.

### **Schmiegelow**

I am somewhat concerned that the question of Turkish membership of the EU seems to be taking on an increasingly psychological dimension and that it is also beginning to have negative repercussions within Germany. In any case, we can see that those Turks in Germany who were previously perfectly willing to be integrated, now feel that they are being forced more and more into a ghetto situation because they are being given the impression

that they are not wanted in Europe and that they will never be given the chance to belong there. Samuel Huntington's theory of the "Clash of Civilizations" between the Christian West and Islam only serves to strengthen that impression.

I think we need to be a little more careful in the way we use particular terms and concepts. The one thing that is clear is that all the strategic arguments speak in favour of bringing Turkey closer to the EU. And so do economic considerations. Herr Horstmann quite rightly described the obstacles which still remain on both the Turkish and the European sides as "homework" which still needs to be done and which, though it will take time, can be completed.

But now, in place of these obstacles, the cultural problem is being played up by the media and I get the impression that our elites are gradually succumbing to the sweet poison of the "Clash of Civilizations". I would warn against that. Instead of concentrating attention on the threat to Western culture, to which Turkey does not belong, we should far rather be looking to cultural pluralism and religious freedom in Turkey. Turkey wants to be a modern, secular state, the great majority of whose citizens belong to an Islamic culture - just as we in Europe accept that we belong to a Christian culture

which comprises, as we should not forget, quite considerable confessional differences. Our own history in the West provides us with a number of examples of how easily theories about the clash of "cultures" can turn into self-fulfilling prophecies.

Cultural differences should not prevent us from believing in a universal civilization, even if it is slow in developing. Democracy and the rule of law are elements of that concept, just as are science and the principle of religious freedom. And not least of all, that concept of civilization involves the taming of violence; it is not reconcilable with terrorism or with violent repression by the state. And here I see a clear parallel with the Kurdish problem and this is also one of the main obstacles to Turkey's EU-membership. But in spite of all this, we should be encouraged by the fact that democracy is on the advance everywhere - even in Asia - despite all the cultural differences which are involved.

### **Schmidt**

The cultural question cannot be dealt with as easily as Herr Schmiegelow made it sound. We do not need to reach immediately for Samuel Huntington and the "Clash of Civilizations" but no one would deny that co-existence between peoples who belong to different cultures and religions can involve some tough problems.

It is not a matter of defending the Christian West against Islam. On the contrary, we are, amongst other things, experiencing the bizarre situation in which a secular Turkey is questioning our position on the extent of religious tolerance because we have allegedly strayed too far from religious principles.

I am not sure either whether this Church Congress mentality which involves subordinating one's own religious convictions almost completely, does not in fact meet the justified demand for tolerance to a much lesser degree than a well-founded defence of one's own religious point of view might do. In saying this, I simply wish to counter a tendency which is taking hold in our very secularized society in Germany, and to a degree in Europe too, and which, rather than making it easier, could make it much more difficult for us to handle some of the manifestations of other cultures and religions in a tolerant way.

I do not want to go into any great detail on the question of the alleged spiritual affinity between Herr Kohl and Mr Erdogan; Kohl would certainly not quote the Christian West as a means of expressing any reservations there may be with regard to Turkey's membership of the EU. Nevertheless, the meeting of the European Christian Democrats in Brussels on 4th March was preceded by a well-orchestrated, tactical foreign policy operation by the Turks which was met with some sympathy in the USA. In consequence, some Europeans felt obliged to conclude that the American view of matters was not sufficient to meet the criteria for membership of the European Union.

However, I think we need to put an end to this rhetorical cockfighting and this mutual, verbal wind-up. And in this respect, I would not play down the fact that the media in both our countries have to accept their fair share of the blame. In my opinion, the Turkish media in particular still need to accustom themselves to adopting the more reputable approaches practised in democracies elsewhere.

On top of this, the German government's Press and Information Office is still incapable of providing our politicians with systematic analyses from the Turkish newspapers which appear in Germany - as they do for all of the German newspapers. Despite this, we politicians have to recognize that Turkish public opinion is being formed in Germany as well as in Turkey and that this sometimes involves the creation of legends rather than the provision of solidly researched news.

Finally, I will state clearly: Like Philip Robins, I believe that no one can deny Turkey the right to apply for membership of the European Union. And no one should say, today, that its accession is impossible. But the question of the final form of that accession and which circle it will join, will not be decided in 1997.

### **Schmiegelow**

I do not say, Herr Schmidt, that Germany ought to give up its Christian heritage. On the contrary, the more aware Germany is of its Christian heritage, the easier it will find it to live together with people of other faiths. I would quote the example of Prussia, a state which was very confident about its own values but unusually open and tolerant in its approach toward coexistence with foreign cultures and religions.

Of course, in this connection, political education has a particularly important role to play in making all our citizens, irrespective of their religious or cultural allegiances, aware of those things which must be

respected: democracy, constitution, the rule of law, governmental monopoly on force and human rights.

### **Horstmann**

I agree with Herr Schmidt that we have had every reason to complain about the increase in "megaphone diplomacy". That is why Secretary of State Öymen and his German colleagues agreed to try to get away from the megaphone and return to the microphone. This high-level Bergedorf Round Table conference is part of that process.

### **Rühl**

As a point of information I would mention that in 1982, the German government's Press and Information Office carried out a systematic study of the Turkish press in Germany and its reports and commentaries in Turkey on Turkish life in Germany as well as into the commentaries as they appeared in the Turkish and German press; it was a very comprehensive study. After studying the report, Helmut Schmidt, who was then Federal Chancellor, immediately ordered that it should not be released under any circumstances because the tone of the Turkish press commentaries on Germany was likely to damage German-Turkish relations and to harm peaceful relations with Turks in Germany. And I can only confirm that the impression which that study gave really did sound as if the Turkish press was reporting from enemy territory.

### **Stürmer**

In view of the fact that Samuel Huntington is being continually quoted here, but not very fairly interpreted, I would like to clarify a few points.

First: It is obvious that there are deep cultural schisms which are likely to persist for a long time to come and that, as Graham Fuller says, globalization and ethnicity are closely entwined. It is understandable, emotionally, that one should try to wish this away but in the hard light of reason, it cannot be done.

Second: In Germany in particular, Huntington is totally misinterpreted on one point. He says emphatically: Be cautious in transferring your Western values to other cultures. You make no effort whatsoever to understand these cultures. And then you allow politics free reign in this one-way street.

Third: Huntington's thesis is that politics cannot assume, in future, that there will only be an American or Western-type civilization. Other world civilizations will exist alongside it which have not the slightest desire to emulate America as soon as possible.

Fourth: Politics will have the important task of mediating in cultural conflicts, whenever they arise - whether we want to or not. If it does not, there will be terrible wars.

### **Alaton**

Let me give you the viewpoint of a Turkish businessman who feels a great responsibility for creating a more democratic Turkey, a Turkey that Europe will be proud to take as a full member - and this in the foreseeable future, because I don't have much time left. I want to see Turkey in the European Union soon.

The problem in Turkey today is how to create in Turkey a mental attitude of receptivity for the prevailing democratic standards in Turkey itself. It is a process of re-education, a problem of how to make European democratic standards understood by the Turkish man-in-the-street and, most importantly, by the Turkish bureaucracy. It is the question of how we educate all the taxi drivers in Turkey so that they stop when they see the red light and how we implement the same human right standards all through the bureaucracy.

Turkey is going through a transition, a process of democratization. So, my message to all you Europeans is, please have some patience with the Turks. The omnipotence of the state is now being questioned every day in the media. There are TV debates. This is very new for us. The media has regained a good part of its respectability, especially since the famous crash called the "Süsülük Accident". The public is becoming more courageous in questioning the untouchability of the politicians and of the top echelons of the bureaucracy. In short, the citizen is learning how to render the state accountable.

Now, actually, the political arena in Ankara does not present a picture we are very proud of as citizens of Turkey. The rules of democracy are bent and even totally ignored by most politicians. We citizens of

Turkey are amazed and very much displeased by what we see on the TV screen when our parliamentarians behave in an improper way. But there is a positive aspect to this picture. The public is beginning to develop a civil mentality.

We experienced the spontaneous solidarity of the citizens in the movement we called "one minute of darkness for continuous light". That was a very important turning point in our society and in the way that civil society is being directed into a democratic atmosphere. There are more and more NGOs being created so that the business community's responsibility in making Turkey more democratic is coming increasingly to the forefront and there are ever-increasing efforts to participate in this process of democratization. We, the TÜSIAD have prepared five reports which we have delivered to Parliament. So, the Industrialists and Businessmen's Association is responsible and is aware of that responsibility.

Another positive development has been by the military. The military now feels more accountable towards the civil society. For the first time in the history of the Republic in 70 years, we were invited by the General Staff to a briefing on the present problems facing Turkey. The result of the briefing was that the military said that Turkey is actually facing two enemies: Terrorism by the PKK and aggressive fundamentalism. And then the military asked the business community to contribute positively to our relations with Greece.

Next week we will have an NGO meeting which will deal with the question of poverty. The whole TÜSIAD Board will be there. I will be chairing the meeting as a founder of one of these NGO think-tanks. The Turkish business community now feels more responsible toward society in organizing these NGOs and aiming at adopting the same democratic standards which actually prevail in European society. So, please have more patience.

### **Gasteyger**

Mr Alaton's very encouraging words lend support to Mr Fuller's belief that Turkey is changing fast - and in a positive way. And not the least of the reasons for this is that the institutions which have been mentioned are behaving in a politically responsible way. But, as always, we must make a distinction here. Just as in every other country, and certainly in every democracy, there are differences - there are institutions which are more capable of reform and which are more open than others. An entrepreneur such as yourself, Mr Alaton, can probably speak more freely than a government official or a member of the armed forces. And, consequently, the conclusions which foreigners reach may well differ depending on the partner they are dealing with in any given situation.

### **Rouleau**

My first ever visit to this country was in May 1960. I made a "mistake" as a journalist - I was a "Le Monde" correspondent at that time. I wrote an editorial in "Le Monde" predicting that the Turkish army would stage a coup d'état and take power in Turkey. The Turkish ambassador at that time, who believed in my good faith, told me that I was totally wrong and that the army would never move and invited me to Turkey, on behalf of his government, to see for myself. So I took the plane some days later to Ankara, and the next morning the army seized power.

So, for 37 years I have observed Turkey very closely. First as a journalist and then as a diplomat - I was an ambassador here in Ankara. I have learned to understand the Turks, to respect them and especially to sympathize with them. One thing I have learned, is that a Turk will accept all criticism as long as it comes from a friend.

The Europeans have to convince the Turks that they are true friends, that it is in their own interest as much as Turkey's that Turkey be integrated in the European Union and that the Europeans, like the Americans, do not want to break up Turkey. We are very much attached to the unity of Turkey and to its territorial integrity. We must convince them that we are not looking for pretexts to keep Turkey out of the European Union but that there are real criteria which have to be fulfilled if Turkey is ever to be a member of the Union.

I would like to extract a couple of recommendations made by the TÜSIAD which is the union of businessmen in this country. They published a report on democracy last January. The first one is that the system in Turkey has to be democratized concretely - not in words - and that the constitution, the laws have to be amended or altogether dropped in the same way Spain or Portugal did before they entered the European Union. They concluded that freedoms should be guaranteed to all citizens including those who choose to have their own ethnic or cultural identity.

I agree totally with Mr Turkmen when he says that domestic politics do have a direct impact on foreign policy. But I would add to that, that the attitude of foreign powers and of Europe in particular, might have an impact on Turkey's domestic politics. And if we want to encourage the Turks, I think we should be more specific about how and when Turkey would be introduced in the European Union. That will encourage the Turks to go faster in what they are already doing by democratizing their institutions and putting their house in order.

## Öymen

Mr Alaton referred to the example of the taxi driver. It is true, in Turkey, taxi drivers do not usually stop at red traffic lights. But this phenomenon is not peculiar to Turkish taxi drivers. The Turkish people do not want any more being stopped by the red traffic lights of the European Union and the European Parliament. We all want to move ahead in the direction of European Union.

I would like to make one or two remarks about the comments we had before.

First, with regard to the remarks of Mr Khamidulin, I would say that probably no one else can understand the Russian better than the Turks, and Turkey. We understand their feelings at the loss of some of their territories when the independent states emerged. You will probably remember that 27 independent countries emerged from the old Ottoman Empire. But the difference is that Turkey has never tried to establish any sort of Turkophone community or commonwealth of Turkophone nations with its former territories.

We regarded them as fully independent states from the beginning of their independence. This was our policy at the beginning of the Republic and it is still our policy. We do not have any political intentions whatsoever with regard to these territories. We want to help them only inasmuch as they wish for our help and our assistance. We know, and it is understandable, that they don't need any "Big Brothers" to guide them or to tell them what to do and what not to do. Therefore, we believe that all of us should respect the full independence of the new independent states.

It is true that we have cultural ties - and there is no harm in having such ties with any country. In central Asia and among Turkey's immediate neighbours, there are 35 million people of Turkish origin. Our sole aspiration is to have good cultural contacts and ties and to have good economic cooperation - nothing more, nothing less.

In the Russian Federation itself, 15 percent of the population are of Turkish origin and we are very happy to see that this population can now enjoy a new, democratic mode of life in Russia. We regard them as a "bridge of friendship". We do not regard central Asia as an area of competition between Turkey, Russia, Iran, China and so on. We all have to cooperate to help them to consolidate their independence, their democracy and their economic development - and there is nothing more to it.

With regard to Mr Abramowitz' remarks on the Greek lobby in America - we cannot counter their anti-Turkish agitation but we have found a more clever approach. We have now started to cooperate with the Greek lobby. And for the first time, and thanks to the assistance of the government of the United States, the president of the Greek lobby has visited Turkey, has visited Ankara and has visited me. He told me that they are very happy with the new climate of rapprochement between Turkey and Greece, that they are ready to contribute to this rapprochement and they have invited me to their headquarters in Washington the next time I visit the United States.

I admire the honesty and the frankness of Mr Klose, when he says that probably, Germany would prefer Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary to join the Union first. We now understand that in your dealing with the candidates, the conclusions have been written first and now you are looking for the arguments which will justify those conclusions. This is precisely what we criticize because if we talk about setting objective criteria, objective standards and objective yardsticks whilst also having priorities and preferences for some countries, then there has to be some justification.

You cannot simply say that you prefer Poland or Hungary just because they are your neighbours. You must have objective criteria and objective justification as to why Turkey is not among this group. You must say that Turkey cannot join in this first "wave" because it has this deficiency which it is unable or unwilling to put right at present.

We would, therefore, urge our friends from Germany and the other countries in Europe to be as objective as possible because our willingness to join this family of European nations is not inspired by your cheque-books or your credit cards. But by a belief in our common values which are based on various positive elements of our common political culture.

Do not first prefer others and then try to find excuses for not including Turkey. We are confident that if you use objective criteria, Turkey will be in the first group.

Mr Boidevaix said that there will be a differentiated Europe. This is true. So, why are you afraid of Turkish membership? If you want to have a "hard core" in Europe with some circles around that, as Mr Lamers suggested some time ago, then what is wrong with Turkey? If we place ourselves in one of the circles that fits the conditions, that would ease the tension and it would make the situation easier.

Mrs Vollmer spoke about the differences between civilizations and domestic problems and so on. Of course, each country has domestic problems. But we have noted not only what you said, but also what you have not said. For instance, I wonder whether you were completely happy when you saw some former communists returning to power in some Eastern European countries. Don't you believe that it creates some domestic problems? Do you believe that only Turkey has domestic problems?

Therefore, when we are assessing domestic problems, I believe that we should not exaggerate. If we have domestic problems, there are also domestic solutions. As long as the system and as long as our multi-party democracy survives, there will be solutions. We are more experienced than any other candidate. So far, we have had 13 democratic elections in Turkey. The best performance among the other candidates is three. You should have some trust in our democratic feelings and democratic experience.

On the role of the military, I would mention that the military has stressed on many occasions that they observe the rules of democracy and human rights and that the military has urged that Turkey should join the European Union as soon as possible. The Chief of General Staff has told me personally that the Turkish military will be very happy if we join the European Union as soon as possible. These are not the words of an army which wishes to disrupt democratic society because our military knows very well that we cannot join the European Union if we lose our democratic system and democratic structures.

On the question of emigration to Germany. I was in Bonn two days ago to speak with my counterparts about the immigration of Turks. If this is the main problem, I believe that we can find a solution to that as well. I told Mr Hartmann and Mr von Plötz and other colleagues that Turkey is ready to adopt a flexible approach in talking about solutions to the situation without giving up our contractual rights.

Our belief is that the day we join the Union, the number of Turks in Germany will not increase. It will probably decrease - as was the case with Spain. Everybody was afraid that there would be a massive influx of Spanish unemployed persons from Andalusia and Extremadura. What happened? There was more investment in Spain and the number of Spanish workers in Europe diminished. Why should it not be the same of Turkey? Don't forget that, according to German figures, the number of Turks who have returned so far in the last 30 years from Germany, has reached two million people. With due respect to the friendly atmosphere in Germany, not all the Turks who live there dream of spending the rest of their lives there. There will not be any excess of Turks - particularly not in places where they are not wanted.

Mr Fuller mentioned the Kurdish problem in connection with minority rights. If we are talking about minorities and the tolerance of peoples of other religions and cultures, my feeling is that you will be hard-put to find a better example in world history. Don't forget that in 1492 we invited the Jewish minorities from Spain and that they have been part-and-parcel of our society for the last 500 years. There has not been one single case of ill-treatment of the Jewish minority. It would go against common sense to believe that the Turks are tolerant only of the Jews but not of any other people from any other religion or culture. They are all our friends and they are part-and-parcel of our society and I believe that the Turks should not be criticized for a lack of tolerance.

I thank Mr Veremis for his very positive and very promising statements and I wish that all the politicians from all the European Union countries would say exactly the same as what Mr Pangalos said on the full membership of Turkey in the European Union. On that matter, we are thankful to Greece for setting a very good example to other politicians. Some of them, for instance have said on several occasions that the eastern borders of Germany should not be the permanent borders of the European Union. That is absolutely true. However, we wish that they would say exactly the same about the eastern borders of Greece.

Mr Cavanaugh pointed out that westernization does not only mean the European Union and this is absolutely correct. We should not forget that the further west you go, the closer you come the east. I believe that the path toward westernization involves nothing new for us. We embarked on this path many decades before the establishment of the European Union and we will continue along this path.

We are particularly grateful for the solid cooperation and the support of the United States in our endeavours to achieve greater westernization.

### **Klose**

I have the impression that the discussion here is returning to the track which leads to the assumption that Turkey's membership of the European Union is dependent on the goodwill, or otherwise, of the Europeans and of the Federal Republic of Germany in particular. This really is a very limited view, to put it mildly.

I regard the view that a country only has to meet a particular set of conditions in order to be admitted, automatically, into the European Union, as totally unpolitical. Certainly, it provides a basis for starting negotiations. But actual membership also depends on quite different factors. It depends, for example, on whether the EU has the funds available to finance the enormous cost of an extension.

At the moment I still find it difficult to imagine how Poland's accession is going to be financed when I think about that country's agricultural sector. And Turkey's agricultural sector will not involve less expense. Everyone here is aware of the financial situation in the European Union and the European countries. Pointing this out has nothing to do with goodwill or negative intentions - it is a real problem and one which we should not try to brush under the carpet.

I am sure that I did not use the word "fundamentalism" in my initial speech but if I did, it was qualified by "political extremist". I am quite aware, Herr Kühnhardt, that fundamentalism also has something to do with religious renewal and with the deep-felt needs of many people. Nevertheless, we cannot ignore the fact that the Turks who live in Germany are becoming increasingly involved in a sort of parallel society which has absolutely no interest in integration. Quite the opposite. It is concerned with the deliberate segregation of a section of the population which does not want to be integrated. And here I would draw your attention to a study carried out in Bielefeld on this topic. If this is not enough, everyone of us is able to draw on our own experience to illustrate it. It may well be that Turkish and German politics have played their role in this development.

I do not believe that we have anything at all to gain by closing our eyes to the facts and if we are not willing to be open and blunt, even here in this debate, then we will be left with nothing more than the empty, rhetorical phrases which Herr Kramer has already warned us about.

I believe it is important that Mr Alaton has asked us to have a little more confidence. And Mr Fuller has rightly pointed out that Turkish society is involved in a process of rapid change. These are all encouraging signs.

I would add just one more point for our Turkish friends. We should welcome, unreservedly, the fact that the Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels has awarded its Peace Prize this year to a very prominent Turkish-language author, Yasar Kemal. This is an outstanding gesture in many respects, both for German society and for Turkish society and politics. I would be more than pleased if this signal were to be positively received in Turkey.

### **Gasteyger**

This certainly does represent an attempt on the German side to give a positive signal.

### **Weizsäcker**

This is the most prestigious prize awarded in Germany.

### **Öymen**

From the German point of view, as Herr Schmidt has explained, Turkey's movement toward Europe is a process which involves foreign as well as domestic politics. I see the situation in a similar way from Turkey's point of view. In other words, there are widely differing views on Europe within Turkey's domestic political scene.

As a parliamentary representative of the Social Democratic Republican People's Party (CHP), I know that I share the same views as many of my party colleagues on the question of Turkey's accession to the European Union and we were already highlighting the preconditions which that accession would involve well before they were demanded by others from outside Turkey. Amongst these conditions were items such as more effective observance of human rights and the alteration of certain articles in our Constitution and certain laws. It is not only my own party which is making demands for these changes - these demands are coming from other parties on the Left and the Right, too. Or, at least,

many of the members of these parties are making such demands. But there are views which oppose these changes.

Herr Klose may say, for example, that Yasar Kemal is a great Turkish writer but by no means everyone in Turkey shares that view. Nevertheless, the great majority would express enthusiastic support for the decision of the "Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels" to award the prize to Yasar Kemal and I am sure that quite a number of official figures from Turkey will be attending the award ceremony in Frankfurt. But, just as in other democratic countries, there is a range of opinion in Turkey, too. We should not overlook that and we should not, therefore, always talk about what the Turks supported or what the Turks rejected.

As far as the observance of human rights is concerned - the total abolition of torture, greater tolerance on the Kurdish question - we agree completely and we tell our voters that we will implement these measures when we are elected to government. But when things get to that stage, there will be, despite all the good will in the world, hurdles which slow the whole process down. And others will seek to exploit that.

We have already heard about the meeting of the Christian Democrat parties which took place in Brussels on 4th March and about the statement that "Turkey has another culture and does not belong to Europe". Several participants at the conference later made their own comments on this. It was said, for example, that what was meant were the differences between Islam and Christianity. Some people said so quite openly. There was criticism of that view. I am thinking, for example, of Theo Summer's article in "Die Zeit". It was also made clear that the German Federal Chancellor made no remarks to that effect. But I have not yet heard any corresponding rebuttal from Herr Kohl himself. In Turkey itself, the message that it was all a misunderstanding has not been accepted so easily. As the remarks in question were not officially disowned, it had to be assumed that they were not made completely unintentionally. The result was a loss of confidence in Turkey's actual intentions. At the very least, it was certain that the impression would be created in Turkey that a number of politicians and influential figures in Europe viewed Turkey in this light. Personally, I do not believe that because I know that many of my friends among the Social Democrats and the "Greens" do not think that way.

On other hand, there are those in Turkey who fundamentally reject Turkey's convergence with Europe. The Refah Party, for example, expressed this view whilst they were still in opposition. Their message was: Christians and Moslems are different, our place is not in a Christian organization, we should be working towards the unification of the Islamic states. When the Welfare Party got into government, this message was watered down politically but that does not alter the fact that this view has always been represented within that party and comments such as those made in Brussels only serve to strengthen that view. As a result, Erbakan and Kohl gain support from their mutual rejection. At least, that is the impression which is given.

It has not been a simple matter for Turkey to make approaches to Europe and to set itself the goal of membership of the European Union. Since the 19th century, there have been those in Turkey who have supported westernization and there have been those who have opposed it for Islamic reasons. Nevertheless, since Atatürk's times, a program of westernization has been a continuous element of state policy. But, as the last elections showed, the number of those who are opposed to westernization and who say that Turkey's place is not in Europe, is increasing. We should not forget that 20 % of the electorate voted this way and, in so doing, made the Welfare Party the strongest party.

To sum up, I would emphasize again that our Turkish democracy also encompasses different political persuasions and that events in Europe work to strengthen one party and to weaken the other. The Europeans would do well not to forget that. I believe that we should all do our utmost to counter the loss of confidence which is making itself felt among the Turkish public. We Social Democrats are counting on our Social Democrat friends and on the Greens in Germany. We do not feel able to count on the CDU because there has, as yet, been no rebuttal. In other words, we place our trust in those in Germany and in Europe who have made it clear that a rejection of Turkey does not represent majority opinion.

## **Türkmen**

On the subject of democratization: No measures in Turkey towards democratization will succeed if it is done for the sake of entering the European Union. This would be only cosmetic. But we have progressed beyond this stage. Democratization is taking place in Turkey because there is pressure from within Turkey. There is a very strong civil society. There are the institutions of Turkey, not only the army, but the courts, the Constitutional Court and there are hundreds of NGOs now fighting for

more democracy in Turkey - more democracy in the sense of human rights because the structure for democracy is already in place.

So when we talk about democratization, we are not doing it for the sake of entering Europe. We are doing it because we need it and we feel the need ever more strongly. Mr Altan Öymen's party is fighting for this. Not because they want us to join the European Union, but because they think this is the best way for Turkey to become a modern society.

### **Sommer**

I would like to make a comment on the fateful meeting of the BCD parties in Brussels on March 4th. I criticized the remark in question about Turkey sharply in "Die Zeit" but I am no longer quite so sure that my criticism was really justified, at least as far as it involved Federal Chancellor Kohl. Kohl is reported to have said only that the European Union was not able to support the integration of more Anatolian farmers at the present time.

In a subsequent press statement, the Belgian Prime Minister, Martens, concluded simply that whilst very intensive cooperation with Turkey was desirable, membership of the European Union did not come into the question. A week later, he then interpreted his statement to mean that Turkey might indeed one day be able to join a pluralistic Europe such as that we are aiming for.

I think we might have been better off without all these explanations.

### **Bagci**

As Herr Klose said, the Turkish press in Germany is hindering the integration of the Turks there to a considerable extent. But does integration mean Germanizing all the Turks? That is hardly possible. Young Turkish people in Germany have the opportunity, for example, to watch Mehmet Ali Birand's television program every Monday evening. The same goes for TRT. And I welcome that. It was not possible when I was a student in Germany and if I wanted to keep abreast of events in Turkey, I had to rely on reading Turkish newspapers which were already several days out of date and which did not always provide news coverage on certain issues anyway. The present situation could also have a positive influence on Turkish-German relations.

However, a precondition for that is that the press publications and programs are used properly because they can also be conducive to negative developments. For example, "Özgür politika" (Free Politics), the mouthpiece of the PKK, also appears in Germany and is sold there.

In this context, there is another aspect which seems to me to be important. The thoughts and feelings of many of the Turks who live in Germany are rooted in Turkey. This attitude plays an important part in maintaining their Turkish identity.

At present there are around 20,000 Turkish students at German universities. These young people represent a massive intellectual potential. If just 25 % of them, let us say 5,000, were to return to Turkey in order to play an active role, then relations between Turkey and Germany would change fundamentally. What the government, the politicians, in Turkey are doing at present is to reject and exclude these Turks and that only promotes their radicalization because they do not see themselves being accepted in Germany society either. That is the quintessence of the last few years. The essential cause of radicalization is to be found in the absence of opportunity available to young people.

Herr Klose mentioned the book by Heitmeier. Whilst it is certainly worth reading, it nevertheless fails to connect with reality because Heitmeier is not in a position to see the Turkish rationale and mentality with Turkish eyes. He sees things from a German point of view. He is certainly correct in saying that 2.1 million Turks have no German passport. But what is missing is an analysis of what these people's lives would be like as Turks. How are they to feel really at home in Germany and to assimilate the social, cultural and family values of Germany society if they have no real chance of integrating themselves in Germany? And on top of that, Germany and Turkey are situated too close to each other - the situation would be different if it were Australia which was involved. That is why we must discuss the subject of integration and think about ways in which these people can be won over for both the German and the Turkish societies.

### **Klose**

I believe that both the German and the Turkish policies on the integration of the Turks living in Germany are seriously flawed. On a legal plane, we Germans still treat these people, many of whom

are third-generation residents, as guests who are staying in Germany temporarily, despite the fact that Germany has become their home. And, like a broody hen, Turkey is unwilling to give the Turks in Germany the freedom to find their own new home and regards them almost as fifth-columnists. All this makes it extremely difficult for these young people to develop an identity of their own - and that helps neither you nor us.

I believe it is important that we find a solution which aims at integration. Herr Schmiede-low's reference to culture is correct in that the Germans' image of Turkey relies largely on impressions gained from the Turks who live in Germany, however accurate this may or may not be. Whatever the case, I would strongly urge Turkey to intensify its efforts in the field of cultural and educational policy in its dealings with Germany.

### **Stürmer**

Whatever the reference, the Germans in particular should not always behave as though they had invented human rights. And the other Europeans might do well to remember that the democracies in Europe generally got themselves into a mess during the 1920s. It would do no harm for all of us to get down from our high horses for a while.

As far as the relationship between the military and democracy in Turkey is concerned, I would point out that without the revolution which started from the top, Turkey would probably be in the same unhappy situation as almost all the other countries of the Middle East with the exception of Israel. The military authorities in this country made a very important contribution toward preserving democracy. In every other country in the region, dictatorship is regarded as completely normal. And it is not all that long ago, for example, that European countries were ruled by absolutist monarchies. I believe that with regard to democracy, the Turkish military has taken over an important function in this country. In the West, this whole process took place in a different way and it took far longer.

The theme of our debate is: "Turkey at the crossroads of geo-politics". We have been looking at Turkey primarily from the north-west but as Herr Gasteyger said in his introduction, Turkey's problems in the sphere of foreign policy cover the full 360 degrees. That means that it is also important to look in detail at Turkey's strategic role in relation to central Asia, the Caspian Sea and so on. The oil reserves here in particular, mean that this region will be one of the great geostrategic axes of the future.

And we should not forget that Turkey is one of the few powers which is promoting the peace process in the Near and Middle East - a process which has few friends at present, Israel included.

These are just two of the trump cards which Turkey holds in its bid for membership of the European Union. I am surprised that Turkey is not playing these trumps more actively in its dealings with the Europeans.

And finally, the European Union. In America, the expression "European overload" is surfacing. The Europeans have probably taken on too much with their extension plans. I believe that Maastricht II will need Maastricht III and IV before the extension can take place. And, as Lothar Rühl said, we are still miles away from a common foreign and security policy. We are faced here with massive tasks and unless we can solve them, Europe is hardly likely to achieve the status of an independent, political power.

### **Gasteyger**

I think the fact that you, Herr Stürmer, like Herr Kramer and Herr Kühnhardt, have brought up the question of extended perspectives for Turkey as well as for Europe. This could be of vital importance to the Europeans for example, with regard to the oil reserves in central Asia. We should indeed avoid concentrating on a limited European viewpoint.

You have also praised the role of the Turkish military in maintaining democracy in Turkey. I am sure that General Yüksel will be able to provide us with further enlightenment on this point.

### **Yüksel**

In his book "Rise and Fall of the Great Powers", Paul Kennedy points out that the Ottoman Empire represented one of the most powerful state structures of the 16th century. At the time, Europe consisted only of small kingdoms, duchies, city states and so on. Why did the Ottoman Empire collapse whilst Europe went on to develop into a superpower? A number of factors were obviously involved and one of these was most certainly human enlightenment.

The Ottoman armies had their first military encounters with the West long before Ottoman society began to develop its contacts with the West. That means that these societies remained completely isolated from each other during the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. It, was only the military which had experience of dealing with the West. It suffered defeats and it began to investigate the reasons behind these defeats. The Turkish Army recognized the importance of modernization long before Atatürk.

The Turkish military has never been interested in ruling our state but it has always had a keen interest in modernizing the country. And this is our way of defending Atatürk's legacy. One should bear this in mind before condemning interventions by the Turkish Army.

Turkey's present situation, as we have been amply reminded here, is characterized by a complex of problems which are very uncomfortable for us. There is, for example, the question of Islamization and there are ethnic problems. Nevertheless, on the basis of my own long experience - I served in the army for 42 years and I am now 73 years old - I am convinced that Turkey has the political and social resources which will enable it to master the situation, even though this is not a simple task.

If I now look once more at the rise of Europe - at its struggle for secularization and against superstition, for human rights, for the rights of the individual, for enlightenment - and if I look at how Europe has managed to overcome all its difficult problems, then it is in the hope that we in Turkey will be able to profit from Europe's experience and thus overcome our own problems more easily.

However, in doing so, we should not forget that until 1923, Turkey was ruled by a theocratic and totalitarian regime under which the freedom of the individual counted for nothing. That is why the process will take a long time and why success will not come overnight. But I have confidence that the social and political forces which have been at work for centuries and which were secured in Atatürk's Republic will enable us to overcome all these problems.

I would like to make a few comments on Turkey's wish to join the European Union and on NATO, to which we have belonged since the very beginning. There have always been problems when it came to a coupling. In this context, I would remind us all that the arguments which were employed against Turkey's membership of NATO at the time, are exactly the same as those which are now being used against our entry to the European Union. There was a lot of opposition against Turkey's admission to NATO. People wanted an alliance with Turkey but they did not want Turkey to be taken into the Military Alliance - only the American Navy supported that. The Alliance's priorities, it was argued, rested in Central Europe and every effort had to be concentrated there. Despite this, General Eisenhower was able to convince President Truman of Turkey's importance for Europe's southern flank and to secure Turkey's membership in NATO. This led to a strategic coupling of Germany and Turkey. However, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the centre of threat for Central Europe shifted some 1000 km to the East. The strategic coupling turned to a "decoupling" and Germany gave first signs of this during the Gulf War.

During the Gulf War, Germany was initially against stationing NATO's rapid deployment force in south-east Anatolia - even though some NATO exercises had taken place there. The force was later sent there nevertheless. Today, too, it is apparent that Germany's approach carries particular weight in the matter of Turkey's accession to the European Union. Germany did not, as was expected, support Turkey, and we fear that the decoupling process is being extended to this issue.

I feel especially strongly about this because the good relationship between Germany and Turkey is something which I first heard about during my childhood and which was later emphasized during my military training. It was something which was accepted, for a long time, as a simple fact in Turkey. This process, which has been going on for centuries, is in a very difficult phase right now and we should do everything we can to revive it.

## Lake

The political situation in Turkey has been paralysed for quite a long time, more or less. And I think it is arguable that in 1995, it was only because of the pressure of the European Union to get the Customs Union ratified in the European Parliament that we managed to get some changes in the fields of constitution and human rights. In fact, changes of the constitution made at that time have not yet been put into law. But the fact is that the European Union does have a big impact on domestic politics here, when the time is right.

The European Union now is providing a safety net, a guarantee of democracy, given the current domestic situation. This is a very important factor. I do believe that Turkey is going through a prolonged transition period. There is a kind of struggle between modernists and conservatives - religious conservatives, nationalists and so on.

Turkey is also going through a curiously post-war transition, following what has happened in the south-east. We in Europe tend to misunderstand the trauma that the south-east crisis has brought upon Turkey, both domestically, and in terms of its image and its foreign policy overseas. That part of what is happening now is a post-war transition.

In fact, the speed of the transition in Turkey is at a different speed from the demands of the rest of the world on Turkey and, paradoxically, partly because of the demands that Turkey is making on the rest of the world, particularly on Europe. Turkey wants to get into Europe. Therefore it has to make a transition fairly rapidly. But in fact the pace of transition is necessarily slow because Turkey is a democracy. You cannot just make certain changes by decree. Nevertheless, the continuing "paralysis" in domestic politics does not help.

But this is a big advance, the fact that the whole country is politicized now, everything is transparent, a big advance on even when I arrived here when there were so many taboos. Now there are virtually no taboos. If you look at the TÜSIAD document which my friend İshak Alaton had such a hand in, you will see that there is a whole range of new reference points, you can always refer to these reference points now. The role of civic society, paradoxically, has been enhanced by this paralysis in the political establishment. In the media I have the highest respect for the columnists, the editorialists, people like Mehmet Ali Birand and Altan Öymen and others who I have known for many years.

And the private sector? When I came here, the private sector looked down their nose at me for raising questions of Kurds and human rights. Now the private sector has taken the lead in this field. There are hundreds of new NGOs in Turkey and they are playing an advanced role. Even the military has joined in this process in its own way. The private sector has remained somehow immune from all of the political deadlock, it is booming. The country is growing at 7 % a year and the prosperity is spreading back from the Istanbul region into the hinterland. That is why you have so many Anatolian tigers now.

So I have a certain confidence that Turkey will come out of this period. It will become more like Europe. But, more important, it will actually become more like itself, with fewer or even no taboos. But at this critical period it is even more important that Turkey feels that it has an anchor, an open door in Europe.

### **Kramer**

It is apparent from the debate here that the special relationship between Germany and Turkey cannot be disregarded in any consideration of Turkey's relations with Europe because it casts a shadow over them. As a consequence, in Germany as well as in Turkey, the question of Turkish membership of the EU is usually perceived within too narrow a framework. At the least, this creates the impression that the bilateral problems affecting Germany and Turkey are simply being extended into Europe and that this lies at the root of the whole development of the relations. We must try, on both sides, to get away from that impression.

Michael Lake has quite rightly pointed out that the process of reform in Turkey is taking place on democratic lines, and that is always a difficult undertaking. It is, for example, in Germany as in Turkey, the case that what responsible politicians say is often a reflection of internal political wranglings rather than an objective evaluation of the actual problems involved.

On the Turkish side, I think Mrs Çiller's totally irresponsible exploitation of the Customs Union theme during her election campaign at the end of 1995, which made it difficult for both sides to deal with the question in a reasonable way subsequently, provided a clear example of this.

This apart, I can only add my support to all those voices which have said that we must stop equating the European Union with Europe. The EU is primarily an organization designed to achieve certain goals and, in the short term, it is hardly likely to become a political community in the sense of a vehicle for the rapid political realization of particular concepts of identity and morality - and that will certainly not happen if we are talking about an extension of the EU to, let us say, 25 members. There is a big difference between six countries getting together to form a Community, as was the case in the fifties, and the situation which might exist in five or ten years when almost the whole of the continent of Europe, up to the borders of Russia, might be included in one political organization. If that is a possibility, we really must start to ask ourselves which tasks and aims we might effectively realize in such a "political community of interests".

I am sure we could get rid of a lot of arguments if we were to look at the questions of Turkish membership in the EU in the medium term in this context. And that is true for the Turks and the European alike.

## **Alaton**

Secretary Öymen spoke about the attitude of the Turkish Republic, the Turkish people and the Turkish mentality especially vis-à-vis the minorities. He talked about the Jewish community in Turkey which was expelled from Spain in 1492 and came to the Ottoman Empire where they were received very democratically. I agree with Secretary Öymen that the Jewish minority never had any problems within this Moslem majority. They have had full and equal rights with no discrimination at all. It has been a perfect integration of the Jewish minority who kept all their traditions and religious freedom etc., etc. So far so good.

I happen to be a very outspoken businessman. I appear very often on TV and in public, holding conferences etc. I have noticed that my being Jewish and my being of the Mosaic faith makes absolutely no difference at all to the Moslem majority listening to the messages I am giving. I am a citizen of equal rights and equal responsibilities. And that poses a very basic question for me. If I can be in a minority with equal rights and I can be of a different religion and a different race, then what is wrong with being a Kurd who happens to be of the same religion, still Moslem, but who wants to say that he is a Turk of Kurdish descent?

I know that the counter-argument will quote insurgency, the PKK and terrorism. All right. Yes, there is terrorism. We have to fight it, there is no doubt about that and we should continue to do so. But there are five thousand terrorists and there are five million Kurds and we should not tend to put both in the same sack and say they are all party to terrorism. If we do that, we will tend to push them into having an affinity to this situation.

So, as a Turkish businessman, I want to vent my frustration and my suffering at this endless war in the south-east, for this waste of human life which is totally futile and totally unnecessary. It is going on just because we cannot sit down around the table and discuss the main factors which prevent us from making a distinction between the terrorists within the Kurdish minority and the rest of the five million or so people who want to have the respect that we Jews have. If we are respected as a Jewish minority of 25 thousand, why can we not respect a much larger minority of five million Kurds? What keeps us from discussing this?

## **Gasteyger**

You have addressed an extremely important and difficult problem Mr Alaton, namely that of the future status of the Kurds and their pacification. Those of us who are concerned with Turkish politics are occupied by this problem to a particularly great degree. And in reaching our conclusion on this matter, we will certainly have to differentiate very clearly between those things, such as the use of terrorism, which are impossible or even unacceptable no matter how much we might sympathize with the idea of greater autonomy for the Kurds, and those things which are possible on the Turkish side and which might even be deemed essential in the interests of a peaceful solution. Mr Alaton must accept credit for having drawn our attention to this.

## **Türkmen**

Mr Alaton has asked a question. What he said is that minority status has been granted to a few thousand Jews. Why can the same not be done for five million Kurds? Now, first of all, in Turkey minorities have always been Christian or Jewish minorities. None were Muslim minorities. There has never been any differentiation between people of the same religion because there was no need for it. Either during the Ottoman Empire or in the period of the Republic because we have had an integrated society. Look at the Turkish parliament today. You have at least 80 deputies of Kurdish origin. We have had Kurdish prime ministers, we have had Kurdish presidents, we have Kurdish ministers, we have generals of Kurdish origin. So it was a thoughtfully integrated society. Why now change the structure of that society which has existed for so many centuries? This is one problem.

The other problem is that people sometimes lose sight of the fact that the people of Kurdish origin do not live in eastern Turkey. The majority of them live in western Turkey. What are you going to do now? Those of Kurdish origin who are in Izmir go to Turkish schools and they are educated like all the children of the Turkish Republic. Are we going to segregate them? Are we going to create minority schools for them? This is not thinkable. This is not what the PKK is asking for. What they want is a real autonomous region in Turkey or a secession from Turkey. No country would allow that and we are not going to allow it. I do not foresee that minority status will provide a solution.

What are the solutions? If, as seems the case, the terrorist movement in the east is severely repressed, then many measures will need to be taken. And the army will be the first who say that once

they have completed their task, the government will have to go there to do its own job. There are so many economic and social measures to implement in the east of the country and the government has to do it.

With regard to the cultural things about which a great fuss is made: They all speak their own language. In Istanbul the Kurds speak Kurdish between themselves and they also speak Turkish. If you go to any library here you will see ten different manuals on how to learn Kurdish. There is no restriction whatsoever on the language. Perhaps in the future, as Mr Altan Öymen has pointed out, there could be, of course, some more cultural privileges which would give them greater expression of their own identity, their feelings, their own culture. It is possible, but not to the extent that they will acquire the status of a minority.

### **Sommer**

I do not want to disparage the Turkish Army. I know that it is not keen on intervention and I remember that it was not enthusiastic about it in 1979/80 either. At that time, when 30 people were being killed every day and when no president had emerged even after 140 ballots, the military was still urging the politicians to solve the problems. It is not the strength of the army which frightens me. What bothers me is the weakness of democratic politics in this country.

### **Rühl**

The Kurdish question which dogs the relationship between Turkey and Western Europe today, has really been an international problem since 1916. Great Britain and France had initially agreed to set up an independent Kurdistan at the expense of the Ottoman Empire but Britain then decided to prefer Iraq because of the oil reserves.

At the same time, Kemal Atatürk elevated national Turkish unity in Anatolia to the status of the doctrine of the Turkish Republic and since then, this has been an integral component of the international status quo in the Middle East. The movement for Kurdish independence, which has widespread support in Europe at least on a sentimental level but also politically, calls this status quo and therefore the territorial order in the Middle East into question.

In this respect, the Turkish state is not wrong in regarding Kurdish separatism as an assault on national unity, on the territorial integrity of the Turkish Republic and on its constitution and even in calling the alliance into question. Every CSCE document since 1975 has come down unequivocally in favour of Turkey. Even the German Foreign Office has recognized this. The US government supports this interpretation and the Russian Federation will also support it because it has to consider its border in the northern Caucasus. And finally, the prevailing view under international law is unequivocal: Nowhere does it equate the right of a people to self-determination with a right of secession in any case as long as no civil war is unleashed by repression or general revolution. And I would like to put a question mark here:

The Kurdish rebellion has been going on for a good ten years now - that is the other side of the coin - and we have seen that the problem has not been solved either militarily or politically, culturally or socially. The Kurdish conflict is about national identity but it is also about a Kurdish state and not just internal autonomy as the PKK spokesmen and Kurdish intellectuals repeatedly suggest - we are all familiar with the documents where this is presented in a quite different way. And this conflict is now spilling over into Europe which has to face the question of how far our sympathies toward the Kurdish national movement should go and what objectives it wishes to support.

Is Europe to support the separation of a part of southern Anatolia and, if so, within which boundaries? Or should it favour a Kurdish state within Turkey? Or a binational Turkish state? Should it support a regional autonomy? Or Kurdish self-administration within Turkey? Mr Turkmen has already pointed out the difficulties involved here. Even in the case of Kurdish self-administration, the question would immediately be raised as to whether it would involve more than just a Kurdistan within Turkey and whether it would not spill over immediately into Iran, Iraq and Syria in a resurgence of irredentism. I know of no European government which would want to see that type of development or which would be willing to defend it within the framework of a European foreign and security policy. The same goes for the Atlantic Alliance and the United States.

We talk about the realities of the Kurdish problems as if it were something completely unreal. Everyone knows it has the potential to blow the foundations of international order in the whole region to smithereens. We want to make sure that cannot happen in the Caucasus. Up to now, German and European politics have attempted to avoid this question, and that is completely understandable.

On the other hand, we have to ask ourselves about the situation with regard to the rights of the minorities and here in Turkey alone this means not just five million but ten to fifteen million Kurds. But Kurdish organizations are also active in Europe where they do not limit themselves to national flag-waving. They extort illegal contributions from their countrymen, demand their loyalty and attempt to exercise power illegally against the authority of the state in their host countries. This is not only a challenge to Turkish nationality and the identity of the Republic of Turkey but also, for example, a challenge to the Federal Republic of Germany.

### **Gasteyger**

What solution do you suggest, Herr Rühl?

### **Rühl**

In 1993, when the Turkish military was preparing its winter offensive against the Kurds, I had a long discussion with the Turkish Chief of General Staff who outlined the aim of the operation and the scope of the resources committed to it. I used the opportunity to tell him about my own experience of the Algerian War when France undertook a thoroughly well-planned and well-organized campaign against the Algerian rebels without managing to achieve any sort of solution to the problem.

Of course, the situation here in Turkey is different; but I am certain that there is neither a military solution nor a political solution to the Kurdish problem. That is apparent even from a reading of Moltke's detailed report "Assault on a Kurdish Castle". As early as the times of the Ottoman Empire, the Kurdish problem surfaced almost on a regular basis and was pacified each time for ten or twenty or fifty years or so. Even in times of acute crises, which often lasted for many years, the sultan always had a Kurdish cavalry and Kurdish generals in his army. In the Ottoman Empire, the Kurds played a role similar to that of Tcherkessians, Tartars and Kosaks in the Russian Empire: They were rebels and military reserve units at the same time, always more or less independent and rebellious. They never succeeded in having their own state, nor did they form a "nation" proper in the sense of Islam.

The only solution I can see rests with long-term social integration. In other words, it is going to take a long time to achieve a solution. We should not forget that there were Kurdish tribes in Anatolia and northern Mesopotamia long before the Arabs and the Turks arrived and neither military campaigns nor diplomatic and political efforts are going to change that. On the other hand is Kurdish nationalism, especially the PKK's revolutionary-socialist variety, an anachronistic obstacle to the slow process of integration - but it might also eventually help to speed it up.

That is why Europe would be well-advised to pursue a pragmatic policy here. That is the approach we always adopted in the past in the EEC and later in the EC. In 1957, when the Treaty of Rome was concluded, France had already been involved in the Algerian War for two years. French paratroops had just occupied the old Arab Quarter of Algiers. At that time, it would not have occurred to any of the European governments to argue that France should not be allowed to play its part in the EEC as long as the French army continued to suppress the Arab nationalists or until France had solved the Algerian problem. In 1969, when Great Britain started negotiations on its entry into the EC, no one demanded that it should first solve the conflict in Ulster and withdraw the British army and police from Northern Ireland. And before Spain joined the European Union in 1986, no one had insisted that they could not join as long as Basque separatism was still being fought by military means.

What I am saying is that Europe cannot interfere. Of course, it should continue to call on the Turkish government to adopt sensible political means and to renounce repression and to support it in doing so. But I believe there is no point whatsoever in saying that Turkey cannot become a member of the EU until it has solved its Turkish problem; that would mean it might never become a member. No one can foresee, today, what the Middle East will look like in ten or twenty years.

### **Türkmen**

I just wanted to remind our western friends, that Algeria was part of the NATO area of defence.

### **Bagci**

I would like to emphasize that the Kurdish question, on which various opinions have been expressed here, is a long-term problem which will still be occupying Turkish domestic and foreign politics ten, twenty or thirty years from now no matter which party is in power. Each and every government in our country will have to contend with the task of overcoming this problem and Lothar Rühl was right to

point out that the Kurdish question is one which has international dimensions and which concerns not only international institutions and organizations but also the world at large.

On the one hand, Turkey is subject to strong pressure on a foreign political level and on the other she has to contend with the domestic political aspects involved in solving the social and economic problems in eastern and south-eastern Anatolia. Both of these elements will affect Turkish society and the population of this region and the political approach we adopt will be particularly important here. At present, neither the military nor the politicians nor the intellectuals are able to solve the problem. If they were, they would have done so long ago.

On the other hand, we should not ignore the fact that Turkey is undergoing rapid change on an intellectual level. During the 60s, 70s and 80s, Yapar Kemal regarded himself not as a Kurdish writer but as a left-wing intellectual. Inside Turkey, particularly since the foundation of the Republic, the Kurdish question was associated with left-wing thought. That situation changed after the end of the Cold War when minorities began to assert their rights all over the world and when left-wing intellectuals in Turkey started to turn their attention to this problem just as they had once turned it to Kemalism.

Abdullah Gül recently said on television that those people who described the Turkish Army as fascists after the triple putsch, were now demanding that the army which Atatürk created should defend democratization and laicism.

On the other hand, we can also see a similar intellectual change taking place within right-wing conservative circles. For the first time in modern Turkish history, we have a situation in which private broadcasting stations, publishers and newspapers on the Right and on the Left are vying with each other in intellectual competition. Like the left-wing intellectuals of the 60s and the 70s, today's right-wing intellectuals are pursuing a goal aimed at toppling the ruling democratic regime. The left-wingers have since realized that that is impossible and have begun to support the political system - unlike the right-wingers who wish to do away with it. I am, however, certain that those on the Right will soon realize that democracy is the best system for everyone.

There is also another development in progress which I believe is very important. We are experiencing a fundamental change in the way people in Turkey perceive the world. As I see things developing, in the 21st century Turkey will become a society of people who are motivated by an entrepreneurial spirit, keen to take the initiative, convinced of the value of democracy, cosmopolitan in outlook and environmentally aware whilst also being ready to tackle the imponderabilities of this region which countries such as Iran, Syria or Iraq, for example, might present.

### **Schmidt**

For years now, each new Turkish government has told us that it wants to move from a military to a political solution to the Kurdish problem. I would like to know how that is going to happen and what measures you intend to take to achieve it - especially in view of the fact that we are constantly being reminded, here and elsewhere, that the problems which remain to be solved are essentially social and economic problems. What programs does the Turkish government have for making serious inroads into these social and economic problems and how might the European Union support your efforts effectively?

### **Birand**

Turkey does not have a Kurdish policy but a security approach to the problem only. Unfortunately, we have discovered the Kurdish problem, and here "we" means general public opinion. We discovered the Kurdish problem with the PKK's armed struggle, when the PKK started killing people.

The military was the section which was most directly aware of the situation. They had been very keen to warn about it since the 1970s. They issued reports to the government and so on, but nobody cared really. The politicians did not want to get involved in this. It was a Pandora's box and nobody knew what would come out of it. It seemed preferable to leave it to the military, to the security forces, to deal with. It was much easier to deal with the problem in that way than it was to institute political, social and economic reforms. But a point was reached where there was no real line between the Kurdish problem and the fight against the PKK. It all became too complicated and public opinion hardened when all those killings started and the violence escalated.

I do read from time to time in the European press that only the military is responsible for that policy. I do not agree with that. Part of public opinion is now really getting tougher on the Kurdish affair than is the military. And the politicians know that but they do not want to get involved. They just hope that

maybe the problem will disappear one day. I do not believe there will be a solution. The PKK will live on. It will get smaller maybe but it will not vanish. The only solution lies in addressing the question of poverty. If you go there you can see how poor the people are. I mean, they are hopeless. They want something to live for. But we are all too preoccupied with the political struggle. Nobody cares about Kurdish affairs now. In the future, maybe. But I am not very optimistic on that.

The vicious circle is still there and you can be sure that the PKK does not want the Turkish government to tackle the Kurdish problem because the longer the problem persists, the longer they will be in the forefront and the better able they will be to command the Kurds. They do not want any other party or any other leader to represent the Kurds. Abdullah Özalp himself told me that it would be a joke for anyone else to speak in the name of the Kurds whilst he is alive because, he says, he represents the Kurds, the PKK represents the Kurds. There were three Kurdish parties but the PKK forced them to get out of the scene. They just want to carry on with their armed struggle.

I am not saying that the military is very democratic or that they think only of democracy, but it is us who provoke the military. Especially now. It was the case before 1980 and it was the case during the coup d'état of 1960. And now, too, it is the secular forces who are pushing them. We are using them to stop Refah. We are more anti-democratic than the military. I can say that very easily because I have written a book on the Turkish military which was very badly received by some of our esteemed generals. So, when you see tomorrow's events, do not blame the military right away. Blame us, our politicians and our circle of forces.

### **Güngör**

In response to Mr Birand I would just point out that in every one of their demonstrations, the Islamists chant against political, extremist fundamentalism: "They are rebels!" And when women in Ankara demonstrated against the introduction of theocratic regulations such as the sharia, they were decried as rebels and prostitutes.

Both sides are guilty of polarizing the situation. Whilst one side accuses the other of wanting to incite a rebellion, the other side reacts as if they really did want one. Both sides are responsible.

### **Füller**

Obviously, the Kurdish problem is a very complicated one. Of course there is terror involved, by the PKK. But these organisations do not grow out of nothing. Turkey is suffering from problems that are not unique to Turkey today. We see a growth of ethnicity world-wide. We see it in the United States. We see the resurgence of ethnic feelings (someone here used the term "re-ethnicization") for various reasons. The more the world becomes homogeneous to some extent, the more there is a craving for some kind of local identity.

There is of course an economic dimension of the Kurdish problem in Turkey. The southeast still is very poor and it is worse today because of the fighting. On the other hand the fighting has served to increase the sense of Kurdish identity. Kurds are becoming more aware of who they are. They are becoming aware of this at an international level - Turkish Kurds, Iraqi Kurds, Iranian Kurds, Kurds living in Europe from all three countries, and in Syria, who meet together - intensifying the question of identity as well.

I don't think anyone wants to see Turkey divided. I don't think it is even necessary for Turkey to have to become a federal state although some Kurds would say they want a federal state. But with the recognition of cultural aspirations and official recognition of the Kurdish identity (much as other states are having to recognize ethnic identity around the world), Turkey probably will need to recognize the Kurdish ethnic identity which involves among some other things some degree of the use of the Kurdish language for official purposes, for radio, for television and for newspapers.

It also would involve Kurds having more control and voice over their own region. Kurds should be able to elect their local governors. For that matter, so should the people of Bursa be able to elect their own governors. Because the inhabitants of Bursa understand their problems better than Ankara does. So, some of this is just not reform for Kurds, it is reform and decentralization for all of Turkey which will strengthen their own control over their local issues. I think the problem is solvable but it must be recognized that it is not just economic, it is not just a terror problem. It is a problem of identity.

If Turkey can do this, it will become a magnet for the region. It will be a model for Iran and for Iraq. Indeed, I would argue that a Kurdish region in Turkey which possesses these democratic rights will strengthen Turkey's voice in both Iran and Iraq on Kurdish affairs. At that point, the Turkish system will

become a model for the solution of these things in a way that will be very painful for dictatorships in Iraq, Iran and Syria.

**Abramowitz**

How does a country which is friendly to Turkey deal with a major Turkish domestic internal problem? The Kurdish issue in Turkey is one of the greatest sources of inflation. It absorbs the Turkish military. It is a major source of human rights abuses. It is perhaps the most exacerbating issue internally within Turkey, whatever amount of attention is paid to it. And it certainly roils Turkish foreign relations. Now, how should Turkey`s friends approach this?

You have said that it shouldn`t be a factor which is allowed to disqualify Turkey from membership of the EU. I agree with that. But how do friends of Turkey react to a major problem within Turkey which is clearly making it very difficult for Turkey to meet the standards for getting into the EU?

You are recommending that Turkey change its political system and establish a federal system?

**Rühl**

No, Mr Fuller recommended decentralization.

**Abramowitz**

That`s a convenient answer. It does not tell me very much, I am sorry.

**Gasteyger**

Have you already read Mr Fuller`s book?

**Abramowitz**

I think it is an excellent book in presenting the problem. I don`t agree that he knows how to deal with the problem. I have never yet heard anybody, Turkish, American, European, tell me a reasonable, practical way to deal with this problem.

**Füller**

Then the world is doomed. If Turkey cannot do it, no country is going to be able to solve their ethnic problems!

**Abramowitz**

Mr Özal`s solution was to move all Kurds out of the south-east.

**Füller**

They are still Kurds.

**Abramowitz**

So they will be integrated in western Turkey - as many Kurds already are!

**Füller**

How many ethnic groups want to be moved and integrated?

**Abramowitz**

I don`t say that is a solution. I am just quoting it.

**Voswinckel**

The Kurdish problem also lies behind the Turkish Authorities` refusal to grant Professor Udo Steinbach an entry permit for Istanbul. Professor Steinbach is the Head of the Institute for Oriental Studies in Hamburg and we had also invited him to attend this conference. He has been persona non grata in this country since 1994 following his meetings with the Kurdish leader Özalán in Damascus when he spoke out in favour of a political solution to the Kurdish question. Unfortunately, we have been unable

to persuade the Turkish government to lift its entry restriction and allow Professor Steinbach to attend today.

Particularly in view of the fact that the demand for a political solution has been repeatedly expressed here, I find it extremely regrettable that an internationally recognized scholar of Professor Steinbach's standing should be denied the opportunity to present his opinions at a forum such as this.

### **Alaton**

I don't want this subject to finish without any solution. The Kurdish problem is not unsolvable. We must have the power and the wisdom and intelligence to find ways of solving it.

Mr Bagci said that this problem is an old problem stemming from many generations. Perhaps he implied that since it is a problem that has developed over many generations, it will take many more generations to solve it. He may be right, he is a young man. He has time. I am not a young man. I have no time. I want a solution to be found before I have to go away.

It is not Europe's responsibility to solve the Kurdish problem. We cannot ask Germany or any state in Europe to find solutions. It is not their problem, it is a Turkish problem and we Turks have to solve it. So we must question ourselves and we must free ourselves from preconceived ideas and beliefs.

Some European sources have been blaming the Turkish army for the continuation of this war. This does a gross injustice to the Turkish army. I have to be very open: it is the army's duty to fight terrorism. The army is fighting terrorism and not the Kurdish problem. The military said it very openly during the briefing that we had.

First, we have to find who is to blame and then we have to ask them to solve the problem. And I will be very clear and open. We must blame the Turkish politicians for not solving the frameworks of the problem - for not refraining the problem openly by creating platforms of discussion - open, relaxed, without preconceived ideas.

The military have briefed us very recently. They told us about the deception about the civilians and especially about the politicians. The politicians passed the problem to the army as if it were a contractor. The army was the contractor and was left to deal with it and solve the problem. No! The army has to limit itself to fighting terrorists - not to solving the problem.

So, it also falls to the non-governmental organisations and the businessmen to contribute to finding the solution. We have to create jobs because since there are no jobs in the southeast, the young generation is tempted to go into the mountains. That is what I have said all along on TV and in interviews with the newspapers. We have to create jobs. So next week we are going to have a conference on how to tackle the problem of poverty in the south-east.

But we have to be supported first of all by the politicians. The politicians must understand that the businessmen cannot solve this problem alone. So, the NGOs, the private businessmen and the politicians all have to shoulder their responsibilities. We have to force the politicians to redefine the framework of the democratic rights of all citizens who feel different from the standard Turk.

I can say very openly that I am a Jew, that I am of the Mosaic faith. Nobody blames me, nobody questions me, nobody asks me whether I am this or that. Why should we force a Kurd, who is already a Moslem, to say "I am a Turk and I want to forget that I am a Kurd"?

So my personal message is: We should have enough courage to take the bull by the horns and ask ourselves about our preconceived ideas in this respect.

We had in Turkey a party called HEP that was closed down. Then a new party was formed. It was HADEP. We closed that down, too. We took all the parliamentarians from the NEC and threw them into prison. Very democratic! Now, another party has been formed. It is called the DKP, Democratic Mass Party. It is an open secret that this is the Democratic Kurdish Party.

I have been talking to the head of this party, Serafettin Elci because I am curious to know what his aims are. He said: First postulate - no separatism from the Turkish state. No separatism and no discussion about it. Then what do we want on identity? Give us a forum where we can express what we mean because we are prevented from expressing what we mean. And he said something which is vitally important. He said: "I have two enemies. First - the omnipotent Turkish state. Second - the PKK: And I don't know who is going to kill me first because the greatest threat for the PKK is that a new element might emerge which will speak for the Kurds."

We have to understand the message that he is giving. If we can have as an interlocutor a man of peace who wants to bring the subject into the open and discuss what he means by democratic rights, human rights, identity aspirations, then why should we give the right to the PKK to speak on behalf of 5 or 10 million Kurds.

### **Gasteyger**

I believe that was an extremely valuable contribution for all of us - for Turks and non-Turks alike. It demonstrates once more how important it is to differentiate and to take account of the wide spectrum of opinion which exists on such thorny problems as the Kurdish issue and the relationship between the Kurds and Turkey.

### **Vollmer**

What worries me, and what worries me in this debate too, is the idea which keeps resurfacing that the main opposition to Turkish membership of the EU comes from Germany. I strongly refute this prejudice which seems to be taking an ever firmer hold in Turkey. It may well be that the question is being debated more openly and honestly in Germany but it is, nevertheless, also being discussed in other EU countries. The world of German politics, and this holds for all of the parties, even has a keen interest in integrating Turkey into the European Union because this would also defuse the internal situation in Germany as far as our Turkish population is concerned.

It would, however, certainly be wrong for either of us to expect any great support for this process from the other side. Each of us has to get to grips with our integration problems on our own. Turkish politicians cannot expect that simply joining the EU will make their internal political problems any easier to deal with just as we should not think it will be any easier to integrate the Turks in our country once Turkey has solved the Kurdish problem or when it has learned to cope better with fundamentalism. We missed our opportunity to promote integration by developing a suitable policy on immigration whilst it was still perfectly possible. And now we have to solve the problem ourselves. Turkey is not going to be able to help us much.

I would also refute the view expressed by Secretary of State Öymen and by Herr Rühl that we are in fact only dealing with Realpolitik here. At the time when they joined the European organization, France, England and Spain would not have been willing to call a halt to their bloody conflicts with the Algerians, the Irish and the Basques. That argument does not hold water for a number of reasons.

First: Without France and England there would never have been a European Union. That situation was different from Turkey's - even if Turkey does think it unjust.

Second: We should not forget that the European Community developed at a time when Europe was divided and when no one wanted to call the post-war order in Europe, and that includes the borders which existed at the time, into question. Today, after overcoming the division of Europe, we are faced with a completely different situation. In particular, the break-up of the Soviet Union and the military blocs led to the emergence of a great many new nation-states and these developments encouraged the Kurds to renew their ethnic claims at what they saw as an auspicious moment when the demands of ethnic groups for their own nation-states were enjoying sympathy and support all over the world.

But this tendency, it must be said, has now begun to lose impetus. In other words, the emergency of small and even tiny nation-states in Europe and elsewhere in the world is no longer seen as the royal route to the solution of ethnic problems. This situation has still not arisen in the cases of Slovenia, Croatia and even Bosnia. Today, no one really believes any longer in the quasi innocent identity of self-determining ethnic groups and the need to support them come what may.

With that in mind, I cannot see world-wide support being rallied for a Kurdish nation-state especially as this case is further complicated by the fact that no one in Europe regards the PKK, in particular, as being capable of conducting negotiations and dialogue because it is a group which has a long Stalinist tradition and one which, in principle, is probably not capable of democratization. No one in the world can have any interest in an independent Kurdish state which is Stalinist in character.

For that reason, I also fully agree with Mr Alaton when he says that serious dialogue has to be initiated with the democratically-minded Kurds within Turkey itself - especially as even the military has apparently begun to realize that the problem of this minority cannot be solved in any other way. That will then mean dealing with questions such as the development of federal structures, cultural autonomy, Kurdish schools, Kurdish spheres of responsibility and so on. If that were to contribute to reducing the amount of aggression and violence involved in the conflicts here then it would represent a great step forward.

## Robins

It seems to me that Mr Alaton deserves our congratulations and our very full support for the position that he has taken. For two reasons: Firstly, because all of us who call ourselves friends of Turkey, are extremely distressed by the situation in the country which has gone on for far too long and because of the costs that has had on the economy of Turkey but also on the moral fabric and fibre of Turkey.

But there is also a second reason which is that at the end of the day, the Kurdish issue is not just a domestic issue in Turkey. It is also a European issue. It is a domestic issue in Europe because of the outpouring of refugees from Turkey since the early 1980s as a result of the events in the south-east of the country. Large numbers of asylum-seekers which have come about as a result of that and who have come into our country and have organized politically and have set about using our political system to affect our foreign policy in a way which threatens to have a detrimental impact on our wider relations with Turkey.

It is a domestic European issue because of the increase in extortion which has taken place within Kurdish and Turkish communities in many of our countries, including Britain, which is so difficult to stamp out because it is difficult for people to really come out and be courageous enough to put their trust in the rule of law in those countries in order to expose the people who are undertaking this extortion.

It is a domestic issue because of drugs, drug-running, drug-smuggling. The biggest drug-smugglers into Britain these days are from this country. And Süsülük, of course, makes us incredibly uncomfortable that there may be support for people like that from within the state itself.

Many Turkish people criticize the position of the European countries for being soft on the PKK and so on. What strikes me, if one looks back at the events of the last few years and the position of the major European governments the European Commission and others, is just how far the European states have bent over backwards to be supportive of Turkey, to face down the PKK to discourage the PKK at every last turn. And this has been done at some considerable cost in terms of criticisms which have been made of European governments by NGOs in Europe, human rights organizations, trade unions and even political parties as well.

We have done an enormous amount to support Turkey and I am not sure that that is always realized because this big problem has existed for a long time. Let us remember that in 1984, there was no problem at all. It was just a ragtag bunch of Stalinist» who just managed to get over the Turkish border in the early 1980s. There was really no problem at all then. But this is a problem which has erupted, it is a problem which has defied an exclusively military solution and it is a problem which is either going to continue - it may be contained but it is going to continue with all the detrimental effects that it has on both Turkey and Europe - or it can be addressed. I think the only way it can be addressed, the only credible, persuasive way that it can be addressed is the way in which Mr Alaton has addressed this today. And I think we need to support him in this.

There is a second issue here as far as I am concerned. This relates to something that Graham Fuller said in his first intervention, which is that Turkey is not the old Turkey. It has changed. It is now a multi-ethnic, a multicultural society. It is a pluralist society. In many ways it is an incredibly rich and attractive and vibrant country precisely because of this pluralism. But these differences which exist, can be incredibly destructive, as we have seen in the Kurdish case. It seems to me, not only should we be addressing the Kurdish issue to try to put an end to that destructive issue once for all, but that we should also be looking at other potential problem areas in Turkish society which, if we are not careful, could result in the sort of conflict and the sort of costs that we have seen everyone suffer as a result of the situation in the south-east of the country.

Consequently, we should be looking to bolster the middle ground - not just over the Kurdish question - but in other areas as well. That bolstering the middle ground may keep the country away from extremism, from intolerance - from whichever direction that might come. We should seek to help our Turkish friends to consolidate their institutions, to consolidate their democratic system as a sort of neutral system which is capable of mediating between these different areas in society. But we should try to recognize and appreciate that that pluralism exists and help those institutions to allow the middle ground to really work in the Turkish context. Whether this be on this issue of the Kurdish problem or whether it be the issue of religion or whatever.

## Mortimer

Northern Ireland has been mentioned a number of times. Of course, this was not an issue when Britain applied for membership of the European Community as it then was. Had the British army been doing

the kind of things in Northern Ireland that the Turkish army has been doing in the south-east of this country, I am sure that it would have been an issue and I think it would have been rightly so.

### **Rühl**

It is not a question of what the British army might have been doing or what the Turkish army might be doing. The point is that there are unsettled territorial issues, and that there are phenomena of separatism and conflicts of secession.

For the European Union, there is of course a policy decision to be made. If all other conditions were right, do we want a new member with contested borders and with an internal problem which might lead to secession or revolution or rebellion or what have you? So, again basically - and, we must understand this - before it becomes a human rights problem (we cannot define all these issues as human rights issues), it is a political problem of conflict between unreconcilable ambitions. And that we have to understand.

If every conflict that we are confronted with, like the Chechnia conflict in the Russian Federation, were immediately styled as a human rights problem, there would be no pragmatic and no viable political solutions. We must understand this. It is not that the British army is much more humane than you think the Turkish army is. It is a matter of unsettled political territorial issues. Can the European Union live with this? Then we can talk about the human rights issue. I would really suggest that a distinction be made between the two.

### **Mortimer**

Mr Rühl I am afraid that precisely is the issue. Of course, one cannot require every ethnic and identity issue to be resolved finally and to the satisfaction of all parties otherwise, indeed, the Union would never expand and would probably never exist. But, if it is anything at all, I understand this Union to be a union of people who observe certain norms in the way that they deal with each other.

The Irish problem may well be insoluble in the sense that there is a deep, profound conflict of identities and it may even go on causing violence although we are all, of course, desperately looking for ways to avoid that. But it is not just a question of humanity. I think it is a question of intelligence and I would just echo what Mr Alaton has said. The way that Turkey has been going about trying to solve this problem is making it worse and worse. And that will cause problems for any association which Turkey belongs to. I don't see how one can be expected, in the European Union, not to take that into account.

### **Gasteyger**

I do not believe that the gap between the two positions is as great as it may seem.

### **Vollmer**

On the contrary, I believe that the gap is considerable and Mr Mortimer is right. The fact is that there is a school of political thought which has always maintained that human rights should not be given such a high priority if peace, order and stability could not be guaranteed by adopting any other approach. This argument was used repeatedly in connection with Russia when it was maintained that we should not be disproportionately concerned if a military regime were to emerge there because there was simply no other possibility at the time. The arguments used with regard to Turkey today are similar. Whilst it may be understandable, that line is no longer supported by a younger generation of European politicians. That is why I see a very great divergence between the positions of Herr Rühl and Mr Mortimer.

### **Türkmen**

I don't know how much difference there is between the Turkish army and the British army in fighting terrorism because we have also heard many stories about the methods used by the British army at that time.

Mr Mortimer says that the Irish problem might be insoluble. Why should the Irish problem be insoluble and the Kurdish problem soluble? The Irish problem is perfectly soluble if England agrees to the unification of Ireland. It would be the rule of the majority which then would decide and they can decide whether there should be autonomy or not for the protestants in Northern Ireland. This is very simple.

### **Abramowitz**

I don't think that there is any question that Turkish policy has not been successful in dealing with this issue. It is conceivable that the war may be over tomorrow but it certainly does not look that way. But I do believe, Mr Rühl, that you are fundamentally wrong in assuming that because there is an insurgent group, that there is the question of sovereignty and territory.

There are millions of Kurds in Turkey. I don't believe that the mass of Kurds want separation or independence from Turkey. So, therefore, I do not believe this should be considered a sovereignty issue. It should be considered as a way of how to deal with Turkey's Kurdish issue, part of which involves terrorism and part of which involves how to deal with a major minority which has been economically disadvantaged.

### Lake

This spat between Edward Mortimer and Lothar Rühl I think is very interesting in the wake of what Mr Robins has said. I have spent a lot of time in Northern Ireland and in the south-east of Turkey and I can assure you that there is a very big difference of degree and this goes to the heart of the issue of how we judge the criteria, the written criteria for Turkish membership - including human rights and respect for and protection of minorities.

If we say Turkey cannot join the European Union because it does not protect its minorities, we give a veto to the PKK. On the other hand, we must find a balance which is based on a question of degree. The European Union has given itself this extremely difficult task of judging these criteria, which will be at least a grey zone. I just leave that for you to reflect upon. It is a very difficult question and we have seen how vividly that "spat" threw up this question.

### Güngör

I agree with Frau Vollmer that Germany is not the greatest obstacle on Turkey's road to the EU, especially in view of the fact that it was Germany, more than any other country, which helped to make Turkey internationally acceptable after the end of the military regime and the establishment of the new democracy. At that time, not only did Federal Chancellor Kohl and Parliamentary President Jenninger come to Turkey but you too, Herr von Weizsäcker, were the first Western Head of State to visit this country.

If I remember rightly, it was you who advised your Turkish hosts during your visit that it would be better not to apply immediately for membership of the European Community as it then existed as this might lead to serious problems. You said it would be better if Turkey waited until it had developed further and the probability of a refusal was not so great. You had hardly set out to return home before the Turks announced that they would be filling an application in Brussels. I made it clear at the time that I viewed this course very negatively and as a result I earned the wrath of Mesut Yilmaz who was then the government spokesman.

Of course, things turned out exactly as you had warned, Herr von Weizsäcker. And there can be no doubt that it is the Kurdish question which has caused Turkey the greatest problems in this respect. I have lived and worked as a correspondent for German media in this country since 1984 and it has been my increasing impression that the way the Kurdish question has developed now presents an insoluble problem.

If one takes the line of argument presented by the military, there are four stages on the road to a Greater Kurdistan: First comes freedom of culture and language. Secondly, the question of autonomy will be raised - as Mr Fuller says - the opportunity to elect one's own governors and administrators. Third: We will have the demand for North Kurdistan, that is, a Kurdistan on Turkish territory. And the fourth stage will then be the creation of a Greater Kurdistan. The military is quite convinced about this.

Surprisingly, however, you added that the Kurdish question cannot be solved by military means alone and you demanded that the government implement suitable economic and social measures. The most important thing is that south-east Anatolia should no longer be seen as a region one gets posted to as a punishment. You can put the fear of God into any policeman in Istanbul or Ankara by threatening to post him to Hakkari, for example. The key to the problem - and the military authorities have recognized this, too - lies in providing this region with well-trained administrative experts who are also able to get on with the people in the region and who understand their language and mentality. The same goes for the police and the security forces. I lived in eastern Anatolia for nine months in 1989 and I know that the people there, who have been constantly suppressed throughout the whole of their history - and not only by the Turks - react quite differently from people who live in other regions.

I believe that this conflict will never be solved as long as the Turkish State maintains a 62,000-man-strong system of village constables who are armed and paid by the state to keep the Kurds in check. It costs the state a fortune. And, on top of that - as Mr Robins has already mentioned - there is any number of arms smugglers and drug dealers in these areas who are profiting from the situation. Against that background, how and with whom is one supposed to achieve a political solution? It is hardly feasible.

So, let me try another train of thought. Turkey is a member of NATO. Its borders to the south and south-east also demarcate NATO territory. These borders have to be secured against NATO's enemies in exactly the same way that Germany's borders once had to be secured against the Soviet Union.

In other words: If American, French, British or German soldiers, equipped with the latest border-security technology, were to guard these borders, then it is surely imaginable that states such as Iran and Syria might be very wary of continuing to support the PKK. And by the same token, these foreign soldiers and specialists would be in a position to keep a close eye on the Turks and to prevent them from burning down whatever villages they suspected of harbouring a few PKK sympathizers. Might that not perhaps be a solution?

### **Rouleau**

What might be the solution Mr Alaton asked for? I have a feeling that we have been going around the subject without giving any answers. We have been analyzing the problem on various issues but we have not really gone to the heart of the problem.

The reason why, is that we are confusing the issues - confusing the issues like these people who do not want to solve the problem for many reasons. It may be because of lobbies or because of ideologies or whatever. These people usually ask people like us, who would like to see a peaceful solution, whether we want them to talk to terrorists and criminals who are killing civilians, and who want separatism. As one gentleman here said, "How can we change the borders of Turkey? They are NATO borders".

This is not the problem. This may be a problem in the future. I think the basic problem is that this problem is, as some Turkish politicians are saying now, a problem of democracy. We don't even know how many Kurds there are in this country. As you probably know, the census does not count the Kurds. Somebody mentioned 5 million. My figure is 15, but I may be totally wrong. Others say 10 million. We don't know what the Kurds want. We don't know whether they want separation or whether they want to practise their own Kurdish culture within the boundaries of the Turkish Republic.

Those who are confusing the issues usually argue with me that their system is similar to France. It is true that Atatürk got the inspiration from the French Revolution to create what we call the "nation-state". It is true that, apparently, the French Republic and the Turkish Republic have a common nature. In France we don't recognize communities, ethnic groups or religions. A French citizen is nothing else than a French citizen.

But the big difference is that in France you can teach a foreign language, whatever it may be in a private school and even introduce it in state schools. Turkish, for example, is being taught in hundreds of French schools because there are people of Turkish origin living in France. This is not because it is a minority language to be protected but because it is a democratic right. If somebody wants to learn Turkish, Hebrew or Armenian, if he pays for it he gets the teaching. In France, you can start an association or a club on an ethnic basis or a religious basis. Nobody is going to arrest you and throw you into prison. In Turkey you have laws - the so-called anti-terrorism laws - which in fact allow the authorities to send writers, journalists, artists, politicians to prison if they dare to say that they want a political solution to the Kurdish problem.

I agree with Mr Robins. It is a European problem. And the proof of that is that when the European Parliament and the European Union wanted to get Turkey into the Customs Union, the condition was that Turkey had to change its laws. Mrs Ciller who was Prime Minister at the time, did not do what she should have done and the Europeans accepted it. Now, I ask you whose responsibility is this? If some Western democratic powers are prepared to abdicate their responsibilities because of material interests, and to forget about democracy and human rights, then the Turks are not the only people to be blamed.

### **Öymen**

As far as the Kurdish question is concerned, we have heard a wide range of different opinions expressed very clearly but no one has come up with an ideal solution. And, of course, there isn't one. We could go into detail and discuss it for hours. Who, in Turkey is a Kurd and who isn't? How many Kurds live in Turkey? No one can provide definitive answers. My party is pursuing a policy aimed at satisfying as many hopes as possible - many and varied as those hopes may be.

As faulty as it may be, we now have a democracy in Turkey. And we must therefore attempt to secure a majority for our policies in parliament. It is the same in Turkey as in England or in Germany. The British Parliament has been discussing whether or not to negotiate with Sinn Fein, in order to solve the Northern Ireland question, for the last 26 years. Parliament recently voted in favour - and then, shortly afterwards, it voted against. In Turkey, the situation on the Kurdish question is not different.

What can be achieved by influence from outside? I believe we must promote open discussion here. Turkey currently has laws which limit the free expression of opinion. These laws have led to the imprisonment of journalists on anti-terrorist grounds. Newspapers which publish articles on this subject are accused of propagating separatism. It is a fact that a large number of journalists, writers and intellectuals are being held in Turkish prisons. I read recently that out of a total of 180 journalists held in prison throughout the world, 67 were held in Turkey. We are at the top of the league.

These obstacles must be done away with if we are to be able to discuss the Kurdish question on a wider and more open footing. Today, any discussion of this topic involves embarking on a legal tightrope walk - and anyone who puts a foot or a word wrong lands up in prison. That is why we need to open up the debate and remove the obstacles which hamper it.

We hear continual demands for greater political and cultural freedoms for the Kurds. They have the right to vote but, we are told, they should also have a greater opportunity to assert their own identity within the framework of the local administrative structures. With this in mind - and this is an important factor for us in terms of domestic policy - we should not forget that there are two million people living in Germany who have no vote either in Germany or in Turkey whilst in Holland, for example, they do have a say at a local political level. That is only possible in Germany if they have managed to secure German nationality, which is, as is commonly known, not particularly easy. This is why the Turkish Constitution was changed two years ago to make it possible for Turks who do not have German citizenship to vote in Turkey. In order to allow Turkish citizens to exercise their right to vote, the Turkish authorities suggested that they should be able to vote at Turkish consulates or that polling stations could be set up at schools or other public institutions. The German authorities rejected the latter on security grounds and for other similar reasons.

Of course the countries of the European Union have the right to take an interest in the Kurdish question. But the decisive factor in this matter is what goes on on the domestic scene in Turkey with regard to minority rights and other such matters.

## **Türkmen**

We see that several possible solutions are suggested but I think the parameters of the Kurdish issue are clear. Theoretically, there are many solutions - autonomy, federalism or even independence. But we should not forget that any solution should be acceptable to the majority of the Turkish people. Anything which is not acceptable will have to remain theoretical.

Mr Rouleau said that France in some degree was like Turkey. It did not recognize minorities and it did not recognize ethnic groups but it did recognize the right to use their languages. This is all very well, but we should not forget that France did not reach that point until 1952. Before 1952, the use of Breton or Basque or Corsican was absolutely forbidden. Children who spoke these languages at school were severely punished. It was only three or four years ago that a draft law was proposed to the French National Assembly which said that the Corsican nation was part of the French nation. This law was rejected by the French Constitutional Court because it said it was contrary to the constitution which provides for "une France unie et indivisible".

We have exactly the same disposition in our constitution which says that the Turkish nation and Turkish territory are indivisible. We, too, have to accommodate the constitution.

The idea was also put forward that there might be some negotiation with groups - not with the PKK - but with more moderate groups. This cannot be done. How you are going to choose such an interlocutor? How do you know whether he or she represents the consensus among the Kurds? So, the only solution is through parliament.

As I said before there are something like 80 deputies of Kurdish origin in our parliament. But the electoral system in Turkey is very bad. Those who are elected are the people chosen by the leaders of the party - who are all dictators because we have a proportional system. The reform envisaged will have parliament adopt a new electoral law which will be based on the "first-past-the-post" system with small electoral districts. One district for one deputy. This will provide better representation in parliament for all Turks, including those of Kurdish origin. This will perhaps provide for a kind of dialogue. I don't see how else you can do it.

Then, there was also discussion about some kind of decentralization. Everywhere in Turkey, including the south-east, the mayors are elected. As far as further decentralization is concerned, one could perhaps envisage something like the French have with their "region" system in which they have more power regionally, but the state is still there. The regional prefects are still there. This is just one possible system which might evolve - but we have to move gradually.

### **Alaton**

I am pleased that my approach to the Kurdish problem raises many points for discussion because the more you discuss something, the more you will find paths toward a solution. There are no perfect solutions. There are only intelligent choices and if one talks about it then perhaps one may come close to a solution. The problem we are addressing is a great problem and it has been going on for so long that it may well still take some time to solve it. But let us be hopeful.

I tried to put forward the viewpoint of the business community on the Kurdish issue. I also expressed my personal belief that this is a futile war that has been going on for so long, draining the valuable resources of the country and creating a war economy with a profiteering class. I think this is one of the main obstacles to peace because it profits a hell of a lot of people today to have this war going on. That makes me extremely unhappy because this is profit made from the lives of human beings. The result frightens me because it means that the solution is becoming more and more distanced from sensible people who wish to find a solution to this Kurdish problem - even when they are protected by parliamentary immunity.

Our former foreign minister, my good friend İler Türkmən, says that the solution lies with parliament. That may be so. But when we have a record of continual blunders, of having shut down first the HEP party then the HADEP party and then of throwing parliamentarians into jail in spite of their parliamentary immunity, we have to admit that we have a very long way to go before we reach a level of democracy which approximates to the universally accepted standards of today. So we really need to be very courageous to raise this issue. Yet I want to be very optimistic about the near future because the solution probably lies in part with parliament. But we also have to create the right atmosphere which will enable some of our parliamentarians to find the courage to tackle the problem head-on.

One of the many signs that gives me great hope, came from the military very recently. A top military representative said that the Kurdish problem was no longer a military problem but a political problem and that it needed a political solution.

I understand the message which the military is sending to the politicians to mean: "You gave us the job of putting an end to terrorism. We have done our best. Now we have gone into Iraq and we are trying to get hold of the remnants of the PKK. But the solution is not a military one, it has to be a political one". They have put the ball back in the politicians' court.

So, the message I want to get over to İler Türkmən and Onur Öymen and all the others who are just as concerned as I am, is that it would be a tragedy if we lost the impetus which might enable us to become part of Europe. Why should we lose the chance of becoming a European country when we can very easily do it by becoming a little bit more intelligent? And intelligence comes from having the chance to ventilate the problem, to discuss and to find alternative solutions. There is no perfect solution. But there will be alternative aspects on the problem. I want to give a hopeful sign to my friend here, both Turks and non-Turks, that we are trying very hard to find the solution. Just be a little bit more patient and give us support.

### **Cetin**

I may have misunderstood İshak Alaton. The military has never talked about a general political solution to the Kurdish problem - and that includes the question of federation. It has simply admitted that it can make no further progress by military means and has said that it is now up to the politicians to tackle the problem from an economic and social angle. To say that the military is in favour of a political solution creates a false impression.

### **Alaton**

This shows how important it is to discuss openly because I meant exactly what Hikmet Çetin said. My meaning was there, but there is a preconceived idea which is well-established in the Turkish mind, that a political solution automatically means secession. That is not the case. When the military says we need political solution, I am sure that they do not mean secession. So, let's free our minds from preconceived ideas and let us discuss!

### **Levite**

When discussing about the issue of the Turkish population in Germany as well as some issues raised in respect of the Kurdish issue, there was an implicit assumption that the way to deal with these issues is through education and then through social and economic solutions. It was implied that, basically, this approach would do away with the problem.

I want to introduce two caveats here. The first is that studies of the radical expression of opposition suggest that it's exactly those people who are better-educated but do not have the economic and social conditions that make it possible for them to express themselves and succeed, are the people who resort to violence. This has been true in Algeria and it has been true throughout the Middle East. The people who are committing suicide bombings are not uneducated. I mention this because I think that education, in and of itself, just as it is an instrument for progress, may also be an instrument for instability. We have to remember that.

The second note of caution is that the mere introduction of economic solutions will not be the end of the process. These would not satisfy aspirations. While they may be a necessary condition by themselves they will not suffice.

I think that the Palestinian issue will clearly demonstrate that we need to find more creative solutions for national expression that are somewhat short of statehood as we normally understand it. This may require providing them also with some symbol of self-government and I am not sure how far this might also apply to the Kurds. But to believe that aspirations can be satisfied solely through education and better economic conditions is very doubtful in my view. I believe that this holds true for the Israeli Arabs and not just for the Palestinians. That is also true of other minorities in the region.

### **Weizsäcker**

I first visited Turkey during the period when I was Mayor of West Berlin, the "greatest Turkish city outside Turkey", as it was then called. That was an epithet which did not just refer to the number of Turks who lived there but which also reflected the empathy which existed for them in Berlin at the end of the seventies and the beginning of the eighties.

But the main problem, even at that time, was one of how we were to integrate the Turks in our country and I still believe that the best solution to the problem of integration would be dual nationality. Unfortunately, that is something with which we are still unable to come to terms in Germany. It would certainly make it easier for the younger generation of Turks to identify with German society and it would help their integration. Even in those days, these young people no longer had any real alternative of choosing whether to stay in Germany or to return to Anatolia. On the other hand, it was understandable that they did not want to go against their parents and grandparents who wanted to retain Turkish nationality.

The only thing which might have provided a way out of this dilemma would have been to grant German nationality to the younger generation of Turks without requiring them to give up their Turkish nationality. I do not believe that any of the objections to this, such as difficulties with conscription or inheritance, are valid. Our laws on citizenship, which originated during the Wilhelminian era before the First World War, are simply not adequate to deal with the needs and problems of the Turks who live in our country today.

Later on, when I visited Turkey as Federal President in the mid-eighties, the predominant question was indeed that of Turkey's membership of the European Community. My warning against rushing ahead with an application for membership was directed primarily toward aspects of economic and social development and not at the question of human rights or the Kurdish problem which had hardly raised its head at that time.

It was not until my third visit that I was confronted with the Kurdish problem. And I have no fond recollections of the way in which that happened. When I was awarded the Atatürk Prize in Istanbul in 1994, I had dared to include a brief mention of the Kurds in my speech. As a result, the very highest

authorities in Turkey made it plain to me that I should delete this reference from my speech if I wished to speak in public in Turkey. I felt that that was really overstepping the mark, especially as I was to receive the prize from the State President himself.

That is one reason why I find it especially pleasing that we are able to speak so openly about the Kurdish question here today and I have been particularly impressed by the way that the Turkish participants in our discussion have grasped this nettle. I believe we all have a lot to learn from that.

I also want to say unequivocally, however, that for me, Turkey belongs to Europe and to the European Union even though the question of the timing of its entry remains open. We Germans, more than anyone else, have raised Turkish hopes for entry; and it is, therefore, understandable that it should be us who give them the greatest cause for disappointment when things do not run as smoothly as one might wish.

Obviously, we too have to take account of domestic political considerations and since 1990, our main problem in Germany has without doubt been that of how we are to deal with the influx of foreigners. The question of religion - Christianity and Islam - is hardly a primary consideration here, even though this is an impression which is constantly aroused as it was, for example, by the unfortunate declaration made at the meeting of ECD parties in Brussels in March. This only served to conceal the fact that the real worry lies somewhere else completely, namely in the issue of immigration. And that raises fears that Turkish membership of the EU, and the freedom of movement which goes with it, might lead millions of Turks to pack their bags and move to Europe - mostly to Germany - to live and work here.

I believe that we Germans should make it clear that we, even more than other partners in the European Union, have an interest in giving Turkey the feeling that it belongs to Europe and that it will also become a member of the European Union one day. And it should not be considerations of security which are our prime motive for doing so - as is the case with the Americans. Far rather, we should do it for social reasons and, not least, out of human concern.

## **Öymen**

In our discussions here on the relationship between the European Union and Turkey, each of us speaks from the point of view of his or her own country and every country has its own domestic political conditions. Herr Klose said that around 35 % of his own constituents in Hamburg are Turks. That is certainly a fact which disconcerts the German population with regard to the question of Islam, for example. And the 2.5 million Turks who live in Germany have almost ten million relatives in Turkey. Seen in this light, it is understandable that everything which happens to Turks in Germany has its echo on the domestic scene in Turkey. For example, if Germany introduces a visa requirement for Turkish children below the age of 16, then that will have repercussions in Turkey.

The same applies to the problem which I mentioned earlier. In other words, the import of the statement made at the meeting of Christian Democrats in Brussels, that relations between the EU and Turkey are, on a long-term basis, conditioned by the cultural conflict which results from the relationship between Christianity and Islam, also has repercussions in Turkey. All of us, on both sides, should understand that.

If Turkey is to be able to join the European Union in a few years time - and the scene for this was set as long ago as 1963 - then the least that can be expected, and this is important, is that Turkey should not be excluded from the list of candidates for membership. There are eleven candidates at present - and Turkey very much wants to be included in the group photo as candidate number twelve. But, up to now, we have not even been granted that privilege. That might help you to understand why Turkey does not have a great deal of confidence in the European Union and its goodwill at the moment.

## **Utkin**

With regard to Turkish problems we are talking about democracy, secularization, human rights and so on. I would remind our German friends that democracy and integration are instruments for the improvement of life, for achieving a more civilized life and so on.

My point is that the future of Turkey is the fate of millions of yesterday's peasants who became the first generation of city dwellers. This is an absolutely unique phenomenon. Of the 12 million people who live in the Istanbul metropolitan region, two-thirds of them never had running water 20 years ago. So, what we are talking about is democracy in its special sense. Don't allow technical decisions to determine whether they come into the European Union or remain outside - the most important thing is that sixty million Turks love the Western values, have experience of them. They are in the Western camp with or without integration.

I taught here at the Bosphorus University for two years and I must say that this is a very small "island of the West" in this country which is so important. Further on there is the Marmara University, there are several very courageous pro-Western newspapers. But there are no satellite channels with Western programs. There are only a few small shops with books from the West. You cannot have an influence on a fast growing nation, without an exchange of ideas and a constant flow of people in both directions. I know that there are 20,000 Turkish students in Germany. It is an impressive figure, but the whole of Anatolia and the whole of Asia Minor remain absolutely outside the European world.

In several days we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Marshall Plan. Part of this plan was a sort of technical tourism into the United States to observe the most efficient professions and occupations. Nowadays, who has the most influential voice with those millions of yesterday's peasants? It is those who are saying that the Muslim world is the fastest-growing world community. Today they make up 14 percent of the World community. In 20 years from now they will be 28 percent. Today they produce 4 percent of world GNP. In 20 years it will be over 8 percent of GNP. So, be proud of this growth.

The influence exerted by this small Bosphorus University, with its English speaking students and teachers is simply not on the same scale as the influence of this ideology which is pushing the country to take pride in it. Russia has the same problem of reculturization and I can see that Turkey is not being given the attention which it certainly deserves.

To look at the position from a different angle: What we are talking about here is a country with 3000 dollars per capita. Of course, it is much more than the 600 dollars in Libya or Algeria but you cannot compare it with the 25,000 dollars in Germany. So, there is a terrible gap and if people really want to see Turkey in the European Community, then they have to come to the conclusion that Turkey deserves a Marshall Plan, 50 years on. And part of this plan would involve the assimilation of Kurdistan and the Turkish population as it was during the Marshall Plan in Europe - that also involved common programs and so on.

Nowadays, we know for sure that the West has no money. But the problem is that Turkey has to be one of the "haves" or one of the "have nots" and, at the moment, Turkey is actually in between. Their standard of living is much higher than in the Arab world but it still does not even match that of the Eastern European countries.

Whilst discussing the future of Turkey, we must not forget the reality there are 50 million peasants striving for an unknown future. We have to show that this future is at least desirable, at least attainable. But we continue to limit our discussions to the highest plateaux and to ignore the simple everyday realities. A ballot is a ballot - it is as simple as that. We must exert some influence here. We see the same problem in Russia. We have to show that Moscow is attractive. Having been here for two years, I know that the Goethe-Institute is very important. We need 20 Goethe-Institutes in this country.

### **Bagci**

I would like to mention a very specific problem and one which might surprise you. Although Germany is the most important European country for Turkey for many reasons - not least, simply because 2.1 million Turks live there - the only foreign languages which the Turkish Diplomatic Service recognizes are English and French. Even Turkey's official representatives in Germany, such as ambassadors and other diplomats, speak very little German and are therefore unable to communicate with the German authorities in the language. That is a major handicap for our relations.

I have often heard complaints from young Turkish people who were born in Germany, grew up there, studied political science and so on and who have all the qualifications for service in the diplomatic corps, that they have no chance of being accepted by Turkey despite their excellent knowledge of German.

I have already mentioned the 20,000-plus Turkish students who are presently studying at German universities. If we could persuade just 5,000 of these young people to work in Turkey later on, be it in the economic sector or at the universities or whatever, they would provide a massive potential cadre of highly qualified specialists - and that is what we urgently need. Our Ministry of Education supports almost 2,500 post-graduate students who are studying abroad, almost exclusively in America and England. Germany almost seems to be a non-starter as far as intellectual life in Turkey is concerned.

That is the case despite the fact that Germany is the leading nation in the European Union today and that its influence is growing and spreading throughout the whole of Eastern Europe as is demonstrated by the increasing importance attached to the German language. I believe Turkey would be well advised to take account of this and to exploit it. Our young people in Turkey are now far more open-

minded than they were even ten years ago and that open-mindedness also extends to a great degree to the sphere of modern technological development.

In other words: Today's Turks are no longer simply the Anatolian farmers about whom Federal Chancellor Kohl is worried. They are a modern people raring to face the 21st century. And that is why I am so confident about Turkish democracy. In the 21st century, it may well turn out to be Turkey's mission to play the decisive role in securing democracy, the market economy and human rights throughout the whole of the Middle East and on into the Caucasus. As William Shakespeare once said: "Don't underestimate the power of the Turks!"

### **Gasteyger**

Mr Bagci mentioned the 20,000 Turkish students in Germany and expressed his hope that at least 5,000 of them would return to Turkey. It would indeed be regrettable - Mr Utkin has already pointed this out - if the majority of these 20,000 students remained in Germany instead of contributing to the Europeanization of Turkey and to the process of encouraging greater openness towards the outside world.

### **Ergüder**

Turkey is facing many problems. The Kurdish problem is one of them. What bothers me is how we are going to solve them and what the political mechanisms are. It is all very well to call on our parliament to solve the problem but parliament is not equipped to do it. I don't think the bureaucracy is equipped to do it because it is still operating with the mentality of the 20s and the 30s. I don't think an efficient government could be run by this huge bureaucracy.

In Turkey, globalisation is having its impact. Certain sectors are developing into a sort of Denmark whilst other regions are becoming more like Bangladesh. So, there are a lot of "distributive" problems. How we are going to solve them? What is the political mechanism? Can the political system generate consensus? These are the "million-dollar" questions. I see all the rest as secondary problems.

I am not very optimistic that parliament can provide a solution. Proportional representation is a very important problem and the Turkish intellectuals and scientists are guilty of looking at proportional representation as the most democratic form of electoral system. We have equated democracy with justice and representation. If you do not get governments that are able to solve problems, democracy will lose its legitimacy.

Right now, we are faced with the problem of how to get out of this quagmire and how to get governments which will make decisions and which will streamline the Turkish bureaucracy and make it operate in a contemporary fashion. What kind of an electoral system are we going to have in order to produce majorities and consensus? If we do not do that, I'm sure the vacuum will be filled one way or another. That may present a danger for Turkish democracy.

I think that Turkish democracy is moving into a legitimacy crisis because of the lack of ability of the system, to solve problems in Turkey. But the danger for society itself is that the emerging NGOs and business organizations and even public institutions such as the universities, are offering their own solutions. They are operating in a grey area, in a semilegal area which is very dangerous for the system.

My own personal experience is that to make the university function, you have to produce solutions. You cannot wait for the government to respond. That would be dangerous. That creates profiteering, for example in finding a solution to the Kurdish situation. But in other areas, too, NGOs and "foundations" are emerging which are misusing some of their power or some of the semi-legal freedom that they have achieved. So, I think the million-dollar question in Turkey is how we generate a democratic consensus which will get democratic government working again. Then we will find the solution to the Kurdish problem and to the "distributive" problems, too. Now the military is operating as a pressure group and (from behind "closed doors") and is forcing some of the NGOs to be more active in the political system. I don't know whether that's a solution.

### **Gasteyger**

In his article on questions of human rights, Mr Turkmen asked at one point whether there should not also be a human right to efficient and stable government. For most countries, that is probably a justified demand - after all, who is satisfied with his own government? However, the question of whether a "human right" can be derived from this demand, would require further investigation.

Probably the first people to come out against it would be the governments which might be targeted. But that should not deter us from pursuing Mr Turkmen's idea further.

### **Füller**

Mr Turkmen raised the problem of the wishes of the majority. We are all familiar with the idea of the dictatorship of the majority everywhere in the world. There are two approaches to it: one is legal and one is practical. On the one hand you can certainly have majority rule but you also have to protect the minorities. There is rich literature on how to do this. The practical question is that if Turkey votes as a majority against any recognition of anything Kurdish, you will have an insurrection on your hands and you will have this indefinitely. And that is a practical problem - it is not a legal problem.

So, therefore, good governance is certainly the key to the successful willingness of all minorities in the world to stay within the states in which they live. If their basic needs are not met, then those states are facing a disaster. Turkey, unquestionably, is entering the ranks of progressive and advanced nations and its very success will rest on the settlement of this.

Mr Ergüder raises the question whether we want to have proportional representation and whether this is adequate. It is not adequate to answer the problem. But to hope that one might find consensus is also a very risky question. In modern societies with increasing diversity of peoples and views and attitudes and ideas, the search for consensus, unfortunately, becomes increasingly difficult.

### **Abramowitz**

I just wanted to tell a little story that illustrates Mr Ergüder's point which is a very basic point in today's Turkey - the ability to get effective governmental action.

I met a very prominent Turk and I asked him to describe the current situation to me. He said Turkey is like a vast highway with all sorts of pot-holes on the road - all along the road and on both sides of the road. And he said, the Turkish approach for dealing with the problem is to get a good driver. We don't have any more drivers in Turkey. It's time we fixed the road!

And that to me, is the basic thing that Turkey has to do if it is going to get out of its current dilemma. It is not going to get out of it by the amalgamation of the two right-wing parties or the two left-wing parties. It is going to get out of it because it has a reform movement which takes a fundamental look at the way the system is operating.

### **Gasteyger**

As far as security issues are concerned, Turkey's significance for the West and for NATO remains undisputed. But what is the situation with regard to Turkey's economic importance in its future relationship with the European Union, Mr Lake?

### **Lake**

I want to talk in fairly factual terms about the imperatives of European Union - Turkey relations. The first imperative, to my mind is strategic. The second imperative is political. Turkey is pro-Western and Europe wants it somehow in the European architecture. It is already about 70 % in the European architecture. The third imperative is social, which involves values. This part of Turkish propaganda, if you like, is part of the argument and includes things such as human rights, freedom of expression and the Kurdish issue, which is mixed up with all of it. And the fourth imperative is economic.

Economically, we already have very close integration. It is irreversible and it is strategic. In 1993, our total two-way trade was \$ 20 billion. At the end of 1996, after the first of our new Customs Union, the two-way trade volume was \$ 35 billion - an increase of 80 % over three years, which is phenomenal. In the first year of the Customs Union Turkey's total trade deficit went up to \$ 19 billion. I may say incidentally that the current account deficit is far less. It is just over \$ 6 billion because it includes tourism and remittance and the famous "luggage trade" with Russia. Of the total trade deficit of \$ 19 billion, the European Union has half the volume and half the deficit. Turkey does half of its trade, imports and exports, with the European Union.

In the first year of the Customs Union my big fear was not realized. There was no wave of bankruptcies. Turkey rapidly showed that it is competitive in the Customs Union. And the deficit will start to come down this year and next year because much of the deficit was because the Customs Union was accompanied by an expansionist economic policy which sucked in imports of capital

equipment and raw materials to increase Turkey's productive capacity and its exports potential. This will start to come on stream this year and more next year.

The relationship was bedevilled by the lack of financial cooperation, following the Greek veto, involving the money which was supposed to reinforce the Customs Union both from the Commission and the European Investment Bank, and, subsequently, by limitations which are still being applied to this financial cooperation under the Euro-Med Agreement by the European Parliament which focuses exclusively on human rights issues in terms of this financial cooperation. So we have the odd experience where the European Union made a \$ 10 billion profit on this market last year but we are not giving any financial cooperation yet.

There is however a program of further integration linked to the Customs Union as well as the financial cooperation which has fallen down so far. There is institutional cooperation, regular meetings from prime minister level down. There is cooperation in the fields of small and medium-sized enterprises, energy, environment, transeuropean network in road, rail, electricity and telecoms, transport, agriculture, research, education and even culture.

This adds up to a substantial program of further integration. And we may start negotiating the application of some of the single market in Turkey, such as services, which were not included in the Customs Union because of opposition from Germany, but which may be solved.

Where is Turkey in the European architecture now? At the 1995 European Council summit meeting in Madrid, Turkey was put into a box with Russia and the Ukraine. And this traumatized Turkey. In 1997, at Apeldoorn, our foreign ministers decided to reconfirm that Turkey was eligible for membership and that the same objective standards and criteria would be applied to Turkey as all the other candidates. This is a substantial improvement in the status of Turkey vis-à-vis the architecture. That wording was included in a common statement by all 15 made by the Presidency at the Association Council in Luxembourg on 29th of last month.

Turkey has also developed a broadening relationship in the region as a result of all of this. It has a free trade association with Israel and with Hungary. It is negotiating similar arrangements with Poland, the Czech Republic and so on.

This development is having structural changes in Turkey. There is a huge upgrading across the country of Turkey's industrial capacity, particularly in the textile and garment area. Turkey is becoming the automotive hub of this entire region not only with cars but with components. Bosch exports 80 % of what it makes in Turkey. Two weeks ago, Volkswagen sent 15 decision-makers to an auto-fair here to meet 1400 Turkish automotive suppliers to see what they could buy from Turkey for the future. Turkey in fact gets 70 % of all its investment from the European Union and joint ventures are now becoming part of this. And this investment whether foreign, or as at the moment principally domestic, is now spread quite dramatically back into the hinterland of Turkey.

Perhaps in 5 to 10 years, I am told, there will be no more industrial manufacturing around the Istanbul-Marmara region. There are several cities now, all the way back to the east of Turkey, where the growth rate is higher than the national average 7 %. In Gaziantep the growth rate is 10 %. It is extraordinary. Now this of course has an important implication for future consideration of membership because it means that the disparities in income between East and West are somewhat diminishing. That is a fear in the European Union that should therefore be diminishing.

Another fear of Europeans may be diminishing because of the spreading of prosperity is that the birth rate is falling. During the last six years it has fallen from 2.3 to 1.8 %. I say this, of course, because the European Commission has had a great deal to do with funding family planning in Turkey. And President Demirel is the first president publically to support family planning.

So, if we look at the economic integration which I have described, if we look at the common foreign and security integration which Dr. Rühl mentioned, my feeling is that membership of Turkey will one day arise naturally. But to ensure this Turkey needs political stability above all. On the other hand the European Union will continue to need Turkish support on several issues in this region, strategically and in the region as a whole. In our dealings with Russia, the Middle East, the Aegean and Cyprus we are going to continue to need each other.

## **Cetin**

There can be no question that serious problems exist between Turkey and the European Union and that these also have a very negative effect on the relationship between Turkey and Germany. But this

relationship does not rest solely on the issue of our people's emigration to Germany and other European countries in order to find work and a better life there.

I believe we have to look back at history here. When the Republic was founded, Atatürk had three alternative points of orientation: First, the Soviet Union, which had just successfully carried out a great revolution; second, the Islamic world including the Ottoman Empire and Turkey; and third, Europe from which we had gained our independence by war. Atatürk did not find it easy to substantiate his decision in favour of Europe and its values. But he chose this alternative and he declared to the Europeans: "I am a European and I will introduce European values in Turkey."

It is in this vein that we must view Turkey's application to join the European Economic Community which it placed directly after the conclusion of the Treaty of Rome in 1957. Right up to the present day, nothing has changed in that approach. Of course there are those among us, just as there are in other countries, who oppose that policy, but the great majority is still in favour of it just as it always was.

After the end of the Cold War, the European Community made it clear to us that Turkey was no longer required as a security factor in guaranteeing the stability of the region to the same extent as was once the case. The world had changed, it was said. Europe's primary concerns were now the economy and prosperity and Turkey was no longer needed.

That, at any rate, is how we interpret the Europeans' present behaviour. But during the Gulf War, we suddenly found ourselves in demand again. We are welcome when it comes to providing a Turkish contingent for the peace-keeping force in Bosnia - and we are, of course, to continue to guarantee security and stability in the region. But, the word is that we have no contribution to make to prosperity in Europe.

At a stroke, Turkey's place in Europe has been brought into question. And this is a country which has had close ties within Europe since the 14th century! The question is now being posed: Is Turkey really European? Let me say quite unmistakably: Turkey is a part of European history and that history could not be written without Turkey just as the history of Turkey could not be written without Europe. Turkey belongs to Europe geographically. There really can be no discussion on that score even though the matter is continually being raised for discussion.

Basically, we are dealing with two Europes. On the one hand we have the Europe of security and stability, and NATO's boundaries are situated in the south and the east of Turkey. On the other hand, we have the Europe of prosperity - and I do not mean prosperity in the sense of the Welfare Party (Refah). And this Europe is embodied in the European Union, whose boundaries, however, are deemed to lie in the west of Turkey. You will appreciate that it is scarcely possible to make this distinction clear to people in Turkey. If we are talking about NATO, about security and stability, you Turks belong to Europe; but if we are talking about prosperity, we do not need you.

There is the Customs Union with Turkey. Certainly. But that is an extremely one-sided affair which does not work in Turkey's favour. Michael Lake rightly pointed out that despite great difficulties, Turkey has fulfilled all of its obligations in respect of the Customs Union, especially in the private sector of the economy, whereas Europe has done nothing and is still, even today, refusing to release the funds which were promised to us. When you use the Greek veto as an excuse for this, I can only reply that Greece's position was already well-known when the agreement was signed on 5th March 1995. The European Parliament then dragged in the argument about human rights. And time and again, new arguments against honouring these payments are found. Michael Lake pointed out that since then, European exports to Turkey have increased by 10 billion US dollars - an amount which works in the European Union's favour. The European side has shown no willingness whatsoever to undertake political dialogue whereas we have fulfilled all our obligations.

If the states of Central and Eastern Europe are to be preferred in the process of building the new European Order, we do not object. But Turkey's contribution to the establishment of freedom and democracy in Eastern and Central Europe and to making the re-unification of the two parts of Germany possible has been no less than that of England or the Federal Republic of Germany. Turkey has defended NATO's south eastern flank for decades. And in order to maintain peace and stability for Europe, Turkey had to maintain the second largest army, after the USA, in the Western Alliance. That is not the least of the reasons why Turkey believes in its right to belong to Europe. But Europe does not wish to recognize that right. And that is why human rights, the Cyprus conflict, disputes in the Aegean, Islam, the Kurdish problem and so on are raised, as convenience dictates, in order to justify rejection.

As a former foreign minister I recognize all too clearly that these arguments are no more than excuses. Herr von Weizsäcker was far more honest on this point when he said: "Turkey is a big country with a

growing population; that might mean problems for us." Well, we can always discuss that. Michael Lake mentioned that the decision to apply the same criteria for all countries was taken in Apeldoorn. That is the situation on paper. In practice, the situation looks different. Whilst the discussion process has been initiated with the other eleven candidates, Turkey has not been granted this privilege despite the fact that she is attempting to fulfill all of the conditions.

### **Horstmann**

Just two remarks on your comments, Mr Çetin. You mentioned the boundaries of affluence. As Michael Lake has impressed upon us, Turkey's role in the Customs Union means that its ties with the EU are closer than those of any other country outside the EU.

And as far as the Greek veto is concerned: when it comes to the admission of new members, the European Union operates, as it always has, on the principle of consensus. The Governmental Conference in Amsterdam is presently making efforts to improve the situation on this point and on others. But at the moment, we are still bound by this principle.

### **Schmidt**

I really think it is important in the long term, Mr Çetin, that the European Union and Turkey liberate themselves from this quest for reciprocal accusations and work together to define strategic aims, too. In the course of its further development, it must surely be possible for the European Union to free itself from its present bonds as part of that process. It cannot be in Greece's own interests, for example, to have the rapprochement with Turkey blocked long-term because funds are being withheld. I think that Turkey is right in insisting that European promises be kept.

Here, I would like to stress once again that it was Germany which was essentially responsible for ensuring Turkey's acceptance in the Customs Union and Mr Çetin will confirm that. In particular, it was Chancellor Kohl who strongly supported this move at the European Parliament. If the European Parliament chooses to concentrate solely on the question of human rights whenever Turkey comes up, then it runs the risk of becoming politically impotent.

In all other respects, Europe and Germany have always fully honoured their obligations toward Turkey as their partner in NATO and the Federal Republic in particular has fulfilled its commitments on the provision of military equipment to the letter despite some very lively internal political debate on the subject.

I think the United States has been right to involve itself in the conflict between Greece and Turkey - for example on the issue of the rocky islands in the Aegean. The European Union has not been in a position to do that - perhaps because it is, in a sense, party to the dispute. I cannot understand, however, why the Europeans have so far been unable to develop mechanisms to deal with conflicts of this sort - and the Cyprus problem belongs in this category. Perhaps the development of a European contact group might help here.

As far as the double containment policy on Iran and Iraq, which has obviously failed, is concerned, there can be no doubt that Turkish involvement will be needed if the USA and the Europeans, too, want to ensure any sustainable political influence there. The same applies to the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict which is likely to become a much more critical issue for us because of the reserves of natural resources in the Caspian region.

The new NATO-Russia Council, which is being set up in Paris this week, will rely on very close agreement between the member-states - and Turkey is one of these - on all basic strategic issues, especially where the regulation of conflicts is involved. That is why I support Turkey's full membership of the Western European Union as a means of ensuring that we will be better placed to reach agreement in defining our common interests.

As far as the 1963 Treaty of Association between Turkey and the EEC, as it was, is concerned, I subscribe to the principle of "Pacta sunt servanda". I am quite convinced that Turkey's membership in the European Union is only a question of time. But it is not only up to the Europeans to smooth the path to that goal. Turkey also has to play its part - not least of all on the question of its internal political stability. And we shall be watching future developments in Turkey with great interest.

### **Cetin**

I did not say, Herr Schmidt, that NATO has not fulfilled its obligations toward Turkey but that the European Union has not fulfilled its obligations in respect of the Agreement of Association and the Customs Union.

Of course I do not dispute that Turkey has problems - with or without the European Union. We have to solve these problems and we want to do so. These problems involve the infringement of human rights, the democratic deficit, the Kurdish question in the south east and, on the economic front for example, high inflation. We do not pretend that we have solved these problems and therefore have a right to become a full member of the European Union immediately. What we are concerned with is the right to be counted among the serious candidates for acceptance.

Time and again, the impression is being created here that we have to solve all our problems before we can be considered worthy for candidature. But we are not even being told that we might become a full member once we have solved all our problems. The line is: Do your homework and then we will see. That is why Turkey is insisting on obtaining, at the very least, binding recognition that it can pursue its candidature actively.

Today, we in Turkey are at a turning point. Our people and our society are gradually coming to realize that Europe does not make up the whole of our world. We have other options. Turkey is a great country which can lay claim to an honourable place in today's world. The Turkish Republic has managed to exist for 70 years, even without the European Union. And it will continue to do so in the future. But we are prepared to go with Europe. If the Europeans do not want that, then they should say so openly. We will be able to come to terms with that and to find our own way.

### **Robins**

Michael Lake has shown that there is no way that Turkey and Europe can be separated. Any talk along this line is just rhetoric. The economics of the situation and the demographic relationship show that we have to co-exist together.

But what we are talking about here is integration on the one hand and membership on the other hand and one has to ask why it is that our Turkish friends are so absolutely insistent, again and again, on speedy membership of the European Union. I think, that there is one issue, one issue above all others. That is the question of identity and it is the question of shoring up the European identity of a section of the elite in Turkey.

Now, I think the European Union is very important in terms of securing and guaranteeing values. After all, bringing Greece and Spain and Portugal into the European Union was immensely important in terms of shoring up democracy, in terms of ensuring that there would no longer ever be the options of a military take-over or military dictatorship in those countries. Therefore I think the idea of shoring up values is a very attractive one.

But what of the values that we are being asked to shore up in the Turkish context? We are being asked to shore up values which are led by the military in Turkey where the military is in the vanguard of ensuring that a rigid set of values, which are increasingly out of step with the values of society. I am afraid that that is just not going to run in Europe because a reduction of the centrality of non-democratic institutions, including the military, is so fundamental to the values of the new Europe and to the values of the European Union.

So, I would ask our Turkish friends to rethink the approach to the relationship with Europe. Put the emphasis on integration, be pleased with integration, be pleased with the economic integration which is taking place. Be pleased that there is increasing prosperity as a result of the relationship with the European Union. Look at the foreign direct investment which is taking place in Turkey. And let's try to get away from those things that are likely to push us further apart rather than bring us closer together.

### **Türkmen**

Mr Robins mentioned that the European Union should not take the values of the Turkish military into consideration. Why do our British friends have so much against the military in Turkey? This surprises me. What are the values of the Turkish military today? The main value that they are expressing forcefully is secularism. Are we against secularism? The second thing they are doing, for instance, is to push the idea of negotiation and dialogue with Greece. Is it bad because these ideas are expressed by people who wear a military uniform?

### **Mortimer**

Mr Turkmen, the point is not the specific values of the military. How could we have anything against secularism? Of course we are in favour of peace and dialogue between Turkey and Greece. The point is democracy, as we understand it in Western Europe, means that you have an electoral process. Governments are elected and, if necessary, overthrown by parliament.

We don't expect to see people, by virtue of the fact that they have uniforms on and weapons in their hands, saying: "You have got to have so many years of compulsory state education` or This kind of party has no place in government". That is not the role of the armed forces in a democracy as we understand it. This is a real problem and it will not help to sweep it under the carpet.

### **Cetin**

I emphasize yet again: Turkey is not demanding immediate membership. But at the end of this year, the new map of Europe will be drawn. And that is why we ask: From the European point of view, when the future of Europe is re-drawn, will Turkey be there or not? We would like a clear answer on that from the Europeans. We are not talking about immediate membership.

When I mentioned Turkey's other options, I did not mean that we would turn away from Europe. Turkey made its decision many years ago - in particular when the Republic was founded. That decision was for a secular, democratic, modern Turkey. That decision is not going to change. And we would say to the Europeans: Do not doubt that we want to follow that path together with you. But if the Europeans say no, then we will continue to follow it even without them.

### **Mortimer**

I want to say something about this relationship between Turkey and the European Union and I want to make four points.

While Turkey feels a strong sense of grievance about its treatment by the EU, it does seem to me that a lot of the damage is self-inflicted. To start with, in 1977 Turkey missed an enormous trick by not applying for membership at the same time as Greece. It might have been very difficult for the EU to have one of those countries as a member and not the other if both had been applicants at that time.

Coming much nearer to the present crisis and even now this "wise men" thing is held up by Turkey's inability or unwillingness to make a fairly simple statement that it respects international law, the territory of its neighbours, and that it will not resort to force. That, one would have thought, was the minimum that could be asked of a fellow member of NATO and of the OSCE in its dealings with another member state.

The question of democracy and human rights remains posed, it seems to me. Of course, there is a tendency for the Turks to say it is unfortunate that they have got this fundamentalist party which happens to be in government now, but that is a sort of aberration and that really, they are all great believers in secularism and it is going to be dealt with because, luckily, they have strong armed forces which are very popular in the country.

I think this misapprehends the nature of the problem and I would like to make a short commercial here for tomorrow's Financial Times which will contain one of the surveys which we do periodically. This one happens to be on Turkey and in the introductory article written by my excellent colleague in Ankara, there is a very interesting quote from an unnamed European diplomat: "We can accept a Moslem state in the EU, but not a Kemalist one." By a Kemalist one, of course, I think he means one in which the armed forces have such a strong institutionalized role that to get the right government it depends on a military intervention, whether direct or indirect, rather than on the normal electoral process.

Secondly on the European attitude. Of course the faults are also on the European side. The statement by the Christian Democrat Parties on March 4th was very bad. But the fact is that it reflected a real ambivalence in the European body politic. We, the elites, who study the strategic questions are clear that we want Turkey as part of Europe in the long term. We have completely failed to communicate that to public opinion in Western Europe. I think most people, if you stop them in the street in any Western European city and tell them that Turkey is a European country, they will be surprised. So that is a real problem.

Thirdly, the European Union is not paradise. I remember the 1960s when everybody in Britain was as eager to get into the Common Market as we called it in those days, as apparently the whole of the Turkish elite is now. This was mainly because de Gaulle was keeping us out and we were as cross with him as you are with Kohl now. Ever since we got in, we have been complaining. And I strongly

support those who said that you can be a Western civilized democratic country without having to be a member of the European Union, and I think the Turks should think about that.

But finally, and in spite of all those things, personally I hope that Turkey will pursue its desire to belong to this Union. I feel a great affinity with many Turkish people and especially in this room with Mr Alaton and all the forces that he represents. I admire the TÜSIAD program which includes the abolition of the National Security Council, and I regard all those courageous people who are fighting for human rights in Turkey, many of whom unfortunately are now in prison, as fellow Europeans and I look forward to welcoming Turkey as a full member of the European Union in my lifetime.

### **Kramer**

What surprises me about the debate here is the implicit assumption that the present foreign political and military "establishment" in Turkey will continue to determine this country's foreign and security policy for the foreseeable future just as it has in the past. That means we are ignoring the fact that the most powerful political force at present, the only party which has consistently gained votes over the last seven or eight years and which has, therefore, increased its public support, is one which pursues a completely different foreign and security agenda from the one which we have assumed as the basis for our debate.

Can we really be so sure that the next elections will not see a new government which will seek to pursue an alternative agenda even more energetically than the present government? I am thinking, for example, about "D-8" and the moves toward closer economic cooperation between the eight countries which Erbakan hopes to bring together. (Apart from Turkey, these include Egypt, Iran, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria and Bangladesh.) We might not take this too seriously at the moment. But can we afford simply to leave factors such as this out of our calculations when we are assessing Turkey as a strategic partner and to assume that the foreign and security programme of the political Islamist element in the Refah Party will play no role at all in the future?

### **Rühl**

We have to make a distinction between Turkey's strategic-geopolitical significance and its availability as a partner. The latter element depends on the balance of mutual interests. If that changes, although Turkey will of course continue to be an extremely significant factor in strategic terms for any European Middle East policy, it will simply no longer be available to us as a partner. That would not be an unusual event in politics. If that happens, Herr Kramer, we will have to see what alternatives remain open to us.

Of course we cannot rely on the situation remaining as it is now. The situation in Iran may be changing now, even as we speak, and those changes may affect Turkey. We will have to wait and see.

### **Güngör**

The question of Turkey's alternatives to EU membership has been raised here. I want to state clearly that Turkey is not searching for any such alternatives but it does want to change the conditions which it currently faces at the gates of the EU. From the Turkish point of view, the search for an alternative would be like a stick which is covered in mud at both ends. No matter where you get hold of it, you will always get your hands dirty.

If Turkey enters into military cooperation with Israel for example, certain people start to yell. If she tries to reach an accommodation with Iran, other people are outraged. Mr Rouleau says that it is only the Kurdish problem which stands between Turkey and Iran. I can assure you that if Turkey were to become an Islamist state with a mullah regime, Iran and Turkey would immediately embark on a sandwiching operation to destroy the Kurds in both countries. That is not an attractive alternative.

Herr Kramer mentioned D-8, the monster that Erbakan has introduced to the world. Erbakan proudly announced recently that when the D-8 participants meet in Istanbul in mid-June, they will be joined by a state president who has specifically chosen Turkey as the venue for his first visit abroad, namely Sani Abachi, the President of Nigeria. That is an example of the quality of the alternatives which would be open to Turkey.

I believe that whilst Turkey still has a pro-Western government, Europe should grasp every possible opportunity to draw Turkey closer to itself. If Refah gets back into power at the next elections, it will not get just 21 % of the votes as in 1995, but probably over 30 %. As Herr Kramer rightly suspects, that will make things much more difficult. And the military will not simply stand by and watch. They will intervene - and that, again, is something which we democrats totally reject.

## Kühnhardt

I would like to follow up your last remark, Mr Lake. You say that the European Union also needs Turkish support on the Cyprus issue. Well, the application by the Republic of Cyprus for membership of the European Union has put the problem of a divided Cyprus well and truly on the agenda and the EU cannot dodge it any longer.

Various political proposals for solving the Cyprus question have been floating around for years now: Equal rights for both ethnic groups; a dual-canton solution within a single state; demilitarization of the island. But, and this also applies to Turkey, the political will to achieve a real solution is obviously lacking.

In this connection, we are now faced with very important questions. First: Is Cyprus only to be accepted into the EU after the disputed issues have been resolved? Or, are we hoping that the Cyprus question will be resolved by accepting the island into the EU? In other words, to come to the nub of the matter: Next year, will we be seriously considering Cyprus' accession and at the same time accepting Turkey as a full member of the WEU? That could provide the basis for a re-appraisal of military security on the island. It really is a shameful state of affairs when a UN-contingent from the Fijian Islands, and goodness knows where else, has to be stationed in Cyprus to prevent an escalation because we cannot make the effort to find a European solution to this European problem.

My second question is: Is it not conceivable, as part of the development toward a common EU foreign and security policy, that the WEU might play a role in achieving a peacekeeping solution in which Turkey, as a member of the WEU, could be involved? The Turkish troops would then not need to leave Cyprus because they would be part of the WEU peace-keeping force.

We should, of course, not forget that there have been times when Turkey and Greece enjoyed good relations as neighbours. Under Ataturk and Venizelos, for example, or after the Second World War when both countries joined NATO and the Council of Europe and when they became associate EEC members almost simultaneously. I would ask why Greece and Turkey should not once again identify their common interests and work together to shape future developments in Europe?

Like Herr Kramer, I would also like to ask about European concepts and interests. Surely it should be possible to identify common Greek and Turkish interests in a Black Sea Cooperation Zone. The first tentative moves towards creating such a zone have already been made and it might be possible to intensify its links with Europe on the model of the European Economic Area. Both countries could make a valuable contribution on these lines. After all, this region is politically and strategically vital for Europe because it holds the key to the future oil supply routes from the Caucasus, the Caspian Sea and central Asia. In view of all the uncertainties in the Middle East, that is an aspect which should not be neglected.

There is another question which concerns Turkey directly. In Armenia I heard one complaint over and over again: "Turkey is blocking our access to Europe."

Of course I appreciate the difficulties involved in coming to terms with the past. That is why we should be looking to the future and, for example, thinking about membership for Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan in the Council of Europe. Turkey's foreign policy, which is oriented toward Europe, could play a useful role here in supporting the aspirations of these three countries of being admitted to the Council of Europe.

## Cetin

Turkey is not opposed to the inclusion of Armenia and Azerbaijan in the Council of Europe. We have no problems with Armenia. What does concern us is that the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia should be resolved first. In other words, both countries must agree on mutual recognition of the borders which are recognized by the Council of Europe, the OSCE and world-wide. Our relations with Georgia, with Azerbaijan and with Armenia too, are good. But, at present, Armenia is occupying twenty percent of Azerbaijan's territory. One million people have fled the region. That situation has to be regulated. Once this is achieved, I see no reason why Turkey should have any objection to these countries being accepted in the Council of Europe.

## Veremis

Mr Kühnhardt has suggested a trade-off for the accession of a rump Cyprus into the European Community against full WEU-membership of Turkey. I have no objection to that in the sense that I have already committed myself to a full accession of Turkey to the WEU.

However, I think there is an even better solution and that is to have Cyprus in toto in the European Union - a reconstituted Cyprus which will I think (although Turkey may not appear to agree with this now), benefit Turkey, since it will have its own exponent into the European Union via the Turkish-Cypriot community, and of course Greece, because this will break the logjam of the lack of credibility between the two sides. Be that as it may, it would be a mistake to hold Cyprus' accession ransom to Turkey's own desire to enter the European Union right now. This is a very delicate point which should not influence the discussion of Cyprus' accession.

The Black Sea Cooperation Agreement is a marvellous idea. It is certainly ground for exploring a commonality of interests between Greece and Turkey that is so elusive. In fact if we do not explore and identify a commonality of interests we will limit ourselves to words of good intention which will not weigh very much.

I think this is what bedevils Greek-Turkish relations. There is an anachronism on both sides which refers to times of yore instead of looking forward to a future where a stable eastern Mediterranean will facilitate the interests of both countries, especially given the fact that the Caspian Sea is coming into focus and will come even more into focus when the price of oil rises. The transfer of oil and pipelines will require peace in the region. There is immense promise but we are still squabbling over petty questions such as grey zones and whether the island of Gavdos belongs to Greece or Libya or whatever.

Having said that, I must come back to Mr Schmidt's question about Greece's veto on blocking EU funds to Turkey which is obviously not without cost for Greece. The veto was not a fancy of the moment but was used because Greece has a very strong security concern in the region which was not at all alleviated by Turkish statements of last year about Gavdos. I also hear that there is a publication of the Naval Academy in Turkey on the status of Greek islands or islands in the Aegean in general. There is a very real concern, believe me, on the part of Greece concerning the security of the island territory in the Aegean.

Continental shelf questions and economic issues are secondary to this basic perception (and perceptions have their own reality in people's minds) that Greece's sovereignty is being questioned in certain parts of the Aegean which have been Greek at least since the second Balkan War. What Mr Pangalos is after is a fig-leaf to justify lifting this veto. And the fig-leaf, of course, is some agreement, some credible pronouncement on the part of Turkey that the "casus belli" invocation is not appropriate for relations between states that belong to the same alliance.

This brings me back to my initial view that Turkey's accession to the European Union will alleviate such problems. Even if it does not enter immediately, if there is a credible prospect for Turkey to enter the European Union, this will act as a kind of learning process into the ways of solving problems in the EU manner.

### **Ergüder**

I will try to imagine myself on any of the Greek islands or in Greece, and to look at Turkey as a Greek. I would think that Turkey poses an important security problem for Greece not because Turkey has a declared policy aim, a military policy or an expansionist policy, but if I were Greek and a member of a nation with a population of 10 million and if I looked at Turkey, I would see a country with a constantly growing population, 50 % of whom are 20 years old or younger, I would see a country with a population which has a significant proportion of people who are not properly educated and I would see a country with a very dynamic economy. And, with Cyprus giving all the wrong signals, I would look at Turkey as a security problem.

Now, if I switch over and look at the situation from this side of the Aegean and adopt the Turkish mentality towards Greece, I would not think that Turkey is expansionist at all. But Turkey's problem is that it is not able to produce the kind of leadership which is capable of dealing with some of the problems that may make Turkey a potential problem. If Turkey is not able to educate its growing population and if Turkey is not able to institute the necessary political and economic reforms, then Turkey could be a potential problem. Greek fears would then be understandable.

The major problem in Turkey is the lack of political leadership. If you do not have political leadership, if populism dominates your political system, then it is very difficult to look for the commonalities that Mr Veremis was talking about. The Turkish political system is fragmented and I think we need leadership that transcends populism and that transcends the day-to-day political problems.

### **Türkmen**

I think that Turkey should be admitted to the WEU for general security reasons but not for this quid pro quo against the admission of Cyprus to the European Union.

We have to look at the problem of the admission of Cyprus from two angles. If Cyprus is admitted as a reconstituted island, as Mr Veremis has said, I think we should have no objection. I know the Turkish element has objections to it because it says that unless Turkey becomes a member of the EU, Cyprus cannot become a member. Personally I don't agree with that. I think that if we have a solution for Cyprus, we should let the Turkish people in Cyprus benefit from the advantages of the European Union, too.

I also fully support the view that we should resolve this problem as quickly as possible. But if we are going to make a determined effort to resolve the problem, we also have to bring Greece and Turkey into the negotiations. I don't think that we can go anywhere if we continue with this bilateral relationship between the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots.

If Cyprus is admitted before there is a solution, this will only complicate the problem of Cyprus and it will complicate the whole relationship between Turkey and Greece and between Turkey and the European Union. This will render the division of the island permanent. The moment Cyprus is admitted without a solution, which would mean admitting only part of the island, the Turkish Cypriots would ask for full integration with Turkey, if not for annexation by Turkey. This would create a tremendous problem so I think that here, we have to tread very carefully.

One brief remark on what Mr Veremis has said about the Aegean. First of all, I would like to say that he is 100 % correct in what he says about the islands of Gavdos. But you know, everybody has the right to make a stupid remark now and then and some stupid remarks were made at that time. The islands is close to Crete, it has nothing to do with us.

However, on the Aegean, Mr Pangalos recently made a very important remark in an interview with a Turkish newspaperman. He said, "Why not freeze the situation?" If you cannot resolve it, freeze it. I think it is a very interesting idea but we will have to wait and see and this is why I hope that these talks involving the "wise men" will start immediately and will try to explore all the possibilities of the situation.

### **Gasteyger**

Let us now turn our attention to the Middle East and look at how Turkey's role in this region is perceived and what is expected of her here. Mr Léville, as an extremely well-informed specialist, you are just the man to provide us with clarification on this regional perspective. The relationship between your country, Israel, and Turkey has recently undergone an important change.

### **Levite**

I would like to approach the issue of Turkish integration in Europe from a Middle East perspective and specifically from an Israeli perspective.

I take two facts for granted. The first is that there is a sizeable Moslem presence in Europe and this will continue to grow. The basic dilemma is will it be of an Ataturk-style or Iranian-style? That is one challenge we will have to face. The second fact is that Europe has a vital interest in the Middle East and in the Mediterranean basin but that Europe has thus far focused (and I think for obvious reasons) primarily on its southern pillar, especially on Algeria. But we now have to turn and look eastward also, and the Barcelona process adds primarily that missing dimension.

This brings me to the second point which is that the Middle East at present (and fortunately or unfortunately, Turkey and Israel are not spared this dilemma) is now facing a very acute identity crisis. That identity crisis is characterized by all three factors that have been discussed here: stability, secularism and democracy. All three elements are being challenged. The question is whether we are going to end up with the least desired outcome of chaos, fundamentalism and totalitarianism. Or will it be some combination of the former, more desirable features?

It is here that the struggle over the identity between Pan-Islam, Pan-Arabism, Mediterraneanism, Middle-Easternism goes on. And Turkey has a very important role to play in shaping the future of this region. I admit that we have a true vested interest in Turkey having a European identity while it also engages in this part of the world, and for three primary reasons. First, as a model - if you wish, as the antithesis to Algeria. Secondly, as a bridge between Europe and the Middle East and Asia. And thirdly as areal player in the region - as somebody who will be a member of the region's security and

economic architecture of the future Middle East. Part of the effort to try and help Turkey play that role, in fact all of these three roles, constructively is precisely through Turkey's integration into Europe.

If you look at the NATO context, people have been playing up the importance of Turkey in terms of the immediate security benefits which Turkey had brought to the West by virtue of its NATO membership. But I want to highlight another dimension to it. I think that Turkey's membership in NATO (and I can attest to this from first-hand experience of the Turkish military in recent years) has also had obvious benefits in civil - military relations. It has contributed directly to the fact that the Turkish military is not eager to step in and assume the levers of government. Secondly, its NATO membership has been very important also in cultivating the role of its military as the guardian of the Atatürk tradition, more in the European style - perhaps not as much as people had hoped, but nevertheless in that direction. Thirdly, it has also contributed to some moderation of the Turkish-Greek disputes. Many of the people who monitor their acrimonious debates in Europe tend to see the negative side to the Turkish-Greek conflict taking place in the NATO arena. But it has also kept a cap on the situation and prevented the conflict from escalating to a much greater degree. And fourthly, NATO membership has also helped to upgrade the technical capabilities of the Turkish military to deal with challenges on their own, initially in the military domain but then with a spill-over to other parts of society.

I think we can use this model to extrapolate the effects which Turkey's integration into Europe would have in other domains of Turkey's society, as well.

The thrust in Israeli-Turkish relations (and I am not talking about specific transactions which are mainly driven by commercial interests) derives from Israel's desire to see Turkey - a modern, a secular, a democratic Turkey - play a constructive role in the Middle East region. And to the extent that we can consolidate that role by our bilateral cooperation, not against anybody but with Turkey, we would be the beneficiary. We think that the region as a whole will benefit from Turkey's integration in Europe.

Finally, I think that a solution to the problems of the Middle East lies ultimately in the acceptance of the concept of multiple identities. I do not think that the Europeans would be shocked or surprised by the notion that Pan-Islam, Pan-Arabism, new Middle-Easternism, Mediterraneanism and some Europeanism might all co-exist side-by-side. We, as Israelis, settled for a western identity based not just on Europe but on the Atlantic dimension as well. It would help Turkey, and then all of us, to see Turkish westernism enhanced and consolidated by a European pillar.

Perhaps the best way of getting around to discussing the current state of affairs in the Arab-Israeli domain and to seeing where Turkey fits in, would be to understand the last year in the peace process. I think this "one-year perspective" is useful not only because the current Israeli government is now about one year old, but because I believe that one cannot otherwise understand the current predicament that the peace process is experiencing, and consequently also the likely solutions one may be able to find to it.

After Prime Minister Rabin's assassination, and definitely in the spring of last year, it was already becoming apparent that it would be difficult to sustain the peace process in the format in which it was being conducted after Oslo. Syria was offered two variations of a deal on Golan, both involving essentially what they wanted. It turned down both - one because the Syrians thought that the price they would have to pay in security terms was too stiff, the other because they thought the price they would have to pay in economic normalization was too stiff. Either way, it was not primarily a question of whether they would get more or less what they wanted, but rather a question of whether they were willing to pay the price for it. And the answer they gave at the time was a resounding "no".

Moreover, even at the time when the peace process was going very well for the Palestinians, they were showing clear signs of experiencing severe difficulties in delivering on their part of the deal with Israel. They were not able to control violence against Israel and Israelis from their own territory. At the same time, expectations were rapidly rising for a degree of progress in the process which was well beyond what the process itself could deliver. There was also mounting evidence of internal weaknesses in the system that have, I am afraid, long-term ominous consequences in terms of corruption, dictatorial style and things of that nature.

The Lebanese were in no position to make progress in the peace process. Having tried, they found that they could not get any elbow-room from the Syrians and were consequently stuck. The Jordanians were thus the single most important bright spot at that point. But the inherent vulnerability of Jordan by itself on the one hand, and the grossly exaggerated expectations on the other hand were another thing that did not portend too well for the future.

Egypt was feeling quite endangered by the direction that the peace process was taking. In consequence, it was becoming increasingly hostile and uncooperative, fearing the normalization of

relations in the Middle East or multilateralization of the Middle East that might ensue if Palestinians, Syrians and Jordanians were to deal directly with Israel. This would have left them largely "out of it" and would have been highly inimical to Egypt's perception of itself and its role in the region. They were, therefore, making life very difficult both on a multilateral and a bilateral level of the peace process.

All of this must be seen against the background of twenty years of an Egyptian-Israeli peace in which very little normalization or for that matter, reconciliation with Israel, has taken place. In fact, the phenomenon that we are talking about - that peace was only occurring between elites rather than reconciliation between people - was becoming an increasingly important factor.

I want to highlight the role of the multilateral track of the peace process in this context because I think this is one major area where Turkey comes in. On the eve of the last elections in Israel, the activity of the various multilateral working groups was coming to a screeching halt for a variety of reasons. One of them was the over-prioritization at that time of the bilaterals at the expense of the multilaterals. But also, the multilaterals had reached a stage where some of the process was already there, but the energy to move it one step further into the implementation phase of projects, into building institutions and so on - that driving force was not there. The energy was missing, either because of lack of economic resources or because of the absence of political will. In any case, the multilateral momentum was then dying down. At that time it looked like this was not a high price to pay if we were going to have a break-through on the bilateral front. Yet the problem was that we did not realize how precarious the bilateral track had been and what a vital role the multilaterals had to play in reinforcing it.

Adding the Israeli dimension to the question, I think, by the eve of the Israeli election, the Israeli mood toward the peace process had changed dramatically. It had reached the point where it was becoming increasingly apparent that not only were we not getting this euphoria of a new Middle East, but in fact the one and only thing we really wanted the Middle East peace process to deliver - namely greater security for Israel and its safe anchoring in the region - was not only proving elusive but that the security situation was actually becoming a lot worse.

However, the relevant dimensions for Israelis to evaluate the impact of the peace process have shifted from assessing its impact on the national security - that is, the prospect of war - to its effect on individual security. What people feared most was the threat to individual personal security. And they felt that the deterioration of individual security was directly attributable to the progress in the peace process.

Given the fact that Egypt was moving backward rather than forward on normalization after 20 years of peace, that the Jordanian peace, despite all the euphoria, was not as intensive in view of the societal resistance in the Kingdom, the limitations of peacemaking with non-democratic regimes were becoming increasingly apparent. Israel has consciously made the choice of dealing with its Arab neighbours, whether they are democratic or not, without trying to change their system. We knew that there were inherent limitations to the peacemaking potential of such partners, but we put them aside and preferred to ignore them. I think that in the final analysis we have come to realize that this was going to haunt us.

The last year since that point has been characterized by a lot of mistakes on all sides, and there is little point in blaming any of them. Consider for example the viewpoint of the Israeli prime minister. Having made his share of mistakes, he nevertheless feels tremendous frustration that he has completed and implemented the Hebron accord, he has carried out the first phase of further redeployment, he has released women prisoners who have blood on their hands. He decided not to close the Palestinian Authority's functions in Jerusalem. He recognized and endorsed the Oslo accord and Arafat as a partner and so on, and yet he is getting the worst part of the deal.

My bottom line is that we were getting into a phase of the peace process that was becoming increasingly a zero sum game. When you get into a negotiating process that is increasingly zero sum, and the issues on the table are so messy, it is obviously very difficult to make progress without third parties' support. And this is where Turkey comes in.

In our perception, Turkey is an important player not just because of our cultural affinity and the legacy of the Ottoman Empire (although some of our laws in Israel date back to the Ottoman period). It is something more concrete. We believe that Turkey, in the absence of initial Arab willingness to accept us, can still provide us with some sense of anchoring in the region. For Turkey, as one of its identities, also has genuine Middle East credentials. Moreover, and most importantly, it is a large Moslem country that has very good relations throughout the region - in the Gulf, with Jordan and so on. It also has a

very important geostrategic location and it has control of a very scarce resource in the Middle East, which is water.

Turkey has an identity card which shows a pro-Western, democratic, secular identity and a link to the European security system. This comes not just through NATO but also through the CFE and the OSCE process, to mention just a few. Furthermore, the latter deliberately leave the south-eastern corner of Turkey outside of the scope of application of their arrangements. Turkey has thus accumulated all the experience of dealing with such regions and it provides that kind of a natural link to the Middle East. So, if we are talking about how we move into a period where there is a regional system in the Middle East, a regional architecture, which has an economic as well as a security dimension, Turkey has a very important role to play in providing the bridge between Europe and the Middle East.

It is in that context of the perception of the role that Turkey can play in the region, as well as some potentially beneficial commercial interests - military as well as non-military - that Israel and Turkey have launched bilateral mechanisms for political and political-military consultations. Turkey has also played a very important role in the arms control and regional security working group (ACRS). Mr Cetin knows this very well. He gave it a lot of support.

There has been a modest degree of military cooperation between Turkey and Israel and despite all the press releases, the cooperation has not been directed against anybody. It has been partnership rather than alliance. It has been mostly a solution to very technical problems. For example, we don't have enough air space in which to train. Turkey has made it possible for us to train, just as it has offered to do for NATO. At the same time, we provide them with an opportunity to train in order to address other technical deficiencies. In fact, this trilateral naval Turkish-Israeli-US exercise that so much has been made of, is a humanitarian search-and-rescue exercise, and this is where the US also come in.

My bottom line is the following: We have now reached the point where if, on all of the thorny issues that lie ahead of us - whether it is the Palestinians or the Syrians or whatever - we are stuck with a zero sum game, so we need this multilateral set-up to provide an anchor. We need to know that if we deal with the security problems with the Palestinians and the Syrians, we will find ourselves confronted by problems with Iran and Iraq once we turn the corner.

It is only through this anchoring of the bilaterals in a true regional structure that we can make progress toward a more stable Middle East. Perhaps we would then be able to accommodate the destabilizing factors, whether they be nonsecularism of a radical form or whether they be parties which want to challenge the order in the Middle East.

## **Robins**

The relationship between Israel and Turkey is a very important one and a very interesting one. If I was an Israeli, I would feel slightly disconcerted about the fact that that relationship had been forged with the Turkish military and not with other institutions and other parties in Turkey. I would feel a bit disconcerted about the fact that the first agreement, which took place in February 1996, was made when there was no government in Turkey. The process of coalition-building was still going on.

It would have been very easy for that process to have been delayed until the ANAP-DYP coalition government had been put in place and then give it the seal of democratic legitimacy. Now, the Israelis have been very sensible and try to move on to thicken up their relationship with Turkey and Turkish society. There are lots of visits taking place with think-tanks coming, with academics, with political figures and parliamentarians going backwards and forwards. I think, that is very sensible and to be applauded.

The thing that also makes me rather uncomfortable about the Turkish-Israeli relationship, however, is that there are very strong echoes of the 1950's here of the periphery pact, the relationship which existed between the two which was based on the premise of cooperation amongst the countries of the region which lay "beyond the Arab fence", to quote David Ben Gurion. The difference between the 1950's and the 1990's is that Iran is not part of that periphery pact. Iran is on the other side of the barriers.

That ought to be of concern to both Turkey and Israel because two or three years ago we had a major opportunity to get away from this historic conflict problem, to get away from the Arab-Israeli problem, to have integration, to have real cooperation across the region. The multilaterals were a symbol of that. I think we should all be concerned about the fact that the multilaterals are no longer running and about what that symbolizes.

If there are increasing echoes of the 1950`s here we know what happened in the 1950`s: polarisation, tension and ultimately some really unfortunate developments. Turkey very much got its fingers burned in terms of the Middle East relationship during that time and that is why it has been so reluctant to interact with the Middle East since then.

Finally, Mr Lévíte, I think it is absolutely unbelievable that it can really be stated that the Israeli-Turkish relationship is not directed against any third party. The Syrians feel squeezed by it. The Iranians feel extremely perplexed by the fact that Israeli flights will be taking place near to their borders. This is something we should be very concerned about. We should be concerned because at the end of the day, the Turks and the Israelis are our friends and we do not want to see rising tensions in the region which might be damaging to either or both of those countries.

### **Bagci**

Mr Robins, do you see Turkey`s good relations with Israel as an obstacle for future Turkish membership of the EU because the neighbouring countries Iran, Syria and Iraq are not happy with it?

### **Füller**

I would simply like to lend support to Phil Robin`s outstanding remarks on this question with which I fully associate myself. I think the relationship between Israel and Turkey is extremely important and promising. Both countries are democratic, both countries aspire to certain kinds of values that the West would fully share. But I think the rationale that was provided by Mr Lévíte here suggests that because there is no reasonable possibility of reaching agreement very soon with Israel`s own immediate neighbours, in effect, Turkey has become almost an alternative option for Israel to pursue.

This is important because we are talking about models of problem-solving and about the Turks reaching agreement with their own Kurds. It would be heartening to think that Israel might provide a model here, through its own agreement with the Palestinians, for Turkey and the rest of the world on peaceful solutions. But certainly, ties with Turkey should not be an alternative to an Israeli inability to solve its problems with all its own immediate neighbours.

### **Cetin**

Mr Fuller says that Turkey and Israel are both democratic countries. Throughout our history we have had no problems with Israel or the Israeli people. We have set up our policy taking Israel`s relationship with the Arab world into account. As long as they are moving toward agreement, there is no problem. Therefore all kinds of agreements are to the benefit of our two countries. We think that this will also help peace and stability in the Middle East.

Our agreement on the defence side is not our first agreement with Israel. Free trade agreements have already been passed by parliament and we have agreements on investment incentives, double taxation, tourism and cultural issues.

Turkey and Israel are using the same defence material - from the United States mainly. We are the only two countries with agreements on cooperation in the defence area and on training. It is not against any third party. It is not a pact and it is not going to function as such. For this reason no country needs to be afraid of our cooperation which will benefit our two countries and the whole region.

Of course, our two countries can contribute in this way to peace and stability in the region. This also involves cooperation on fighting terrorism because both countries suffer very much from terrorism. This is a very reasonable agreement, it is not directed against any third party. I am the one who signed the general framework of the agreement in 1993 and I think we must continue with it.

### **Gasteyger**

Mr Çetin, you say that the agreements with Israel do not represent an alliance but only a partnership on cooperation in various areas.

### **Cetin**

I emphasize: It is not an alliance.

### **Gasteyger**

I believe that that differentiation is more than a question of semantics. It reflects the novelty of and the sensitivity involved in the military cooperation between the two countries and the fact that the Arab countries also view it in this light.

### **Robins**

In the 1980`s I was always surprised that Turkey didn`t have closer relations with Israel because after Egypt made peace with Israel there seemed to be no reason why Turkey shouldn`t have relations which were at least as good bilaterally. So I very much applaud the improvement in relations between Turkey and Israel which have taken place over the last few years.

However we have to deal in realities and how that will be perceived by other actors in the region. The way in which this relationship has been perceived, especially since February 1996 when it took on a military dimension which is very clearly led by, pushed and driven by, the military.

It has always seemed to me that one of the strengths of Turkish-Middle Eastern policy over the last few years was the very calm and measured way in which Turkey has gone about trying to manage its relations with three very difficult neighbours - with Syria, Iraq and Iran. God knows, we have all had our problems with those countries in recent years.

But the nature of the relationship that has developed with Israel, the defiant way in which much of this has been announced - this has been very defiant; let`s make no mistake about it - has been much out of step with the quiet and calm and systematic development of relations which we saw between, for example, 1989 and 1993. This was very much to the benefit of both countries in terms of bolstering and expanding tourism and in terms of increasing senior diplomatic contacts and so on.

So I have no problem with the development of the relationship. It is an absurdity to suggest that the European Union is going to say that Turkey`s good relations with Israel might present a problem for Turkish membership. But the way it has been presented and the way it has developed is deeply perplexing. The responses from the Iranians, from the Syrians, from the Iraqis and now recently from the Egyptians as well, are also deeply perplexing.

Put into the context of the peace process and the way that has gone over the last 12 months - it is doubly perplexing. One feels concerned because of Israel and the Israeli people, Turkey and the Turkish people and our overall interests in seeing as stable a Middle East as can possibly be achieved.

### **Cetin**

I believe there is no way we can please Iran, Iraq and Syria on the matter of our relations with Israel. They are not even very pleased about our relationship with the United States and Europe. Mr Robins, why have you not mentioned the fact that Iran is not very happy with our relations with NATO or with the United States or with Europe? Israel and Turkey play a very important role in the region and we have pursued our relationship very calmly. They are the ones who object to a relationship between Turkey and Israel and who say that we are going to create a new pact in the region. This is not true. We have not said this.

There are some countries in the Middle East which want to assume a leadership role in all matters. As soon as Turkey took the initiative, to the benefit of both countries and the region, some countries began to ask why Turkey was cooperating with Israel. Why shouldn`t we do it? We have no problem with Israel and we believe that cooperation will help peace and stability in the region in the long run.

We may go even further - I discussed this with Simon Peres when he was foreign minister - and try to achieve some kind of CSCE in the Middle East. We started to work on this idea which would include Egypt, Jordan and other countries later. But we have both now left office and the situation in the peace process has become very critical. Nevertheless, I believe we can continue along this path and Turkey and Israel can take a lead in searching for solutions to the problems in the Middle East.

### **Bagci**

Turkish foreign policy, Mr Robins knows this very well, was a hostage to Arab nationalism throughout the 50`s, 60`s and 70`s. Now, we have entered a period where Arab nationalism no longer dictates what Turkey has to do.

Turkey and Israel are going to play an important and formative role within the European Mediterranean Project. They are two democratic countries and all those other countries are non-democratic countries in the region.

Turkey and Israel are the key players in this framework and this strategy. Together with the USA, they form a triangle which is going to bring democracy and stability in this part of the world.

### **Türkmen**

I differ slightly from Mr Çetin and from Mr Bağcı. Turkey was never a prisoner of Arab nationalism. We made many mistakes in the 1950`s, that is true, but we made our own mistakes. The Arabs did not push us. We pushed Iraq into the Baghdad Pact.

I am all for cooperation with Israel and this includes this military cooperation which is not a very large-scale cooperation. But symbolism in foreign policy is important. The way it was presented, the talk of a strategic understanding with Israel at a high level, created a bad impression with the Arab countries. I understand that. If Turkey is going to be an active player in the Middle East, it has to be an active player both with Israel and the Arab countries. We should not deprive ourselves of that possibility.

It was said that Turkey could play a role in the Middle East peace process. I don`t think it can really, because only the Americans can play this role. But anyway, Turkey has a much larger role to play if peace is achieved and the beginnings of multilateral cooperation in the area are established.

### **Klose**

You said, Mr Lévyte, that over the last year, the Israeli government has seen the peace process develop into a sort of zero-sum game. And you added: Then Turkey entered the game. Does the particular emphasis on cooperation with Turkey, from the Israeli point of view, mean that the peace process is finished?

### **Levite**

Mr Turkmen, Turkey did play a very important role in the Middle East peace process in several of the multilateral working groups. Incidentally and interestingly enough, the only country from the region that displayed any ambivalence about the Turkish role was Egypt. Many Arab countries from the Gulf and from Magreb and Jordan for sure, were enthusiastic about the role that Turkey has played.

I mentioned the Turkish role in the context of the slow-down of the peace process and the problems it was experiencing, not as a way of saying that the peace process was finished and that there was no other way than to bring Turkey in. I do so in order to illustrate that enthusiasm for the peace process was finally dying down and that people were beginning to look more pragmatically at the difficulties they were encountering. On both sides, it was becoming increasingly clear, that this had some zero sum dimensions to it and unless you found some way of making the pie larger and of dealing with the broader security problem at the same time as the bilateral dimension, it would be very difficult to make progress. In that context I think Turkey has an important role to play.

Part of our motivations for cooperating with Turkey is precisely because we feel that Turkey is favourably predisposed to play that role, geographically, politically, culturally, religiously and so on by virtue of its connection to Europe but also because of its presence on the Mediterranean side of things and the other Middle Eastern sides. As we get the process restarted - and I think we are now moving back into a phase where more people than ever realize there is no alternative to it - it will prove an impossible task to deal with the most intractable issues unless we find some way of putting them in a broader multilateral context. And just as Mr Çetin has indicated, we recognize Turkey`s role in that context as very important. So we are looking for other states to pitch in order to complement the key role that is played by the United States with some European support.

Finally, one clarification on the bilateral Turkish-Israeli military cooperation. Neither the Turkish side nor the Israeli side, wanted to play it up beyond what it really is. It is very modest and limited in scope. Some people who wish to oppose it, wanted to try and create a false and misleading impression. But the fact of the matter is that the relationship is characterized by very cautious cooperation - cautious not only in terms of scope but cautious also not to get into any area which is a bone of contention either between us and the Arabs, or between Turkey and its neighbours, or to somehow touch on delicate issues whether be Cyprus or Greece.

### **Klose**

I have always understood the Israeli position to be that the USA has the leading role in the peace process and that the Europeans should keep out of it. Obviously, the issue now seems to be much more complex. Now, apparently, beside the Americans, the Europeans and Turkey, too, are expected to involve themselves in efforts to get the peace process rolling again. I seem to have lost track of the

logic here. Is it still the case that the Americans are heading the political process? If so, cooperation with Turkey must have some other role to play.

### **Levite**

There is a difference between getting the process restarted and giving it a viable chance of being concluded successfully. To get it restarted, we don't need Turkey. My assessment is that if we are now going to address those issues that are the sticky points such as Jerusalem or the Golan Heights and so on, the context has to be one in which Israel might be giving something. That might be territory or sovereignty or whatever. The question is, what does Israel get in return? A peace with elites that may be fragile? A peace with only the neighbouring countries whilst Iran and Iraq stay out of it?

I think that this by itself will not be sufficient to sustain the process. The only way of sustaining the process is by giving it depth and momentum through a multilateral setting. There was a realisation on the US side that one needed the multilateral dimension. In fact there was a European one in Barcelona, too. If we want to try and give this process sustainability and the viability of a final solution, it cannot be achieved without a multilateral context in the Middle East. Whether we call it CSCE and whether it has an economic pillar and a security pillar doesn't matter. Either way Turkey is vital.

### **Türkmen**

I think at the present time the multilateral discussions in the Middle East are a side show, Mr Léville. It might be important once the bilateral problem is resolved - peace with the Palestinians, with Syria and so on. But now there is nothing of substance going on in these discussions on the multilaterals. Therefore it isn't true to say that Turkey is active in this way.

What I said was that Turkey cannot be an important player in the bilaterals. How do you want Turkey to be an effective player between Syria and Israel or between the Palestinians and Israel? The Americans have been trying to do this for a long time. We don't have their power, we don't have their means. So, this will have to remain something between the Israelis, the Arabs and the Americans - and the Europeans, if they want. Even Europe as a whole could not play a part. How do you want Turkey to play a part?

### **Rouleau**

It does not matter whether you call it a partnership or an alliance. It is how it develops and how it is perceived which is important. I think there are three aspects which we have to take into consideration if we want to have a correct evaluation of the partnership between Israel and Turkey.

The first one has been mentioned by Mr Turkmen as symbolism - perceptions. It does not matter what you say or what you do - in politics it is paramount how people perceive you. So, we should not reject that.

But I would add two other factors which are perhaps more important. These are the content and the context of the partnership.

The context we have to keep in mind is a very explosive situation within the Middle East. We have a government in Israel which has a totally different approach to the peace process than the previous government. I will not discuss whether Mr Netanyahu is an enemy of peace or not. He is perceived as an enemy of the peace process even by the United States government.

At this very juncture - and here I come to the contents - Turkey enters into a military partnership with Israel. I am not talking about what you have done, Mr Çetin - that was a totally different field. We have to imagine those Israeli planes overflying the frontiers of Syria, Iran and Iraq - and they are doing it. We have to imagine the cooperation between the secret services in Israel and Turkey against the Kurds. I can see the advantages which Israel draws from it. But I hardly see any Turkish advantages.

I was ambassador here when Özal was prime minister and then president. He was very careful to have a very balanced policy towards the two camps. At that time there was no Oslo, there was no peace process. Turkey was the first country to recognize the State of Israel in 1948. Turkey was also the first country to recognize the Palestinian State when it was proclaimed in Algiers by Arafat. At a time when it was difficult to recognize the Palestinian State, they did it. Özal established good relations with the Gulf countries, with Saudi Arabia in particular, and he developed business. It was in the Turkish interest to have good relations with Israel - Turkey has never ceased to have good relations with Israel - and good relations with the Arab world.

Today, whether we like it or not, Turkey is perceived as the enemy of the Arabs. I read the Arabic press from all the Arab world. There are very critical articles against Turkey. Turkey is isolated in the area and cannot play any role in the peace process even if it is invited to take part.

The Arab press goes much too far in stating that this is a war alliance between Turkey and Israel. I say that it is more of a "cold war" alliance. The context of the Middle East today is that there is a cold war going on between Israel and the Arab states and Turkey is lining up with Israel.

### **Cetin**

I agree with Eric Rouleau that Turkey's relations with the Moslem countries are bad at present. But that is not a result of our relationship with Israel. The real reason for this is that, at the beginning of its period of office, the present Turkish government established contacts with groups which were opposed to the regimes in a number of Moslem countries.

One should not, for example, be surprised that relations with Tunisia deteriorate when Mr Ganushi is received by various important personalities. Nor should one be surprised if Iraq is disappointed when Mr Erbakan, whilst still in opposition, says that the embargo will be lifted as soon as he gets into power - and then, as head of government, fails to keep his promise. If relations with Iran are cultivated intensively at the highest levels and then two ambassadors are expelled, that will obviously have a negative effect on relations.

Our relations with Israel are not the fundamental reason why we are failing to get on well with some Islamic countries.

### **Levite**

There is no military alliance between Turkey and Israel and Israel is not cooperating with Turkey against the Kurds in any way. Nothing whatsoever. There is the utmost caution. Furthermore, several Arab countries have even approached Israel to participate in the naval exercise with the United States and Turkey.

And anyone who believes that the multilaterals can wait until success is achieved in the bilaterals has missed the point. In the same way trying to put the blame for the current problems of the peace process strictly on Netanyahu also fundamentally misses the point, which is not to deny that Netanyahu's election has not benefitted the peace process in the region in the short run. But here only time and careful analysis will tell.

### **Gasteyger**

Nevertheless, Mr Lévite, what Mr Rouleau said still remains true: Unfortunately, what counts in politics is perception and not reality.

### **Rouleau**

In international politics, statements on democracy and on values are often nothing more than rhetoric. You do not establish good relations only with people who have healthy democracies and values similar to ours. If that were the case, France would only have relations with about five to ten countries in the world.

Turkey is living in an area where it has to have good relations with its neighbours. And it had good relations until the Kurdish problem became worse and worse. The reason why relations are deteriorating with Iran is not because the Iranians are Muslim fundamentalists and you are not. It is because of the Kurdish problem. And the same is with Syria. Turkey has bad relations with other countries suspected of helping the PKK. The day you get rid of the Kurdish problem, the regional and international relations of Turkey will change dramatically to the better.

### **Rühl**

There are a number of reasons why neither Europe nor the USA nor NATO has a coherent policy on the Middle East. Whatever the reasons, the double containment policy which has been pursued since 1990 with regard to Iran and Iraq and which has been based on a not all-too robust and particularly sensitive and vulnerable Saudi-Arabia, does not hold out much promise of success in the long term. I do not want to speculate as to whether the prospects might change as a result of the election, yesterday, of a new president in Iran.

How could a common Middle East policy which did not include Turkey be formulated? Without Turkey as a partner in NATO, Western policy would have absolutely no base for securing access to the Persian Gulf when, for example, regional crises occur, as they might at any time and as we saw in 1990.

I need only remind you of the futility of all the attempts so far to secure Egypt as a base for that purpose. And the same goes for the relationship with Israel. Name me one other partner of the same calibre as Turkey which could even come near to being so useful to the West - whether we are talking about the exploitation of natural resources, infrastructure amenities, investment in industrial production or whether we are talking about securing military defences against long-range carrier weapons and weapons of mass destruction or facilities for stationing troops to pre-empt the escalation of crises in the region.

### **Boidevaix**

Of course the oil reserves in the Caspian region are an extremely significant strategic factor for the European Union and Turkey certainly is an important element in this scenario. Equally, we would all welcome it if the European Union could develop its own political concept on the issue. On the other hand, however, we must not ignore the fact that the oil reserves in the Caspian Sea are not in the same league as those in the Middle East. It is, however, a fact that a crisis in the Middle East would have a direct effect on the world oil markets and that it would directly affect European interests.

As far as the peace process in the Middle East is concerned, the United States will continue to play the leading role whilst the Europeans will only be able to exert a limited influence. That situation will not change in the foreseeable future.

On the other hand, six years after the Gulf War, we have to address the question of the extent to which normality has returned to the countries which were involved and the extent to which the process of modernization can be realized. In this respect, the situation in the countries of the Arabian Peninsula is different from that in Iran and Iraq. Weak states foster political instability and they are vulnerable to crises. I believe that it could well be in the European's interest to help avoid such crises.

For us, the question of which political regime is in power in this region is not the predominant issue. I agree with Eric Rouleau on that point. After all, we do not want to absorb these countries into the European Union. The question is one of how our relations with countries such as Iran and Iraq, which are at present weakened by the embargo, will develop. I am in favour of lifting the sanctions on Iraq under certain conditions in order to promote stability there. This question will come up again at the end of this year and Turkey will also be involved.

This region is not rich. The countries which need investment most cannot provide the necessary financial basis. An improvement in the economic conditions of these countries and a strengthening of their links with the international community could only benefit our own security interests. Of course, certain European countries, such as France for example, will pursue totally different aims from those of the United States and we will have to struggle to reach difficult compromises between the Europeans, the USA and Turkey, too. But we must try to achieve these compromises if we are to develop common policies.

### **Cavanaugh**

We are talking about crossroads, which is the theme of this conference, and I want to add a bit about bypasses. The dilemma with crossroads is that they are wonderful things, they let you go everywhere, but they stick you with the problem of choosing where you want to go. And I think many of the things we have talked about have highlighted the fact that Turkey today has not made a clear choice about where it wants to go.

We see a number of different tendencies in Turkey today. We talked about ties with Israel at length. It is very clear that the military wants to go down that path. It is far less clear that the governing coalition wants to go down that path. We see the military signing up for exercises that the prime minister himself says will not take place and that the military then says will take place. We see the prime minister attempting to expand military cooperation with Iran, and the military then saying that that is not allowed and stopping him. We see a desire on the part of the governing coalition to improve relations with countries to the east and we see a desire on the part of the military to maintain strong ties with the West. We see lots of elements in Turkey wanting to have better relations with Iraq. At the same time we see Turkey today with military forces a hundred and twenty miles inside Iraq, making it impossible to normalize relations there.

When we look to the European Union, the foreign ministry and Mr Öymen are very outspoken in their desire to have Turkey fully embraced in the European Union but we also see a number of other groups in Turkey taking steps that make that almost impossible. The foreign minister will make progress in getting closer to the EU and then someone from the military will give a briefing about grey areas in the Aegean. Someone will question the status of Gavdos as a Greek island and someone else will stage a military exercise right on top of a Greek exercise and create an incident that sets them back. Until there is a more stable government here in Ankara, we are going to have a very hard time getting Turkey to go firmly down any of these paths. As I said, this is the dilemma with crossroads.

From the outside, crossroads also present an interesting choice. If they are easy and helpful, other countries will use them to further their foreign policy aims. I think they are required on things like double containment (of Iran and Iraq) or like Cyprus. European countries and the United States will be coming to Turkey to help find solution to those problems.

There is a range of other issues however on which, if Turkey cannot make up its mind exactly where it wants to go and cannot deal with internal problems, it will be bypassed. They will be bypassed on Caspian energy that is going to be developed no matter what. The best way to develop it is through Turkey with a pipeline that goes to Ceyhan. But if the problems here are not solved, that energy will come out of the Caspian Basin no matter what.

The development of the Caucasus countries and the countries of central Asia is a huge challenge for the world and Turkey could play the key role in that. But if Turkey does not solve its problems, those countries will be developed by other countries. I would add that Greece could play the same kind of role with the reconstruction of the Balkan Peninsula. But if it cannot solve problems with Turkey, it too will be bypassed. On peace in the Middle East the position is the same. Turkey will be bypassed largely in that process if it cannot overcome her internal difficulties. The bottom line here then is the need for a stable, coherent government in Turkey which can give very clear direction.

The months ahead will be very difficult months for Turkey. There are constant questions in Europe and in the United States as to whether military action will be involved in the political process here and how that would affect Turkey's aspirations for EU-membership and closer ties with the West. At the beginning of next year we see serious problems as the IGC will end this summer. 6 months later the EU accession talks on Cyprus will start. There is the potential for an enormous clash. If Turkey decides that that means Cyprus is divided and that Mr Denktash is now truly president of this rump part of Cyprus, we will have a division in Europe that will be very hard to get past.

We also have Russian missiles en-route to Cyprus sometime next year. Turkey has already said, on the record, that it will not tolerate those missiles being placed in Cyprus. We have Greek military bases headed for Cyprus next year. Turkey has already said it will not tolerate those Greek military bases. You have, literally on the horizon or not that far away, the spectre of a conflict in Europe which would again change many of the issues we have talked about today.

Another point I'd like to touch on is a concern about EU blindness. People have talked about why the EU does not mediate these problems in Cyprus and these difficulties between Greece and Turkey. We have seen repeatedly that the EU has an enormous problem here because it is not impartial. Having Greece as a member of the European Union makes it virtually impossible for the EU to sit down and be an honest broker in these things and that impossibility comes from both sides. It comes from Turkey saying EU has a vested interest in Greece and you are supporting them. It also comes from Greece.

It should not be overlooked that the most recent dilemma in the "wise men" proposal between Greece and Turkey is due to statements by the Greek Foreign Minister that the Dutch Presidency was naive, did not understand and cannot make these things move forward. I think the United States and Europe have to work together on these conflicts and we can work together. But the idea of the EU being able to do it on its own is a misleading one.

One last word on the idea of the WEU. I think Turkish membership in the WEU is important but not in terms of giving Turkish troops a rationale to stay in Cyprus. They are already full members of NATO as are the Greek troops in Cyprus. If both forces stay in Cyprus, I assume that NATO membership is rationale enough. Certainly, in Washington it counts as a more significant card than WEU membership.

### **Gasteyger**

I, for one, have learned a great deal from our discussions here and I believe that they have proved extremely valuable for all of us. I must admit that I had not dared to hope that they would be so frank

and so fruitful and there is, therefore, all the more reason to express our gratitude to everyone who has contributed - to everyone around this table, to our excellent interpreters and to our colleagues from the Körber Foundation who have all been so willing to help at every stage.

Over the last two days we have all become aware, probably more poignantly and more clearly than we were before, that both Turkey and the European Union as well as the countries with which they have close dealings - Russia here and the United States there - are approaching the equally difficult and unavoidable point at which they will have to reach decisions on their relationships with each other. At the very least, they will not be able to avoid being very open with each other, weighing up the arguments for and against Turkey's place in Europe and its membership of the European Union and then adopting a corresponding stance.

This means that the EU will have to talk about its worries and reservations as well as its expectations with regard to Turkey in the same way that Turkey is already doing with regard to the EU - and that is just as it should be among friends. After all, we should all have realized by now that what is at stake involves more than a simple juggling of interests with Turkey's strategic importance for NATO and Europe on the one hand and the vital significance of Europe and America for Turkey on the other.

What is at stake, and what is much more important, is the future of the millions of Turks who live and work in Europe, and particularly in Germany, and who feel at home there. We are talking about the innumerable historical, cultural and economic ties on both sides and we are talking about the future of Turkey as a democracy which forms part of the West together with all the obligations for the peaceful settlement of disputes and the defence of basic freedoms and basic rights which this involves.

No one who has had the privilege of taking part in discussions such as those we have witnessed here can be under any illusion about the difficulties which will be involved in achieving this great goal of convergence and of securing it within an institutional framework. Before we can achieve that goal, which we all so earnestly desire, we will all have to invest a great deal of effort and a great deal of goodwill. Nevertheless, discussions such as this make it clear that we have to work together toward that goal and they provide every hope that we will achieve it. We could not have hoped for a better and more positive outcome to these discussions. And we have every reason to be grateful for what has been achieved.

### **Weizsäcker**

During the course of this discussion the multifarious nature of Turkey's problems and responsibilities, particularly with regard to the Near and Middle East, has been set out before us and, at the same time, we have been made keenly aware of Turkey's desire to draw closer to Europe.

In concluding, I would like to concentrate on one single question: What is the situation with regard to the European side of Turkey's character and what can we Germans, in particular, do to bolster these European characteristics? No one would deny that our present relations are clouded by tensions. Many of the Turks who live in Germany feel that they are under constant threat. And the remarks which have been quoted from the ECDP Congress in Brussels have also served, quite understandably, to provoke the Turks, especially as the Federal Government has failed to provide any satisfactory clarification.

On the other hand, much of what we see happening in Turkey gives us Germans cause for concern. We have not gone into the Kurdish problem at such length here without good reason and equally, violations of the principles of law and order are not a matter of indifference to us. Most certainly, one cannot ascribe the whole of the blame in these things to the military but one must also recognize that their conduct is not such that it might strengthen our confidence in Turkish democracy.

What I am most keen to stress, however, is that we Germans are serious about the statement, which was recently reiterated in Apeldoorn, that Turkey has the same rights as all others in its candidature for full membership of the European Union and that it is on the same level as the other applicants. I regard the integration of Turkey as a task of historic and absolutely vital importance and one which it behoves us in particular, as Germans, to fulfill.

I would contest the view of that unknown European diplomat who said that the EU cannot accept a Kemalist country, Mr Mortimer: Atatürk is one of the few figures in this century who developed a peaceful vision for their country. We must do everything in our power to support the positive progress which this vision has already made possible rather than simply decrying the negative consequences which have certainly also occurred.

There can be no doubt that security issues represent a vital element of the West's interest in Turkey. But the historic task of integrating Turkey in the European Union goes far beyond security concerns. And I see no valid objections or impediments, in terms of religion, culture or civilization, to pursuing that task. Mr Lake very rightly drew our attention to the positive developments which have taken place in Turkey over recent years. These developments are cold fact and we would do well to accept them for what they are rather than concentrating our attention on extremely vague and intangible speculation and apprehension.

I would repeat yet again: The reason why this session of the Bergedorf Round Table was arranged in Istanbul is because we regard the integration of Turkey as a vital task of historic importance. We must continue to work toward that goal despite all the difficulties which have been outlined here.