



Is all for a Smile or Creating a Dependency? Analysis of Turkey's Development Assistance Policy

Herřey Bir Gülümseme için mi? Yoksa Bağımlılık Oluřturmak için mi?
Türkiye'nin Kalkınma Yardımlarının Analizi

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to investigate whether foreign assistance is provided towards the development of the aid-receiving country or it is in line with their national interests by addressing the relationship between Turkey's foreign aid and foreign policy.

Design/Methodology: In the study, Turkey's foreign aid between 2002-2018 was obtained through data published by TİKA and AFAD; foreign trade figures with these countries were obtained through statistics published by TUIK and It was analyzed based on the foreign policy implemented by the AK Party in the light of dependency approach. Hereby an answer was sought to the question of whether a dependency relationship has been established with the aid receiving country.

Findings: As a result of the analysis, it was concluded that the aids granted between the years 2002-2018 included both aspects (creating dependency and national interest), but such aid, contrary to what often pointed out in the literature, could not make Turkey a strong actor in this area and Turkey still has a limited capacity.

Originality/Value: Although there are some qualitative and quantitative studies in the literature about this issue, handling of foreign aids that Turkey made in the context of national interest-foreign policy and its analysis through a dependency approach, constitute the original value of this research.

Keywords: Turkey, Foreign Policy, Foreign Aid, Humanitarian Aid, National Interest

Öz

Amaç: Bu alıřmanın amacı, Türkiye'nin dıř yardım ve dıř politikası arasındaki iliřkiye deęinerek, yapılan yardımların yardım alan ülkenin kalkınmasına mı, yoksa Türkiye'nin ulusal ıkarlarına mı yönelik olup olmadıęını arařtırmaktır.

Tasarım/Yöntem: Arařtırmada Türkiye'nin 2002-2018 yılları arasında gerekleřtirmiř olduęu dıř yardımlar TİKA'nın ve AFAD'ın yayınladıęı veriler, bu ülkelerle olan dıř ticaret rakamları da TÜİK'in yayınladıęı istatistikler üzerinden döküman analizi yöntemiyle elde edilmiř ve bağımlılık yaklařımı üzerinden AK Parti'nin uyguladıęı dıř politika temelinde analiz edilmiřtir. Bu bağlamda yardım yapılan ülkeyle bir bağımlılık iliřkisinin oluřturulup oluřturulmadıęı sorusuna cevap aranmıřtır.

Bulgular: alıřma neticesinde 2002-2018 yılları arasında yapılan yardımların her iki yönü de (bağımlılık oluřturma ve ulusal ıkar) ierdięi, ancak literatürde sıklıkla belirtilenin aksine, sözkonusu yardımların Türkiye'yi bu alanda güçlü bir aktör yapamadıęı ve Türkiye'nin hala sınırlı bir kapasiteye sahip olduęu sonucuna ulařılmıřtır.

Özgünlük/Deęer: Literatürde niteliksel ve niceliksel anlamda eřitli alıřmalar olmasına karřın, Türkiye'nin yaptıęı dıř yardımların ulusal ıkar-dıř politika bağlamında ele alınması ve bunun bağımlılık iliřkisi üzerinden analiz edilmesi arařtırmanın özgün deęerini oluřturmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türkiye, Dıř Politika, Dıř Yardım, İnsani Yardım, Ulusal ıkar

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1. INTRODUCTION

Foreign aid, which is one of the main instruments used by one country to influence another country, can be implemented by taking into account national interests, commercial gains and human realities (Moyo & Mafuso, 2017: 176; Gukurume, 2012: 2). In the literature, although development assistance is considered to be an urgent need in many areas such as fulfilling human needs in the short term, there is debate about the effectiveness of these aid and economic policies of the aid-receiving countries and the conditions demanded or imposed on them. The basis of these discussions is the altruism of donors, economic and geostrategic interests and their historical ties (Asongu & Jellal, 2016: 279-314).

In the implementation of foreign aid, it is expected that the donor countries work towards increasing the earnings of the countries receiving the aid rather than their national interests. Therefore, the aid should be provided for many purposes such as the development of democracies in the recipient country, economic development and meeting urgent needs in the face of natural disasters as in the decisions taken at the United Nations Millennium Summit in September 2000 (The United Nations, 6-8 September 2000). However, where and for what purpose foreign aid will be provided may be closely related to the national security perceptions of the states. From a more general perspective, although the orientation of state aid varies depending on the country, it can be said that the common ground is they are all made for political purposes².

On the other hand, two different types of aid can be mentioned, depending on the institutions that provide aid. The first is bilateral aid in the form of low-interest and long-term loans, with project supports provided by a developed country to the government of a less developed country for economic development. Bilateral aid is defined as “dependent/conditional aid” if it is given under any condition and “free aid” if given unconditionally. Multilateral aid consists of loans obtained from various international, economic and financial institutions such as World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), African and Asian Development Banks, United Nations Development Program and so forth. (Karagöz, 2010: 5, 9).

In the post-colonial period, the United States (Tarnoff & Lason, 2012: 1-38), the Soviet Union (Aluko & Arowolo, 2010: 120-127) and Japan (Balcı & Yeşiltaş, 2006: 167-198) used bilateral or multilateral aid effectively. Turkey, however, made significant progress in this area in the 2000s. Turkey received foreign aid in the 1980s, both received aid and provided aid later in the 1990s to those countries with historic ethnic ties to itself, especially Central Asia, and began allocating more on foreign aid since the early 2000s along with increased economic capacity (Hausman, 2014).

Thus, in this study, an answer is being sought to the question of whether the reason behind increasing Turkey's, governed by a single-party government since 2002, foreign aid rapidly is the national interests, such as creating new markets, or is the humanitarian concerns. In this context, the present study will evaluate the economic, political and trade relations with the countries where Turkey Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) offices were set up, taking into account the periods before and after these offices were established. In addition, it will be analyzed whether there is a similar trend between the regions where Turkey has increased its activity or focused its interest on its foreign policy and the routes where TIKA offices were opened and the course in the bilateral relations with the respective countries after the opening of TIKA offices.

The main purpose of the article is to reveal whether Turkey's foreign aid policy, which Hausman (2014) describes as Turkey-style foreign aid, is similar to the foreign aid policy of other leading countries in this field. Considering that most of the studies on Turkey's foreign aids are on the “quality” and “quantity” of these aids, discussing whether these aids create a dependency relationship between the two countries stands out as the most distinctive aspect of the present study. To reveal

² As of the late Cold War and the 1990s, France provided aid to its former colonies, Central African countries, mostly on the basis of military and technical cooperation. England provides, approximately 85-90% of the aid in Africa and Asia, to its former colonies (Akçay, 2012: 20-21). In 2013, Saudi Arabia provided an aid of \$5 billion and United Arab Emirates (UAE) provided an aid about \$3 billion to the Sisi administration following the coup in Egypt. “www.dunya.com..., July 18, 2013”.

these differences, the article consists of four main sections. First, theoretically, the relations between foreign aid and foreign policy are evaluated and then the dynamics that cause the increase of Turkey's foreign aid are touched on. Second, data on aid provided to the countries where TIKA offices are opened are presented. In addition, the current change is analyzed by examining the actual foreign trade figures before and after the opening of TIKA offices. Finally, it is discussed whether Turkey's foreign aid policy creates relationships of dependency or "market" in the relationships of aid receiving countries and the conclusion section, the findings are given in the light of the data obtained.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Many theorists who focus on the relationship between foreign aid and foreign policy, such as Kabonga (2017), Matunhu (2011), Levy (1988) and Addison and Tarp (2015), reject the idea that underdeveloped countries, with the technical, economic, military or technological assistance they get from the developed countries, can develop through the processes that developed countries go through. Poor nations have their characteristics and structures. This situation feeds the idea that the expectation of the same processes in developed countries cannot be experienced. They also claim that rich countries can control the neighbour or poor nations and make them dependent forever (Kabonga, 2017: 4). One of the predominant predictions in this approach is that developed countries make excessive use of the resources of less developed countries (Rodney, 1972). Rebellions or reactions to eliminate this or change the situation are suppressed by the powerful country. The rich countries always rely on their superior military power to maintain the current status quo, i.e. to integrate poor nations unequally into the international system. Nowadays, rich countries have also included elements such as foreign aid, media and education.

As Matunhu (2011: 65-72) emphasizes, many Western states, especially the United States, use most of their aid to Africa as a means of increasing their economic and political control. Countries that oppose this policy may have to face the threat of not receiving foreign aid³.

Thus, foreign aid appears to be a reality, not just rhetoric, to control the less developed or poor countries economically and politically and to make them more dependent. As Kabonga puts it, there is a strong relationship between foreign aid and dependency or market establishment and these aids make third world countries more dependent on first world countries (Kabonga, 2017: 2). Besides that Pulat, Akdoğan and Küpeli (2021: 1-17), as for the effectiveness of foreign aid, note that countries receiving assistance take donor country's assistance under advisement in their foreign policy decision-making process.

On the other hand, Levy (1988), in his study of Sub-Saharan Africa, emphasizes that there is a positive relationship between foreign aid and economic growth. Burnside and Dollar (2000: 847-868) state that the success of foreign aid depends on the level of satisfaction of the target country. Clemens et al. (2004) assert that aid is effective in the short term, while Minou and Reddy (2010: 27-39) state that these effects can only have a positive effect in the long term. Mitra et al. (2015), on the other hand, states that foreign aid has negative consequences for economic growth in both the short and long term, considering their study covering 13 Asian countries. According to Mitra et al. (2015) there is a 0.18% decline in economic growth in case of a 1% increase in foreign aid. Yiew and Lau (2018: 21-30) suggest that foreign aid has a negative impact on the development of underdeveloped or developing countries and has a positive impact on GDP growth. Peter Boone (1996: 289-329) states that a total of around 600 billion dollars of aid has been provided to Africa, but that the countries receiving these aids are still very poor and that foreign aid does not produce a positive result on economic growth or development.

³ When Zimbabwe wanted to implement the Fast Track Land Resettlement Program in 2000, the European Union (EU) claimed that it was unconstitutional, and member countries, particularly Britain, threatened to cut their aid to Zimbabwe. Similarly, when Malawi initiated a work that declared homosexuality illegal, the United States stated that it would suspend Malawi's budget support and other assistance if this legal change was made (Kabonga, 2015). In 1997, Japan said that if North Korea took a positive step in ballistic missiles, it would provide \$27 million in food aid. Again in March 1991, Japan offered a \$26 billion aid package to Russia in exchange for leaving the Kuril Islands (Balci and Yeşiltaş, 2005-2006: 188-189).

Apart from the two main approaches above, Hansen and Tarp (2001: 547-570) argue that the positive or negative effects of foreign aid on the development of underdeveloped countries are related to the internal political structure/mechanism and government policies of that country and that development assistance may not have a positive effect on economic growth as expected. Kargbo and Kunal (2014: 416-429), Brempong and Racine (2014: 465-480), Asiedu and Nandwa (2007: 631-649), and Asiedu (2014: 37-59), argue that, for the existing aid to produce an impact in the desired direction, the incoming aid should be directed by the government to the right areas, particularly education. Solmaz (2008) stated that both the national and/or international aid organizations, multinational companies and international financial institutions' anti-poverty policy proposals were prepared with a wholesaler approach, not taking into account the structural characteristics of the less developed countries. Therefore, standard policies have not been successful in showing the same effect in economies with different reasons for poverty.

In addition, Easterly (2003: 23-46), who oppose the view that there will be economic growth upon directing foreign aid in the right direction, argues that the relationship between these two factors is weak. Brautigam and Knack (2004: 255-285), Asongu and Nwachukwu (2016: 69-88) and Kuada (2015) also supported the view that the main motivation behind the development of poor countries, especially in Africa, is that states have their institutions because they claim that the foreign aid received creates distorting effects on the governments' level of administration and tax. Especially Brautigam and Knack (2004: 255-285) stated that the aid received was sometimes spent even in wars.

When the studies focusing on foreign aid, foreign policy and dependency approaches are examined, it is seen that these studies are generally gathered around four main views. Firstly, those who argue that foreign aid supports development Levy (1988), Ghura et al. (1995), Addison and Tarp (2015), Burnside and Dollar (2000), Gomanee et al. (2003), Mosley et al. (1992), secondly, foreign aid does not support the development and negatively affects savings (Mitra et al., 2015; Yiew & Lau 2018; Asongu & Nwachukwu 2016; Brautigam & Knack 2004; Kuada, 2015; Boone, 1996; Mosley et al., 1992; Pedersen 1996), thirdly, the impact of foreign aid is directly related to the internal political structure of the recipient country and the policies of the government (Hansen & Tarp, 2001; Kargbo and Kunal, 2014; Gyimah-Brempong and Racine, 2014; Asiedu and Nandwa, 2007; Asiedu, 2014; Solmaz, 2008), and finally, foreign aid makes the aid receiving country more dependent on the donor country (Matunhu, 2011; Kabonga, 2017; Amin, 1973; Frank, 1967; Dobb, 1981; Rodney, 1972).

Turkey's foreign aid policy is considered as one dimension of new policy initiatives. Within the scope of this aid policy, Ankara acts on the "Turkish style cooperation" based on its experience in the Balkans and Central Asia (Özkan, 2017: 59). This idea also shows that Turkey's official foreign aid policy is in connection with the central government's geographical, social and economic interests. Haussman (2014) states that Turkey's foreign aid is not adequately addressed in the scientific studies due to not being reacted negatively in the regions where they provide aid.

Gök and Dal (2016: 67-100) declare that the impersonation of international relations into a normative form in the 2000s had an influence on Turkey's foreign policy and made the decision-makers act in the "civilian power" plane. Kardaş and Erdağ (2012: 167-193) discuss the use of TİKA, which is the main executive of foreign aid, as an identity-building foreign policy instrument. Çevik (2016: 55-67) states that Turkey, to increase their effectiveness in international relations, made efforts towards improving, shaping and managing its image on a global scale by using public diplomacy.

Besides these studies, several other works cannot demonstrate a differing perspective on the factors in the background of Turkey's foreign aid policy or the link between these aids and its foreign policy, from an orientalist point of view (Murphy & Sazak, 2012; Kardaş, 2013). This work, however, on the subject of foreign aid where Turkey came into prominence as a key player in recent years, focuses on the motto of "all for a smile" that TİKA uses in its humanitarian activities and the importance and impact of the national interests in this aid policy. In this respect, the present study is aimed to explain the fundamental dynamics behind Turkey's development aid.

3. CHANGE IN TURKEY'S FOREIGN ASSISTANCE POLICY

After the Second World War, Turkey shaped its economy and foreign policy based on foreign aid it received from the USA and European allies, but with the Özal leadership, it shifted to open free

market economy and started to develop alliances with Islamic countries, neighbours, and regions where not much cooperation established before. However, the structural changes occurring in the international system after the end of the Cold War in 1991, brought new opportunities and some risks for Turkey (Özlem, 2014).

The Bosnian crisis that erupted after the collapse of Yugoslavia in the Balkans, Iraq's attack on Kuwait, dragging the Middle East back into war and clashes, the emergence of a power vacuum in Northern Iraq, the strengthening of the PKK terrorist organization, the invasion of Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan by Armenia, the increased importance of energy security, increased intra-state conflicts and terrorism were among the many important issues and risks for Turkey. Further, the independence of many Turkish Republics from the Soviet Union was considered as an opportunity for Turkey. Because even though Turkey directed attention towards them for decades, it could not determine an active policy until the Soviet Union dissolution in 1991. Then Turkey had an opportunity for "leadership" or in other words that also used by many academics or politicians "big brother" role. But, regardless of historical and cultural ties, steps taken by Turkey towards increasing Turkish Republics' commitment, like increased economic relations and development assistance, did not bring the expected results.

In addition to external factors, failure of economic, military and technological capacity, experiencing economic crises, making wrong foreign policy choices, lack of coordination of foreign assistance and lack of political stability are also effective in the failure of these policies. Because only in 1991-2002, the government 10 times and the Minister of Foreign Affairs 18 times have changed (Balçı, 2013: 324-325). Turkey, with constantly changing coalition governments and foreign ministers, could not reach a kind of stability in the foreign policy, failed international planning and failed to develop a coherent foreign assistance policy (Akçay, 2012: 76). Abdullah Gül, Government Spokesman and State Minister of the period, summarizes the issue as follows:

Our government, which has had to spend a great deal of energy to reduce the tension that is being tried to increase in the country, is naturally unable to give enough weight to the measures that could make our country effective in the international arena (Gül, 1997: 698-700).

On the other hand, undoubtedly the background of Turkey's focus on social, cultural or any other aid policy in different parts of the world since 2003 is influenced by the AK Party government's identity and foreign policy understanding shaped by politicians with Islamic references. The approach of Islam and cultural values encouraging people in need to provide the necessary assistance have facilitated the decision-makers to implement outward-oriented policies. In addition, the fact that conflicts, humanitarian crises or disasters usually occur in Islamic geography⁴ has enabled AK Party decision-makers to give more importance to these countries.

The AK Party's foreign policy vision was primarily aimed at solving the problems with its close neighbours and pursuing an active foreign policy to become an active actor in the world (Davutoğlu, 2008a; 2008b). According to Davutoğlu, Turkey, thanks to its economic and democratic development as well as being the owner of a variety of historical and cultural ties with neighbours, should try to use more soft power (Davutoğlu, 2010a). In this context, focusing on public diplomacy will contribute to a new perception of Turkey in the international arena. As said by Davutoğlu, Turkey should not focus on only the Western allies as it was during the Cold War; on the contrary, it should move at a 360-degree viewing angle, including neighbouring areas. A new understanding of foreign policy is also envisaged that Turkey should act as autonomous and not solely bound to the United States or the EU. In this context, especially based on relations with the EU, Turkey claimed that cooperation with other regions is not an alternative to EU membership, on the contrary, peace and

⁴ The problem of hunger in Somalia, ongoing civil war in Afghanistan, Yemen, Libya and Syria, the earthquake and tsunami disaster in Indonesia, pressures and embargoes applied to Palestine, and events such as the floods in Pakistan, has been effective in the distribution of Turkey's foreign aid. For example, after the flood disaster in 2005, the most aid was given to Pakistan with 126 million dollars. Indonesia, which suffered an earthquake and Tsunami disaster, was one of the countries that received the most aid with \$ 26 million (Faaliyet Raporu 2005, 2006). Due to the civil war in Syria in recent years because of Syrians flock to Turkey that most foreign aid to Syrians (refugees) are scheduled (2013-2018 Faaliyet Raporu).

stability in the region is in the interest EU (Hausman, 2014: 6-7). Davutoğlu stated that this approach is complementary rather than competitive.

To realize this vision, “the zero-problem policy” in Turkish foreign policy has come forward as a key principle. This approach is based on focusing on potential opportunities to develop close cooperation with neighbouring countries and overcoming the problems with many countries in the region (Davutoğlu 2010b). Expectations for pro-active and preventive peace diplomacy are also closely related to the zero-problem policy. Turkey endeavours to solve the problems or conflicts and conducts activities in many countries’ mediation.

Hence, it can be stated that Turkey’s foreign aid policy and foreign policy is closely linked with each other. For example, the increase in trade with certain countries or regions, the opening of diplomatic missions, hosting of high-level bilateral conferences, signing of preferential trade agreements, provision of visa exemptions and establishment of flight connections through Turkish Airlines, contribute to bilateral trade and positively reflected Turkey’s economy. Resulting an increase in the soft power of the country (Kirişçi, 2009: 33).

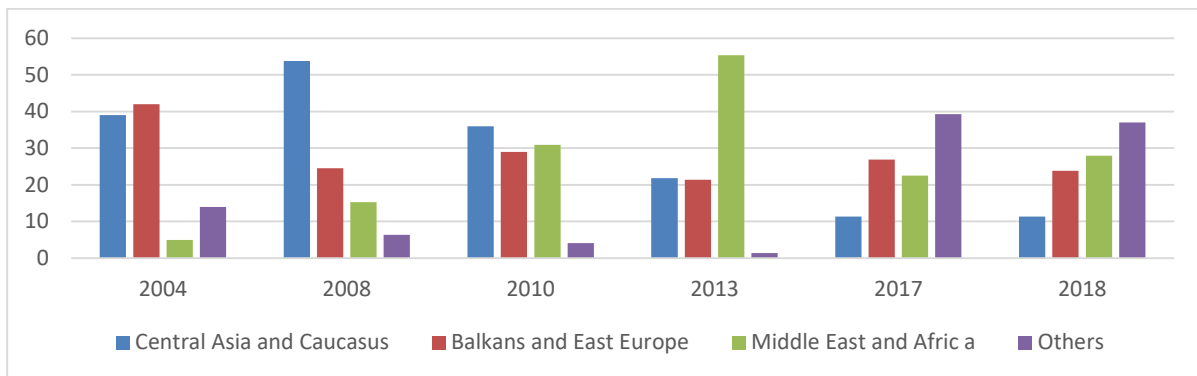
However, to achieve the aforementioned goals, economic capacity, as well as political will, had to be increased. Therefore, while Turkey was trying to find a solution to the problems between its neighbours with a “zero problem policy” approach, economically entered a rapid growth period. Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which was 230.5 billion dollars in 2002, increased to 851 billion dollars in 2017, while exports increased from 36 billion dollars to 168 billion dollars (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, 11 March 2019). Exports to Africa in 2002 amounted to 1.6 billion dollars and this figure increased 6 times in 2018 and reached 14.4 billion dollars (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, 20 February 2019). On the other hand, Turkey opened 79 new diplomatic missions between 2002 and 2019, and 29 of them were in Africa. As a result, the number of embassies in Africa increased from 12 to 41 and the total number of representatives from 163 to 242 across the world (Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dışişleri Bakanlığı, 22 March 2019). In addition, TİKA, which continues its activities abroad, increased the number of Program Coordination Offices (PCO) from 12 countries in 2002 to 61 in 2018 and the number of PCOs in Africa and the Middle East from zero to 34 (Faaliyet Raporu 2018, 2019: 18-19).

These indicators show that, while having global dreams in the 1990s but not having an infrastructure to make it happen, diplomatic as well as the economic progress that has been shown between the years of 2003 and 2018 made Turkey ready at many points and give the power to implement policies. Especially with the actions in recent years Turkey becomes competing in foreign aid with developed countries and had founded a total of 9.3 billion dollars in foreign assistance in 2017. Also, by increasing humanitarian aid while other countries reducing it, Turkey has been the country with the most humanitarian aid in the world with 7.2 billion dollars (Faaliyet Raporu, 2017, 2018: 5).

3.1. Route and Content of Turkey’s Development Assistance

TİKA, which is an organization to coordinate international aid of Turkey, had difficulties executing the functional and effective job, and hence forced to join Prime Minister’s office with the amendment in May 1999. After this change, TİKA, which was not very effective between 1999 and 2002, has started to increase its effectiveness at the international level since 2003. TİKA implemented 2,240 projects in the first 10 years between 1992 and 2002 and increased this number to over 20 thousand in the period covering 2003-2017. In 2002, it completed only 360 projects around the world but in 2017 this number exceeded 2000 (Faaliyet Raporu, 2017, 2018: 26).

In addition to that, the foreign aid region, which was based in Central Asia and the Balkans in the 90s, started to cover other regions like the Middle East and Africa in the 2000s. The provided assistance includes many economic, administrative, cultural and social activities such as education, health, water and sanitation, agriculture, animal husbandry, tourism, forestry, informatics, vocational training, restoration, military, technical and technological assistance, infrastructure services and protection of cultural heritage.

Graphic 1: Distribution of Turkey's Development Assistance by Regions (%)

Source: Compiled from TİKA Faaliyet Raporları 2004-2018

While about 80% of the projects finished between the years of 1992 and 2003 were about Central Asia and the Caucasus region, where Turkey has historic, geographical, ethnic and cultural bonds, this number decreased to 36% in 2010 and later to 11.3% in 2018. Furthermore, assistance to countries in the Balkans and Eastern Europe did not change much in proportion. In 2004, it was around 30%, while in 2018 that was around 23%. However, there have been remarkable changes in Turkey's assistance to the Middle East and Africa. In fact, the aid provided to these regions was around 7% in 2004, 15% in 2008, 31% in 2010, 55% in 2013 and 30% in 2018 (Faaliyet Raporu, 2004-2018).

Project and program support, technical cooperation, scholarship, refugee support and emergency aid are provided to these regions in the form of "bilateral aid". In other words, Turkey, instead of being included in multilateral aid through organizations such as IMF, UN, WB, directly carried out the assistance through its institutions. This approach is also welcomed by the countries receiving the aid, as it can be seen from the following statements of Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mahmoud and Mogadishu Mayor Mohammed Nour:

If we were to ask for computers from the UN, it would take months to procure it and they would require many conditions. They would spend \$ 50,000 on a \$ 7,000 equipment. But if we were to request it from Turkey, it will be delivered to us in following week... Turkish model in Somalia is quite clear. They say "in Somalia we want to do this", and they do it ... From prime minister to other ministers, they come and monitor their projects... Today, thanks to Turkey, Mogadishu is cleaner... (Haşimi, 2014: 127-128).

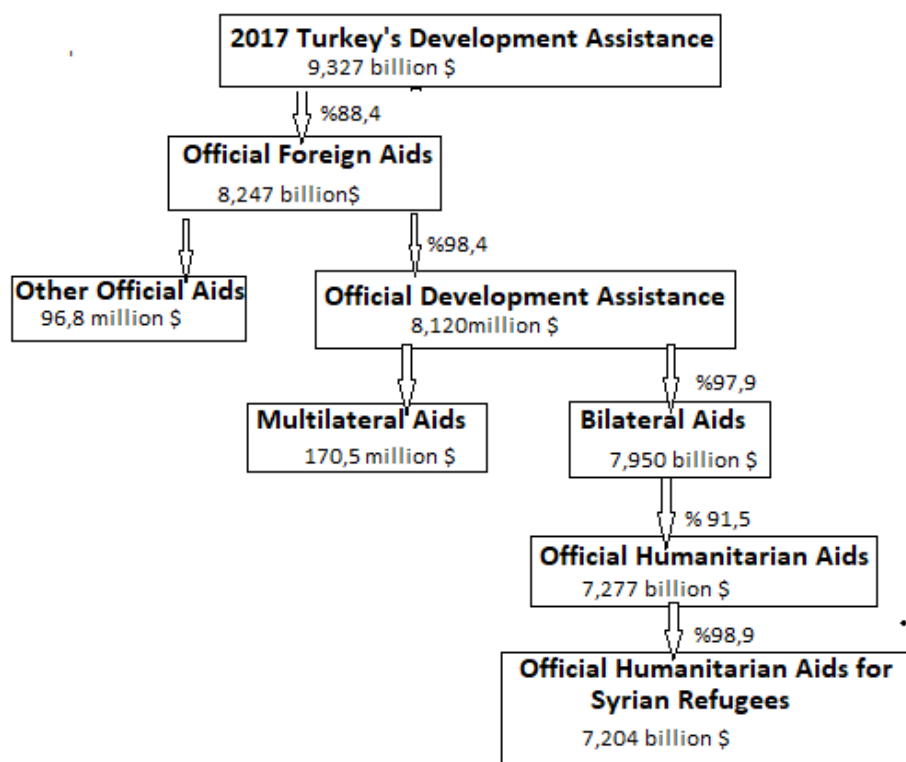
Table 1: Turkey's Foreign Aid (Million Dolar)

Years	2004	2008	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total Foreign Aid	1,128	1,576	1,718	2,363	3,436	4,347	6,403	5,104	7,943	9,327	8,432
Humanitarian Aid	179	31	148	264	1,039	1,629	2,416	2,737	5,865	7,277	7,351

Source: Compiled from TİKA Faaliyet Raporları 2004-2018

According to Table 1, when the total development assistance is analyzed, there had been a gradual increase between 2004 and 2010, but since 2010, foreign aid has leaped. In this context, development assistance, which was 1.7 billion dollars in 2010, increased to 9.3 billion dollars in 2017. The main reason behind this rapid increase is humanitarian aid, which has a share of \$ 7.2 billion in development assistance. Since demonstrations in 2011 turned into a civil war in Syria and caused a large influx of refugees into Turkey, Turkey's amount of humanitarian aid had a rapid increase. As of 2019, when 3.5 million Syrians living in Turkey is considered, the cause of this increase is clearly understood.

Figure 1: Official Development Assistance of Turkey in 2017



Source: TİKA Türkiye Kalkınma Yardımları Raporu 2017, 2018

According to Table 1 and Figure 1, the primary element behind the rapid increase in foreign aid is emergency humanitarian aid to be made within the scope of Turkey's bilateral aid. For example, the “bilateral aid” granted in 2013 has a share of 95.5% and 97.9% in total official development aid (Faaliyet Raporu, 2017, 2018: 11). In fact, the share of emergency humanitarian aid in “bilateral aid” was 68% in 2014, 71% in 2015, 93% in 2016 and 91% in 2017. The point that should be mentioned here is that the humanitarian aid for Syrian refugees has a great weight in the overall sum. 94% of emergency humanitarian aid in 2014, 98% of aid in 2015 and 98.9% of aid in 2016 and 2017 were spent on Syrian refugees (Turhan, 2021: 5; TİKA Development Reports, 2014-2017). These ratios also show that the biggest factor behind the rapid growth experienced in Turkey's foreign aid after 2010 is an aid to Syrian refugees.

However, it should be noted here that although Turkey's development assistance program aligned with "zero problems" or "interdependence" foreign policy principles, in the long run it is far from a content aimed at protecting Turkey's economic interests (Apaydin, 2012: 277). There is no concrete evidence that Turkey focuses on the rich underground resources in the countries where the assistance received or removing those resources and putting those to use following Turkey's economic interests (Haussman, 2014: 10). This assistance through TİKA takes steps to develop joint country-centred, long-term investments and economic, social and political cooperation between the two sides.

Nevertheless, the lack of medium and long-term strategic plans and programs to be created on the effectiveness and efficiency of foreign assistance of TİKA is adversely affecting the effectiveness of Turkey's foreign assistance. As it is formally stated, there is development cooperation focused on the demands of the partners and the other parties. Consequently, executed projects of Turkey are emerging as a much smaller part of the larger programs. Despite the rapid increase in Turkey's total development assistance, as shown in Table 1, it stems from the increase in the amount of humanitarian aid.

4. PURPOSE OF TURKEY'S DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE POLICY

The primary goal of Turkey's foreign policy is to promote peace and stability in neighbouring countries and the neighbouring region. In this regard, Turkey, to expand its sphere of influence in the 2000s, used a policy highlighting the soft power of public diplomacy. Therefore, the examination of the impact of Turkey's aid and its target should be evaluated in two categories; emergency humanitarian aid and development assistance.

Implemented official development assistance, such as infrastructure, airports, hospitals, social facilities, roads or many other projects could benefit Turkey timely and concrete manner. A corresponding link can be established between those projects and economic cooperation. This link can be observed when trade relations between Turkey and countries, where TİKA projects intensively carried out between the years 2003 and 2018 were examined. Besides, the countries where the branches of TİKA are concentrated in the first striking evidence that Turkey's aid is concentrated in the region that Turkey is trying to increase relationships or create a leadership over the years. In other words, Turkish foreign policy and foreign aid geography have diversified and expanded simultaneously.

Although previously Turkish foreign aid was focused on Central Asia and the Balkans, now it is targeting the Middle East and Africa along with, wide geographical area, including some of the regions such as Latin America and South-East Asia. Having 12 of the 60 PCOs in the Balkans and Eastern Europe, 32 in the Middle East and Africa, 7 in the Caucasus and Central Asia, and 9 in other regions (<http://www.tika.gov.tr/koordinatorklukler/3>, March 3, 2019) show a similar pattern with Turkey's increased foreign trade volume in these regions after 2003.

Figure 2: Overseas Offices of TİKA (2004-2018)



Source: Compiled from TİKA Faaliyet Raporu 2018, 2019: 18-19

Trade intensity in those countries where Turkey intensified its foreign aid is emerging a similar outlook to the increase in TİKA's project in those countries. Exports and imports, which have been relatively low in 2003 with these countries, have started to grow since then. In this increase, the highest number and ratio was achieved in the Middle East and African countries. To prepare foundations for economic relationships, Turkey proclaimed 2005 as the Year of Africa, as well as increased activities in Africa through both TİKA PCO's and by opening new diplomatic missions. No doubt, foreign policies which were implemented by the AK Party government and Turkey's TİKA's activities are behind the increase in trade that has been made in these regions.

Table 2: Trade Statistics between Turkey and the Countries Where TİKA PCOs are Present (Million \$)

	2002		2018	
	Export	Import	Export	Import
Balkan and Eastern European Countries⁵	1,509	2,029	9,640	7,558
Middle Eastern Countries⁶	2,244	0,764	17,865	5,600
African Countries⁷	1,117	0,929	7,841	3,689
Caucasian and Central Asian Countries⁸	0,733	0,646	5,458	3,888
Other Countries⁹	0,193	0,253	2,057	2,809
Total	5,796	4,621	42,861	23,544

Source: <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Kategori/GetKategori?p=Dis-Ticaret-104>

According to Table 2, foreign trade with all regions where TİKA PCOs are located has increased significantly. However, these benefits revealed not only a one-way relationship network in favour of Turkey but also increased the exports of the target country to Turkey. Compared to 2002, these increases were approximately 3.5 times higher for Balkan and Eastern European countries, 8 times higher for Middle Eastern countries, 4 times higher for African countries, 6 times higher for Caucasian and Central Asian countries and approximately 10 times higher for other countries. Although not very high value on the numerical level, the increase in proportional terms, indicates that Turkey is not seeking unilateral dependence relations with the countries where the aid occurred.

Similarly, looking at the content of Turkey's assistance in these countries under the "bilateral aid" shows that investments are not made to the sectors that would make target countries of benefits dependent on Turkey or not connected to several conditions to receive assistance. For example, Turkey between the years of 2003 and 2018, built 304 schools covered by foreign aid projects and renovated or equipped 1134 schools. In the health sector, 111 hospitals and health units were built, and 281 hospitals and health units were repaired and equipped. In addition, during this period, 1908 water wells were drilled to provide clean drinking water to the people in need (TİKA Faaliyet Raporları, 2004-2018; TİKA Kalkınma Yardımları Raporları, 2004-2017). In addition, the assistance provided support to students in different fields such as agriculture and animal industry, education, health, tourism and IT.

In terms of emergency humanitarian aid, it can be stated that the Turkish people have a strong tradition stemming from their history and culture. It can be argued that Turkey's Islamic references and cultural values of the needy encourages people in the delivery of necessary assistance and this is the starting point for emergency humanitarian assistance of Turkey. In this context, helping countries that are in a difficult situation due to natural disasters, war, poverty and social conflicts are considered an important humanitarian duty to the Turkish people and institutions through providing international peace. AK Party government is the ruling in Turkey since 2002 and a big part of the decision-making people of it comes from an Islamic tradition and culture. Consequently, Turkey has demonstrated the reflexes, which may be very different from other countries, in the case of a country inhabited by Muslims such as Pakistan or Indonesia. It can be stated that this feature is an important motivation in conveying the opportunities of the AK Party government to the people in need.

Another parameter is the construction of a foreign policy on the "soft power" which reflects the AK Party government's foreign policy philosophy and the use of foreign aid as an economic and political/diplomatic influence tool. Helping many different ethnic and religious regions including Palestine, Somalia, Kosovo, Philippines, Nigeria and Haiti, shows that Turkey is not giving aid only to

⁵ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Macedonia, Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, Serbia and Moldova.

⁶ Palestine, Israel, Egypt, Lebanon, Yemen, Jordan, Iraq.

⁷ Algeria, Djibouti, Chad, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Republic of South Africa, Cameroon, Kenya, Union of Comoros, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Sudan, South Sudan, Senegal, Somalia, Tunisia, Tanzania, Uganda.

⁸ Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

⁹ Afghanistan, Pakistan, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Philippines, Mexico, Colombia.

countries that saw near or around its close, in contrast, it is helping only with humanitarian concerns (Turhan, 2021: 1-15). However, hopes that through these grants Turkish “influence” in this geography would increase, show that these aids are done not only to reduce the humanitarian concerns, but also to bring economic and diplomatic achievements. Mesut Özcan who served as the advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoğlu on the subject and also served as the Vice President of the Center for Strategic Studies at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, cited foreign aid as an instrument of economic foreign policy and he evaluated the humanitarian assistance of TIKA, Turkish Red Crescent, Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) and other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) among these tools. Furthermore, Özcan indicated that the amount of aid for Syrian people is quite high, and the aid to many countries helps Turkey to gain efficiency in different geographies to build better trade relations and find support in the international arena (Uğur, 2013: 34).

In addition, Turkey's foreign aid, as will be apparent from the above explanation, is part of a new pro-active foreign policy and development assistance expands the soft power of Turkey. At this point, it can be stated that development assistance serves to realize zero problem policy. Besides, as expressed by Serdar Cam, president of TIKA, development assistance demonstrates that Turkey is a global player in the international arena and contribute to increasing its visibility and acceptability of it (Haussman, 2014).

5. CONCLUSION

Global change and increasing sense of responsibility to contribute to world peace through sustainable development and promotion of stability in the global development cooperation have led to the emergence of Turkey as a dynamic actor. Turkey, similar to its locally and globally growing political influence, had a growing economy in the last seventeen years, involved in many problems in the world's various regions and began to assist a large number of countries. This assistance takes place in a manner consistent with the foreign policy, the direction of the economy and active foreign policy objectives of Turkey.

It is difficult to say that the aid given before and after 2000 was given only with humanitarian concerns. Especially in the 1990s, assistance towards Central Asia was carried out as a manifestation of the policy to impose Turkey's existence in the region as a leader to the newly independent Turkish Republics. Thus, Turkey desired to come forward to control the region economically and politically through foreign aid. In this sense, it could be stated that Turkey tried to create a dependent relationship with Central Asian countries during the 1990s. Since the 2000s, based on the new foreign policy, Turkey aimed to highlight the soft power across a wide geographic area including the Caucasus, the Balkans, Middle East and Africa. In this context, the aid given to the mentioned regions is not given with certain conditions requested by the USA from Malawi or the EU from Zimbabwe. Aid without any condition contributes to the positive development of economic, political and commercial relations. In this sense, if it is necessary to conceptualize the current situation created by foreign aid, it is possible to express it as “interdependence” rather than “dependency”.

Also contrary to the opinions highlighted in the theoretical part, Turkey is not benefiting enormously from the resources of the least developed countries. Consequently, Turkey did not receive a revolt against the assistance policy. On the contrary, support is provided for the training of students in many fields, particularly in education, health, agriculture, trade, technical, technological or military fields, and an approach is taken to meet the needs of that country in the short, medium and long term. This aid policy does not constitute a unilateral dependency network as it does not aim to interfere with the internal political structure of the aid receiving country or government policies.

On the other hand, being the most generous country in the humanitarian aid in international platforms, should not mean that Turkey ensures the maximum benefit from this assistance. In addition to that high amount of Turkish aid should not mean that its recipient countries become more dependent on Turkey. Yet Turkey is still a country that continues to receive development aid¹⁰ and a large part of the aid especially the amount spent on Syrian refugees is emergency humanitarian aid. In other

¹⁰ Turkey received approximately \$ 9 billion in development assistance between 2010-2014 (Doğan, 2016: 386).

words, the conditions of Turkey have made it the most helpful country in the world. Moreover, these are not development assistance but rather humanitarian aid.

Ultimately, sending foreign aid is a demonstration of power and evidence of purposeful power. This showdown against the foreign countries can also open up a space for manoeuvre to the government through strategic discourses and behaviours in domestic politics. One of the main motivations in foreign aid is to show how sensitive the donor country is, how responsible for global problems and can cope with such problems. In this sense, especially the developed and rising powers attribute great importance to humanitarian aid. Humanitarian aid provides an important opportunity with both to show that these countries share global responsibility and to show their potential. Hence, since Turkey has put itself the objective of becoming a global actor, it gives a hand to countries in need of assistance.

Discussing the return of the aid, it can be said that assisting in many areas including urgent humanitarian needs, infrastructure and functioning of the institutions of the health services, in other words, pursuing a "value-based" foreign aid, has contributed to conducting Turkey's soft power foreign policy. Nevertheless, it is difficult to say that these aids are purely humanitarian and not economic or political. Because although some aid (such as emergency aid) is provided solely for humanitarian needs, no country has ever seen long-term assistance to the other without expecting some benefits for itself. Help is also often used to gain new markets in developing countries to sustain the growing economy of Turkey. In particular, despite the prominence of the human dimension in aid to Africa, in the long run, it will serve Turkey's economic interests and its idea to increase the impact in these areas, proving that foreign aid is not made only by humanitarian concerns.

Ethics Statement: *In this study, no method requiring the permission of the "Ethics Committee" was used.*

Etik Beyan: *Bu çalışmada "Etik Kurul" izini alınmasını gerektiren bir yöntem kullanılmamıştır.*

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