



FCMUN VIII

At Mount Holyoke College

March 27th - March 29th

Erdoğan's Cabinet

Letter from the Director

Dear Delegates,

On behalf of my chairs, staff, and special friends, I'd like to welcome you to the most exciting weekends at FCMUN VIII and especially to this committee on Erdoğan's Cabinet. Turkey's importance in world affairs has only increased in recent times, and there is no better way of understanding their importance than re-enacting their current political situation.

Before delving into greater details about this cabinet, I wished to briefly introduce myself. I am senior at Mount Holyoke College studying History with a concentration in South Asian and Middle Eastern affairs. Based on my personal experiences, while studying and living in Turkey, I wanted to highlight the issues that the politics there needed to be addressed. I have been an active member on the MUN circuit - both in the US and in Turkey - and I hope to bring my experiences from both, into this cabinet. I am from many places in the world, and enjoy eating chocolates and having Turkish Rakı (buying me some is always a good idea...). I will also burst into occasional Turkish after that.

This committee will tackle important issues dealing with Turkish domestic and foreign policy. Given the dictatorial manner with which Erdoğan is currently running Turkey, it is no surprise that delegates should expect the same in the committee as well. The committee will begin soon after the Presidential election results have been announced in August 2014 and Erdoğan seamlessly moves from his Prime Ministership to become President (Başkan).

I have no doubt that each and everyone of you will bring your MUN skills, and political knowledge to the forefront in this committee, and show Erdoğan how Turkey should be run, MUN-style!

If you have any questions pertaining to this committee, FCMUN, or any other life issues, please do contact me at - puri23n@mtholyoke.edu or just find me on Facebook!

Warm wishes,

Nooria Puri'15
Committee Director



Background of the Committee

This committee, as the name suggests, is a Presidential Cabinet. The members of the Cabinet are therefore senior representatives from the different ministries across the current Turkish government, under Erdoğan. However to make the committee a bit more diverse in perspective, we have also added opposition leaders within Turkey. Because of this, the cabinet is not a complete re enactment of the Council of Ministers (*Bakanlar Kurulu*), as it includes members outside the executive power circle of the Turkish state.

The committee comes into effect on the 1st of October 2014 after the Presidential elections of August 2014 and will culminate on the 16th of October 2014 - the day the results of the United Nations Security Council seats are announced. Each committee day will encompass events worth 4 days, leading up to the UN elections.

The committee is being headed by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan who is the recently elected President of Turkey, in August 2014. While the President itself does not constitutionally belong to any party, Erdoğan was a part of the AKP political party (Justice and Development Party). The AKP is known to be a conservative Islamic political party.

The political system in Turkey is based upon the secular Modernization methods of Atatürk (the Father of the Turkish Republic) in 1923. Since then, Turkey has undergone several political changes within the system. There has been a separation of religion - state, military - state, and a leading position for economic liberalization for the Turkish republic. Following the birth of the Turkish Republic, from the older Ottoman Empire days, Turkish politics has undergone several changes so as to make it more Western/European in structure, and less Ottoman/Islamic. The concept of political parties would not come into effect into the later Atatürk years, but this gave the foundations for the establishment of a multi-party democratic structure in Turkey.

For the purpose of this committee, it is important to know the influential role that Atatürk played in shaping the Turkish Republic, and the effects that it has on contemporary Turkish politics. Because of his strong leadership, and effective domestic policies, Atatürk became a symbol in every household and political structure.

Heading now into the contemporary focus of Turkish politics, for the purpose of this committee, there will be brief mentions of the importance and the rise of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) within Turkey and especially under the leadership of Erdoğan. AK Parti was founded in 2001 and rose to prominence when they won the 2002 elections in Turkey under a landslide vote. The rule of AK Parti has only increased since then, and they are still the ruling party. Two main opposition parties, CHP and MHP, challenge the AK Parti. While this

challenge is currently at the minimum, it is required for delegates to understand the political dynamics each of these parties play, in contemporary Turkish politics.



Turkey and her neighbours, 2014.

Current Issues

- **International Relations**

International pressure has always been there in Turkey - whether it be for control of the area (since the post Ottoman Empire times) or pressure for the Turkish government to react to international forces that are close to home. Currently Turkey is facing pressure from the international super powers to act on issues linked to ISIS and the growing presence of Islamic parties in the region. Turkey has had to deal with not only these issues, but also issues linked to the civil unrest in Syria, Iraq and the Israel-Palestine conflict.

In recent times, Erdoğan has shown his support for the Syrian opposition against the Assad regime, and believes that direct military intervention should be a priority, as a solution. Turkey believes that the US needs to be more involved in this conflict. They feel that the US is not being aggressive enough in the fight against the Assad regime. A solution for this issue, Turkey proposes, is for the US to allow for a no fly zone in Syria so that the strong air presence that Assad has in the north, can not be used against the opposition forces.

In another move, Erdoğan expressed his disapproval towards Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, saying that he had even surpassed “Hitler” in terms of barbarism, despite Turkey’s otherwise decent relations with the Israeli state - especially on economic terms. However, while Turkey seems to have good economic ties with the Israeli government, Turkey has been a supporter of the Palestinian Authority, and has been providing to the state with economic aid. Erdoğan has also welcomed Hamas’ leader to Turkey on several occasions, and enjoys good relations with them. This has also resulted in certain tensions with Western allies of Israel, namely the US.

The situation between ISIS and Turkey is currently not on amicable terms, given the strong pressure from international powers to dislike them. While the Islamic state might be fitting for a Sunni dominated political Islamic state under AKP in Turkey, ISIS has also been responsible for capturing top Turkish diplomats and therefore causing tensions between the two. However while Turkey is not in favour of ISIS, they do not necessarily condemn their actions, either. Leading many opposition parties within Turkish politics to believe that the AKP government is even involved in supply arms to this terrorist organisation group. There are also rumors by certain sections of the public, that believe that the Turkish diplomats were hostages only because Erdoğan wished to use it as a propaganda tool in his election campaign to become President.

Turkey has been a strong supporter of other political Islamic movements/political parties in the region as well (especially under the rule of AKP) and therefore are active supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood. The AKP government feels that they have been able to set precedence for other Islamic groups who wished to enter into politics, through democratic means, in the surrounding countries.

In Egypt, Erdoğan condemned the overthrowing of Morsi and this led to an increase of bitter relations between the two nations. A rivalry that has reached even diplomatic relations between the two nations, as Egypt finds Turkey to not be fit to have any rights to control any of the Muslim world nations.

Given Turkey's strong foreign affairs political position, Turkey is a contender for a position on the United Nations Security Council. Delegates will have to maneuver both domestic and international strife to ensure the successfulness of Turkey's bid for a seat on the Security Council.

- **Kurdish Question**

The Kurdish situation in Turkey has been a growing problem since the time of the collapse of the Empire and the start of the Republic. Currently Turkey homes a large percentage of the Kurdish population, and they are mostly located in the southeastern side of Turkey, close to the borders of Iraq and Syria. The Kurdish population in Turkey as well, have been strongly advocating for independence and a separate state for themselves, however the Turkish government has always denied them these privileges and instead quelled any rebellions, down with force. The Kurds have always been a neglected part of Turkish history, and they have faced several discrimination policies by the government to suppress them. Due to this, the Kurdish community started an organization known as PKK, in Turkey, for the betterment of their conditions and demands for a separate state for themselves. However, they were continuously being suppressed by the government forces as well. Despite this, the PKK was able to spread to other areas outside the Turkish borders, in both Syria and Iraq. Because of the active rebellious nature of these communities, there is obvious international pressure for Turkey to react. For the most part, however, Turkey supports the autonomous positions of the community in Iraq and Syria, but not within its own borders. The Kurdish community, especially after the capturing of the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, has showed willingness for a ceasefire with the state, and is only demanding equal rights and not a state. The government does not openly advocate any ties with PKK, currently. The Kurdish community though does have political representation through their party - HDP, who also put up a candidate, Selahattin Demirtaş in the recently held presidential elections.

- **Women's Rights**

Since the time of the republic in 1923, women in Turkey have enjoyed more rights compared with many of their other counterparts in previous areas of the Ottoman Empire. In 1934 women were given full suffrage rights, an act that Mustafa Kemal saw crucial to ensuring greater modernization for the Turkish Republic. It was crucial around this time that the Republic be seen as Western and different from the older Ottoman times of not allowing women as much of representation, or rights. Women were actively encouraged to remove their headscarves, and encouraged to be more liberal in thought and action, including in the public sphere. Women's movements during this time were based upon the structure the state wished to create, and on the ideals that Atatürk at that time, saw important for women. However as waves of feminism movements started to grow stronger in Turkey - women were starting to depend less on state feminism, but on their own individual representation and concerns. Currently, there are several women's organizations across the country, and each of them advocate for greater equality and women's representation in the political sphere. Under the AKP regime, women's organizations, for the most part, have felt that their needs were not being met by the state, and in fact women's voices were being suppressed. Women's organizations are currently fearful that feminist movements in Turkey, are once again going back to state controlled feminist movements as was in the case of the earlier Atatürk days. The AKP government has issued several instances of controlling women's rights within the country. They have demanded that women focus on being mothers, and their roles within the domestic sphere. Women are highly encouraged to have at least 3 children, with the government even offering cash rewards for each child. Domestic violence abuse towards women is 42% and the state is doing very little to counter this problem. The gender gap in Turkey is also much higher than it is in other countries and is currently ranked 120 out of 136. Turkish women also face an acute problem of low literacy rate, and domestic violence, low labour force participation rate, honour killings, child marriage, political and educational participation. Women's representation in politics is less than 1% in Turkey, compared with other developing countries such as India, where there is a political representation of nearly 38% in parliamentary politics. Erdoğan has also famously quoted saying, "Women are women, and men are men. How can they be equal?" raising even greater issues regarding women's development, and their roles in Turkish society.



Structure of the committee

- **Committee structure/procedure**

This committee is a single crisis committee. It will adhere to all parliamentary procedures, and motions. This committee will remain in a default moderated caucus with speaking time of two minutes, unless altered by a motion from either the chair or a delegate. All motions have to have final approval by the chair. Note passing between both delegates, and the crisis room is highly encouraged. This will help offer a more stimulating discussion within the committee room too. Directives can only be passed with at least 2/3rd majority. Directives that deal with the current issue at hand will be looked upon favourably. Both directives and press releases will be accepted by the chair.

- **Logistics for the committee**

As stated earlier, this committee moves by 4 days every committee day. Delegates need to keep in mind that events from previous days need to be addressed before moving on to events from the following days. The first UNSC election result will be announced on Friday. Delegates will be informed of the time line.

The chair of this cabinet will be the recently elected President, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The cabinet is meeting to discuss the ongoing domestic issues that Turkey is facing, and the international pressure they have to face. The cabinet is meeting for their monthly October meeting and to discuss Turkey's bid for the UNSC seat. Delegates also have to make sure that they remain within the portfolio powers that have been assigned to them. While the events in this committee may not necessarily follow the factual course of contemporary politics, the characters in this committee will be expected to adhere to their roles, unless there has been any change, upon which crisis will inform the concerned character.



Character Profiles

Prime Minister - **Ahmet Davutoğlu**

Ahmet Davutoğlu assumed the position of Prime Minister on the 29th of August 2014 following the Presidential elections. He was unanimously chosen from the AK Parti as the leader of the government. Prior to assuming his post as Prime Minister, Davutoğlu served as Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2009-14. Ph.D educated, Davutoğlu follows a principle of Islamic conservatism and a desire for neo-Ottomanism revival for the benefit of Turkey. He believes in the need for European inclusion for Turkey, and uses that as one of his foremost policies in international politics. However he was famously criticized for apparently supporting the Islamic state - which lead to an increase of violence in Turkey, against the government. He wishes to have a strong presence both within Turkey, and abroad and not be cast in the shadow of his predecessor. He is an ally of Erdoğan, and has the support of many of his cabinet members.

Deputy PM - **Bülent Arınç**

A founding member of the AK parti in Turkey, and a lawyer by profession, Arınç has been a vital political member of Erdoğan's rule in Turkey. He was active in politics since his early days in University itself, and was made speaker of parliament in 2002. In 2009 he was appointed as Deputy Prime Minister in charge of Turkish radio and television and Foundations of the state. He has had several controversial statements that have resulted in great rebuttal - especially from social media platforms. Recently he issued a statement against women laughing in public as it was a sign of indecent behaviour. He believed that women were starting to become too promiscuous and this needed to be curtailed by the state. This was met by much anguish and mockery by not only women within Turkey, but internationally as well. He has also openly stated that the media needs to be more careful about publishing actions of ISIS and provoking them in any manner that would have negative consequences for Turkey. He has a solution process council to help Turkey find an agreeable solution to the Kurdish issue within the country.

Deputy PM - **Ali Babacan**

Highly educated minister, Babacan started his political career after holding several high positions in the field of finance in the United States. A founding member of the AK Parti, he was assigned Ministry of Economy in 2002 and was in charge of one of the most comprehensive economic reform policies. Before becoming Deputy Prime Minister in charge of economy and

the treasury of Turkey, he was also Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2007-09. He is strongly for action to be taken against the PKK in Turkey, as opposed to just words. He believes that greater cooperation needs to be made with Iraq in order to ensure this. Babacam is also no alien to the world of UNSC member voting as he was successfully able to lead to Turkey in the 2008 elections.

Deputy Prime Minister - **Yalçın Akdoğan**

In charge of counter-terrorism and human rights issues in Turkey, Akdoğan joined politics in 2011 after being a professor and a writer in several newspapers including *Yeni Şafak* - a conservative Islamic paper that is known for very strong support to Erdogan. even using hate speeches to incite people. He has been working very closely in finding a solution to the Kurdish problem, and therefore was appointed to this post so that he can continue to maintain an active solution and create a new Turkey based on the ideologies of the AKP. He believes that the PKK should not be resorting to violence as the solution against the state, and innocent lives should not be involved in this conflict.

Minister of Justice - **Bekir Bozdağ**

He has previously been on the cabinet as deputy prime minister, under Erdoğan's rule from 2011 to 2013. Bozdağ is a lawyer by profession and therefore was allocated the portfolio of the Justice Ministry under the new Prime Minister. He is a close ally of Erdoğan. He is pro Kurdish negotiation. He has also famously opposed any allegations that the government is trying to shut down the Kurdish political party, or that the government is trying to take sides in the Kurdish debate that is currently taking place.

Minister of Foreign Affairs - **Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu**

Mevlut Çavuşoğlu is a prominent figure in the international arena as a representative of Turkey. He is known as both a politician and a diplomat. Before holding a cabinet position in Turkey, with the AKP government, Çavuşoğlu was appointed as the head of the Turkish delegation to the Council of Europe. He was made the president of the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe from 2010-12, including for the 2010 term in which Turkey was the chairman of the Committee of Ministers in the Council of Europe. Following his high position role in Europe, he was made as the Chief Negotiator (a cabinet position) for Turkey in their bids to become part of

the European Union. He became minister of foreign affairs after the recent president elections in 2014.

Minister of Economy - **Nihat Zeybekci**

A strong ally of Erdogan, Zeybekci has been an important figure in the world of finance and economics in Turkey. He entered politics from Denizli in 2009, and was given the post of Minister of Economy in December 2013, a post he has held since then. He has a strong economics background, and has close ties with several top Economic chambers throughout Turkey. He strongly believes that Turkey should maintain its foothold in the international markets; a strategy that could also prove vital for maintaining Turkey's international image.

Senior Advisor - **Yiğit Bulut**

A very close advisor of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Bulut has even famously said that he is willing to die for Erdogan. He is a journalist by profession and has worked in several of the top news houses in Turkey including Radikal and HaberTurk TV. While not a political figure, Bulut was very vociferous during the 2013 Gezi Park protests, stating that there were several foreign actors who were in charge of trying to topple the Erdoğan regime in Turkey. Bulut has strongly been an advocate for greater state control of the media. He is well known as a strong believer of Erdoğan's policies, and has recently been appointed on the board of Turk Telekom. He has also allegedly been involved in tiffs with Deputy PM, Ali Babacan as well.

Minister of Health - **Mehmet Müezzinoğlu**

A school classmate of Erdoğan, Mehmet has been a close ally of Erdoğan since then. A physician by profession, Müezzinoğlu entered politics in 1992 and was appointed as Minister of Health in 2013. He was an active supporter of Erdoğan during the Gezi protest, and felt that all medical centres near the protest were considered illegal. Recently he has once again been making headlines in regards to women's issues in Turkey. He has been on record as saying that women needed to focus more on their roles as mothers, and motherhood should be their central careers and nothing else. This statement is in keeping mind with AKP's already promoted ideology on the number of children a woman should have, and the health minister is only furthering those claims.

Minister of Defence - **İsmet Yılmaz**

He is a consultant and mechanical engineer. He was a part of the maritime law and defence systems, and has a good understanding of the maritime defence systems of Turkey. He has been in charge of this ministry since 2011. While the Army is now segregated from the state in Turkish politics, the ministry of defence does not have as strong of a role in Turkish politics as it had been in the past. However, Yılmaz has been an active member of trying to resolve the Kurdish question problem in Turkey. He believes that if there is any attack against Turkey by the IS forces, NATO will definitely help their fellow member in a time of crisis.

Minister of European Unions Affairs - **Volkan Bozkır**

Bozkır has been a civil servant for the Turkish republic in the foreign ministry. He has held several important positions, including being posted in Iraq, New York and as Turkey's representative to the European Union until 2009. He entered politics in 2011. He has a two-step approach for getting Turkey into the European Union. This two step approach is based on domestic policies - regarding socio-economic reforms that changes the perception of Europe for the Turks - and for the international approach he believes that there needs to be a change of perception from the EU regards to Turkey. He says, "In this context we will develop different strategies for different countries and we are going to implement different courses of action that will contribute to Turkey's image." He wishes to ensure Turkey has a positive image in the world politics arena.

Minister of Family and Social Policy - **Ayşenur İslam**

From Istanbul, İslam completed her education in Ankara University where she would also subsequently teach as a professor. She is believed to have gotten her portfolio thanks to the previous President, Abdullah Gül, whom she had close ties with. She is also related by marriage to Merve Kavakçı who was the first woman politician to wear a headscarf to the Turkish parliament during the headscarf ban days. İslam is under heavy criticism from women's rights activists as her comments regarding the number of women who have been killed in Turkey, sparked many protests. Her refusal to acknowledge and invite other women's NGO organization for a constructive dialogue has also caused many clashes with the public.

President of HDP - **Selahattin Demirtaş**

Head of the leftist Kurdish party, HDP (People's Democratic Party), Demirtaş rose to prominence in Turkish politics as the Kurdish candidate for the 2014 Presidential elections in Turkey in which he received many accolades for his great effort. He studied law in Ankara and entered politics in 2007. He was a part of the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) in Turkey during the years in which the AKP started to have active peace negotiations with the Kurdish community. After the abolition of the BDP, he became one of the chairs of the HDP in 2014. He

believes in having equality and secularization of the Turkish state. He wishes to actively be a part of the peace negotiation process with the PKK. He feels it is necessary not to isolate the Kurdish community and to allow them to be a part of the democratic functions of the Turkish society. He also believes that greater focus should be put on eradicating the ISIS forces entering the country, and any spillovers this may cause. Demirtaş feels that the government may not be having any secret dealings with ISIS, but should come clean to the public regarding this matter.

President of CHP - **Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu**

President of the People's Republic Party (CHP), which was originally founded by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. A civil servant by profession, Kılıçdaroğlu has had a humble background and entry to politics. He has been known to weed out corruption, especially from the AK Parti and challenges the government on most issues he feels are controversial. He reiterated his party's principles of equality for all genders - and freedom for women's choices - an idea that has been carried out since the time of the start of the republic. The CHP has been linked to the Kurdish Party, HDP, but the differences in ideologies still, had led to the two not being able to work together on resolving the Kurdish problem. Kılıçdaroğlu also believes that there needs to be a more comprehensive approach to resolving the tensions with PKK, especially since they continue to have an obsession with taking up arms against the government. He wishes the government to be more proactive and to ensure the public is also informed about progress of negotiation with the PKK. He has also accused Erdogan of blatantly supplying weapons to ISIS and has displayed his evidence to the Turkish media.

Representative from MHP - **Meral Akşener**

A member of the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) and current is a vice speaker of the parliament. She has been in politics since 1995 and has also served as Minister of Interior from 1996-97. She is one of the three women politicians who are a part of MHP in the Grand National Assembly. She actively believes in strong equality of women's rights and in ensuring that the present government should play a more active role in making this equality a reality. She is also a staunch campaigner against the AKP's leniency with dealing with the Kurdish issue, especially in regards to the PKK. She feels that too many concessions and talks are being held with PKK leaders and this is disrupting any possible solution to the problem, for Turkey.



For further research

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