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**MY SUBJECT IS 'WHY THE EUROPEAN DEBATE IS NOT (ONLY) ABOUT TURKEY'**

1. PREAMBLE:

Mr. chairman, ladies and gentlemen

Allow me to start my words by conveying my special thanks and appreciations to those who are directly engaged or contributed for the preparation and organization of such a workshop in the Washington DC.

2. A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

I know how annoying it is for the audience to listen to a speaker who makes reference to the history. But in order to make more realistic assessments of today and more sound predictions for the future, going back to the historical background is always necessary.

There, we must go to those days when the WW2 was fought and won and during the post war period how the 'Transatlantic Tie' played a vital role in bringing democracy, peace and order to Europe.

This 'transatlantic tie' by means of NATO, and its motto, so called 'All for one , one for all' has created such a solidarity, determination and deterrence towards its adversaries such as communism, socialism and Warsaw Pact and finally ended up, with the demise of all of them from the history.

With the end of an era, global cards were re-shuffled once again... This time, despite a land slide victory, for my humble perception, not in favor of the victor, so called the 'West'

The 'West' has managed to turn out the huge success of WW2 and cold war period to a Success Fatigue within less than two decades...

Let us quickly remember the important events which have paved the way to this success fatigue for the West.

There, I put to the top of the list, the strategic reasons. Just after the demise of the USSR, most of European politicians and especially public opinions have reached a perception that, there was no longer need for the US deterrence and presence in Europe. For them 'ever lasting peace' was finally achieved! They have used every opportunity, mainly initiated by France, to signal the US that why they were not wanted in Europe.

Same was true for some American strategists. For them, with the end of the USSR together with its economic, military and ideological system from the scene, Europe was no longer a vital requirement for the overall global strategic interests of the US.

But the time elapsed since then, has proven one sheer fact that, both parties were wrong.

The bloody clash of Yugoslavia into pieces has clearly demonstrated to us that the European Union was totally insufficient in handling a crisis even at the very heart of Europe. Existing decision making mechanism of the EU which is mainly dominated by micro-nationalistic sentiments of the member states, can not cope with the dynamic nature of crisis.

Second event was, the first Gulf War. With the invasion of Kuwait by Saddam, the 'global strategic epicenter' was removed from Europe to the Middle East. Despite wide range of coalition formed by European and American allies against Saddam, the atmosphere of cooperation have quickly faded away at the end of the Gulf War.

As we have reached the 9/11; US-EU relations were steadily at the down slope. This was unavoidable, because, by replacing global strategic epicenter, you not only draw lines from one place to another on the map, but you also the whole structure of philosophy on the strategic perceptions, threat definitions, missions and priorities.

Against this background, the efforts to create 'the European Identity' and 'the European Army' only helped to erode 'the Transatlantic Tie' and NATO.

The 9/11, was big shock for all of us. The message was very clear. "The war is on to the US as the representative of the West".

Despite severe losses the US suffered, I assumed this disgusting attack, as a big 'eye opener' for the west. Because reviving previous sincere partnerships and behaving like everlasting partner against such a terrorist act was vitally important at these days. Global support was enormous when US led forces have brought to an end to Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

The whole momentum of success over Afghanistan was lost however, when the US administration has opened the Iraqi file.

Today, Iraq was invaded. Saddam and his brutal regime are gone. But what is left behind was not only the debris of war in Iraq. Under these debris, there lays once again, the chance to cope with a global crisis together as the West as a whole.

There allow me o make my own assessment on what were the rights and what were the wrongs.

It was right and the reasons were fully valid for the US not to let Islamist terrorists to control or dominate the energy geography which were mainly owned by Muslim countries.

Energy dependency of the west must not be left to the mercy of terrorists. Therefore, securing, stabilizing of oil fields and safe transiting of energy through sea lines of communications were vital for all energy dependent countries as well as overall wellbeing of the global economy

Just before the invasion of Iraq, it was wrong to for the US to give the impression in the minds of many public opinions that, America had secret agenda of controlling energy resources. By the invasion of Afghanistan, the US had

managed not only to topple Taliban, but also gained the control of oil reach in Central Asia and Caspian Rim.

Decades of long trust, solidarity and determination between the US and most of European public opinions were seriously questioned right before and after the invasion of Iraq.

Today we have just left behind the first anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. There are very few things to celebrate. Yes, Saddam's brutal regime has gone. But what is also left behind this invasion was, a broken transatlantic tie, an unfunctional United Nations and NATO and finally a EU in deep division.—The future of Iraq is very bleak. And despite relative stability, energy prices are much higher today as compared the days before the Iraqi invasion.

### 3. WHERE TURKEY STANDS:

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to make my remarks on where my country stands when all these things have happened.

After the collapse of NATO's traditional adversaries, I think Turkey was in deep trouble in assessing the global radical shift on the strategic scene. We were in trouble in assessing the situation because for our part, we were the vital part of the NATO's deterrence during Cold War Period. How then the European Union treat Turkey the way exactly they have treated the US?

'You are no longer wanted in Europe'... This was the message to Turkey. All Eastern block countries and some countries who are gained their independence from the ex USSR, were welcomed with red carpet to the European Union.

On top of it, throughout of this period, the EU as an institution and most of European countries —overtly or covertly- have provided safe heaven, moral and financial support to terrorist organization so called PKK.

More over, despite all existing international laws which prohibit the two communities of Cyprus from unilateral integrations, the European Union bowed its head to the veto threats of Greece during the enlargement process to the east and obliged to put Cyprus to the enlargement list.

Post Gulf War period had similar adverse effect to the relations between the US and Turkey especially on the perception of Turkish public opinion. With the vacuum of authority in the Northern Iraq the Kurds bolstered their autonomy in the region and provided sanctuary and all cash of weapons to PKK to wage terrorist attacks to Turkey.

Embargoes imposed on Iraq have prompted almost full collapse of economy and trade at the South Eastern provinces of Turkey.

These were the years when Turkish nationalists were strengthened. Average Turkish citizens were felt abandoned, deceived and stabbed in the back by the west namely the EU and the US.

I don't want to lengthen this list. Because these were the events most of the Turks do not want to remember. But being professionals around this table and traveled thousands of miles just to listen or to make our address at this workshop, we must remember all these, if we really want to anchor Turkey in the West, If we want to anchor America to its traditional allies and if we want to anchor the European Union to the policies and responsibilities for more secure and stabile world.

To sum up, the picture that I see is as follows:

- If we do not establish new form of relations and cooperation, I am afraid a global chaos would dominate for upcoming years.
- If America fails in Iraq, not only Americans but we all energy dependent countries and global economy will pay the price.
- The price will not only come as rocketed energy bills. With the failure of the US in Iraq, radical Islamists terrorism as the Victors may take control of the energy geography.
- We must not sit and wait till that happens.
- In order to do something we must recognize some sheer facts.
- These facts are, the US has no chance to succeed without the support of her traditional allies. Therefore a new tie must be re-established between traditional partners so called Europe and the US. Where? Not on the Atlantic this time. The new tie must be re-established in the Middle East. Europe and the US can only establish a new 'Trans- Middle East' tie over Turkey.
- Because, as long as geo-strategic epicenter remains in the middle east, the EU can not be a major player without being part of this petro-geography. EU can only be the part of the game if she becomes neighbor to this region. This can only be possible if the EU integrates Turkey in the EU
- Anchoring Turkey in the West is vital there, but 'what or where is the west?' is the question that we must find an answer. For me the answer is as simple as this: By integrating Turkey to the European Union you will not only integrate this country to the west but also integrate the EU to the area where energy will be dealt with. Therefore the West will be re-defined by the way Turkey will be perceived.
- The Turkish Government has displayed strong determination and will, not only by adopting necessary bills in the parliament required for Copenhagen criteria, but also during the recent Cyprus talks. With these unprecedented initiatives, the Turkish Government has taken up great risks which deserve full support and appreciation by the global community.
- If the European Union fails to comprehend all these and does not give Turkey a firm date for negotiation at the December summit, it would be counter productive for the anchoring of Turkey in the west, at least in the mind of Turkish public opinion.

- The time ahead of us is very short and critical. We must do our utmost to overcome overt and covert obstacles awaiting us.
- I am confident that the German leadership will play a vital role in convincing other governments of member states of the EU.

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen

Having said all these I hope I have conveyed my views on 'Why European debate is not (only) about Turkey. If we succeed in anchoring Turkey to the west via EU, with full and sincere support of the US, the geo-political and geo-strategic scene would radically change in favor of the west.

Thank you.