

ISTANBUL SOMALI
KONFERANSI
21-23 MAYIS 2010 - ISTANBUL

THE ISTANBUL CONFERENCE
ON SOMALIA
21-23 MAY 2010 - ISTANBUL



مؤتمـر اسطنبـول حـمـل الصومال

LA CONFERENCE D'ISTANBUL
POUR LA SOMALIE



center for
strategic
research

Republic of Turkey
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

A New Vision for Least Developed Countries

Prof.Dr. Ahmet DAVUTOĞLU
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Republic of TURKEY

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ahmet Davutoğlu was born in Taşkent/Konya in 1959. After completing his secondary education at Istanbul High School, commonly known as Istanbul Erkek Lisesi, he graduated from the departments of Economics and Political Science at Boğaziçi University, where he then went on to complete his M.A. in Public Administration and Ph.D. in Political Science and International Relations. He became an Assistant Professor in 1990 at the International Islamic University of Malaysia where he established and chaired the Political Science Department until 1993. He also lectured at the Institute for Middle Eastern Studies, the Institute for Insurance and Banking, and the Political Science Department's PhD programme of Marmara University as well as at the Military Academy and the War Academy. He was Professor of International Relations and Head of the International Relations Department at Beykent University from 1999 to 2004. He served as Chief Advisor to the Prime Minister and Ambassador at large during the 58th, 59th and 60th Governments. He was appointed as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the 60th Government of the Republic

of Turkey on 1 May 2009. He was elected as Deputy of AK Parti from Konya to the Turkish Grand National Assembly at the 2011 General Elections and reappointed as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the 61st Government.

He is the author of many books and articles on foreign policy and international relations in Turkish and English. His books and articles have also been translated into several other languages including Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, Arabic, Persian, Greek and Albanian. Professor Davutoğlu is married with four children and speaks English, German and Arabic.

His publications include *Alternative Paradigms* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1993), *Civilizational Transformation and the Muslim World* (K.L.: Quill, 1994), *Stratejik Derinlik* (Strategic Depth) (Küre Yayınları, 2001) and *Küresel Bunalım* (Global Crisis) (Küre Yayınları, 2002). He has pursued a multi-disciplinary approach in his work on such fields as international relations, regional analysis, comparative political philosophy, and comparative history of civilizations.

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| THE CONTRIBUTION OF INTELLECTUAL FORUM | 5 |
| DEVELOPMENTAL TACTICS FOR FDCs | 9 |
| CONCLUSION | 11 |

©All rights reserved

A NEW VISION FOR LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

While pursuing its own development with confidence and success, Turkey has become deeply concerned with all forms of human inequality that exist in the world, especially those forms that impact upon the dignity of the individual and the community. This concern has led Turkey in recent years to turn increasing attention to the plight of countries experiencing acute economic and ecological challenges.

In this spirit it has sought to provide assistance and moral support to the people of Somalia who have remain afflicted by a lethal famine as well as the absence of human security as a result of sustained civil strife and uncontrolled crime. In 2011 the leaders of the Turkish government, along with their families, made a visit to Somalia as a demonstration of solidarity and engagement.¹ It was a dramatic event in part because Somalia had been treated as off limits for world leaders due to the perception of dangerous levels of chaos and the pervasiveness of violence on the ground. This initiative was welcomed with great appreciation by the people of Somalia. Besides showing solidarity and immediate help for famine, Turkey wanted to raise consciousness in the global setting about the tragedy of Somalia so other countries would join in the emergency relief effort. While tragedy of Somalia persists, greater international attention is being given as evidenced by the February 2012 international conference held in London and May 2012 Istanbul confarence. Problems of this magnitude, we believe, require not just national or regional responses, but depend on generating a global response.

Starting in 2005 the Turkish government gave a high priority to Africa, making it

an integral part of our foreign policy. The number of Turkish embassies in Africa was raised from 12 in 2005 to 31 in 2011. The Prime Minister and the President visited several key African countries, and on such international platforms such as G-20 Turkey often serves as the voice of Africa expressing its regional needs and concerns.

Undoubtedly the most durable and visible Turkish commitment along these lines was its acceptance of responsibility for overseeing the UN efforts to alleviate the condition of the so-called LDCs, the 48 countries that the UN regards as suffering the direst consequences of extreme poverty. No less than 33 of these countries are in sub-Saharan Africa, suggesting that the focus of policy efforts should be directed toward improving the life experience of these countries. The UN relies on three criteria to categorize countries as LDCs:

- three-year average GNI per capita of less than US\$905;
- human resource weakness (based on indicators of nutrition, health, education, and adult literacy);
- economic vulnerability (based on instability of agricultural production; instability of exports of goods and services, economic importance of non-traditional activities, merchandise export concentration, handicap of economic smallness, and the percentage of population displaced by natural disasters).

Every three years these indicators are reviewed by the Committee for Development Policy of the UN Economic and Social Council



to determine whether a country should be ‘graduated’ from the LDC to developing country status. Only three countries have graduated over the forty-year period, Botswana (1994), Cape Verde (2007), and Maldives (2011). Turkey will regard that part of its challenge in acting on behalf of these 48 countries will be to get as many countries as possible out of the LDC classification. As one indication of disappointment with the results of past UN efforts to alleviate poverty in the LDCs, the actually number of countries that fall into the category has almost doubled over the course of the last 40 years, rising from 25 in 1971 to 48 in 2011.

Turkey wanted to raise consciousness in the global setting about the tragedy of Somalia so other countries would join in the emergency relief effort.

We would like to work with the international community to find a more satisfactory policy, one that is acceptable to the LDCs

and their developmental partners, to replace this invidious “graduation” system. Of course, we wish to move in such a direction while affirming the responsibility of the developed world to alleviate extreme poverty. These countries face numerous challenges, some of them long-standing and some new, some of them are own making, some a consequence of the colonial legacies and the manipulations of neoliberal globalization. Underdevelopment, lack of infrastructure such as electricity, sanitation, clean and accessible drinking water, weak production capacities, weak institutional capabilities to shape and implement policies, lack of financial resources, low level human development, low labor productivity, overdependence on few export commodities, brain drain of talent, and widespread corruption can be mentioned among these challenges.

Moreover, many of these countries endure political, geographical, and climatic deficiencies through no fault of their own. These deficiencies make such societies particularly vulnerable to external shocks

and natural catastrophes. The still unresolved global financial crises, the troublesome challenges associated with food and energy security, and the related problems caused by climate change are affecting all countries, but the adverse impacts on LDCs are more severe and immediate. Many LDCs are situated in those climate zones that are experiencing the high end of global warming and have the least knowhow and technical capabilities to mitigate the harm.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF INTELLECTUAL FORUM

Turkey's role in relationship to the LDCs involves a commitment of ten years, and was initiated by a UN Conference of Governments that brought 192 governments, 60 head of states, more than 100 ministers as well as the UN Secretary - General Ban Ki-moon and the heads of governing bodies of the UN system, 47 international organizations, and 10,000 participants to Istanbul for several days in May 9-13, 2011. For the first time at an LDC summit, a parliamentary forum consisting of legislators was initiated to supplement the private sector forum that had been previously established.

The conference also featured a Civil Society Forum that ran a parallel program to the formal inter-governmental conference. An interesting innovation at the conference was the establishment of an Intellectual Forum consisting of independent scholars from around the world that addressed the same set of issues that were on the UN agenda. The underlying idea of the Intellectual Forum was the conviction of the Turkish Government that global policy making to be effective and a vehicle for global justice need to be built on a foundation of knowledge that was detached from special interests associated with either private sector ambitions or governmental manipulations. It is the intention of the

Turkish Government to maintain this creative tension linking policy to knowledge throughout its ten years of responsibility for forging constructive UN backed initiatives for the benefit of the LDCs, and will continue to deploy the Intellectual Forum as needed.²

Many LDCs are situated in those climate zones that are experiencing the high end of global warming.

The importance of the event was signaled by the presence of the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, throughout the proceedings, but the political obstacles to effective international action was expressed by the absence of prominent leaders from the most affluent countries of Europe and North America. Their absence was widely understood as underlining their refusal to accept any further financial obligations on behalf of these countries, which is a discouraging but definite part of the global political landscape. It must be taken into account in fashioning Turkey's leadership role in the years ahead, although it is possible that improving world economic conditions and other factors might lead to a greater willingness on the part of some of the richer countries to reconsider their low profile posture on issues of global poverty, and even be more forthcoming in the funding of various types of assistance designed to benefit LDCs during the coming decade.

Turkey has assumed this role of responsibility under the UN banner despite some reservations about the framework that has been adopted in the past. We made it clear during the UN Conference, and in discussions with the Secretary General, of dissatisfaction with the language used to categorize these countries as 'least developed.'

Such a designation to the extent that it is at all illuminating of the realities, is only so with respect to the economic situation confronting these societies. But development and human wellbeing cannot be adequately expressed by relying exclusively on economic metrics. The quality of cultural life, the sense of historical continuity and tradition, and the sense of community and identity are all vital components of human dignity and societal wellbeing. Many of the states classified as LDCs have deep and proud living heritages that give the life of the people meaning and value that may exceed what is experienced in countries with higher average GNPs.

Turkey seeks especially to take steps allowing the LDCs to benefit from trade among themselves.

Turkey hopes that this richer and more adequate understanding of 'development' can become part of the operative understanding

of its undertaking, and will campaign for the adoption of a new language that recognizes these non-material dimensions of development. I have suggested that informally, at least, we rename the LDC as 'Future Developing Countries,' (FDC) a designation that looks to a brighter and better future, and does not have the negative connotations of 'Least Developed Countries.' The Turkish Government will take this unilateral step informally by describing the 48 countries officially embedded in the UN's LDC lexicon as FDCs in its communications relating to this group of countries. The negative connotation of LDC is further reinforced by the procedure known in UN circles as 'graduation' by which economic progress allows a country to escape from the LDC stigma, and will now be identified by dropping the word 'future' from the FDC designation.

It is important also to avoid the implication that countries that fall in this category of most economically disadvantaged should





not be regarded as the most corrupt or incompetent or even the least endowed with resources. Some of the poverty experienced by these societies is a direct result of having been abused by colonial rule, including a denigration of national values associated with indigenous culture, religion, and history, as well as deliberate attempts to keep ‘the natives’ uneducated and insecure. More recent abuses can also be attributed to the violence, criminality, and corruptions associated with the bipolar competition for allegiance waged by the superpowers during the Cold War. These countries were wounded from without, sometimes severely, and deserve special efforts to overcome the suffering that became their destiny in past decades. It is the Turkish commitment, as supported by likeminded governments and people of good will around the world, to overcome this dark destiny and bring hope and progress, along with a greater sense of autonomy and self-worth to the peoples of the countries now classified as LDCs.

Such an emphasis on culture and history does not mean that Turkey does not share

in the broad global consensus that some countries need to be helped so as to provide for the material needs of their people. It endorses with enthusiasm the main policy recommendations of the Istanbul Program of Action that stresses incentive for investment, technology transfer, buildup of tourism, support for agriculture, education, health, climate change adaptation, and food security. Turkey seeks especially to take steps allowing the LDCs to benefit from trade among themselves, and to do so by strengthening procedures for regional cooperation and integration. The basic aim of Turkish assistance is well expressed by the familiar proverb: “give someone a fish and he will be fed for a day, teach that person to fish, and he will be fed for a lifetime.” In broad conceptual terms, Turkey seeks to foster a new development paradigm that stresses acceleration of development, sustainability with respect to environment limits, inclusiveness with respect to the outreach toward beneficiaries of economic growth, and equitable distribution of benefits of growth as between various sectors of society, including relations between country and



city. It is a perspective associated with kadim (ancient wisdom) that partakes of eternal truth, and serving as the keystone of the visionary diplomacy that Turkey embraces as essential if real progress is to be achieved on behalf of this group of countries.

A world that tolerates extreme inequalities is not a world built upon shared values and objectives.

Turkey indicated that its commitment to the LDC process is without any interest in securing special access to the countries that are embraced within the UN framework. It is rather for Ankara an expression of and appeal to the collective conscience of the international community, exhibiting a Turkish resolve to do its part to promote the global public good and economic justice for all persons in the world. As President Gül

said in his opening remarks to the Istanbul gathering of governments, “a world that tolerates extreme inequalities is not a world built upon shared values and objectives.”

Beyond this, Turkey feels that its own cultural, historical, and political background give it a certain distinctive credibility in addressing inequalities and extreme poverty. It considers itself a still developing country that is dedicated to raising the living standards of its own poor. Particular stress is placed upon the geographic position of Turkey between East and West, North and South, Europe and the Middle East, the Middle East and Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Given the extraordinary changes in the region, the ongoing ferment, we in Turkey welcome the cries of freedom and for dignity that has given direction and content to the diverse uprisings embraced by the Arab Spring. We see these developments as vindicating our own embrace of visionary diplomacy as reflecting these hope and dreams of the young throughout the world.

It is time also when we must be wary of prevailing orthodoxies that are not sensitive to moral and spiritual values deeply embedded in all of the world's cultural heritages, something universal and timeless, rooted in the dawn of the human awakening and more relevant than ever. In our present period we are searching for a path on the high and safe ground situated between the social and political demands for development and the necessities of sustainability. We need to balance this imperative of addressing economic inequalities and extreme poverty with the growing awareness that modern industrial civilization is pushing up against ecological limits vital for human health, and even survival. The challenge of climate change cannot be ignored any longer, and must help shape our economic policies for all societies, rich and poor. Rethinking the approach taken to the LDCs (or FDCs) needs to be broad enough to devise policies and initiatives that help alleviate poverty and inequality, but also encourage revivals and celebrations of indigenous culture and mindfulness toward ecological stewardship.

DEVELOPMENTAL TACTICS FOR FDCs

In more practical ways Turkey will try to foster developmental tactics and strategies that produce improving results in relation to existing levels of poverty and inequality among the FDCs:

- Although the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPA) deliberately rejected the inclusion of targets, timetables, and delivery assessment to ensure that pledges were upheld, Turkey will on its own devise yardsticks of achievement to inform itself about the degree that progress is being made.

We are searching for a path on the high and safe ground situated between the social and political demands for development and the necessities of sustainability.

- The IPA places confidence in the role of the private sector in advancing UN goals in this domain, but it is important also to be mindful, as civil society advocates have noted, of the serious misconduct of multinational corporations that have exploited indigenous resources in a manner that brings little or no benefit to the territorial society, that have been involved with land grabs that impinge upon future agricultural self-sufficiency and food security, that have established biofuel plantations that destroy forests and agricultural lands, and have introduced industrial projects that pollute or appropriate local water supplies in a manner injurious to the health and wellbeing of the population. Many of these countries are endowed with abundant and as yet unutilized natural resources, which contain great potential for future growth provided that these resources are developed in a manner that is respectful of the environment and sensitive to the importance of ensuring that developments primarily benefit the indigenous population and not foreign investors.
- Careful evaluation and monitoring of the contributions associated with public/private partnerships, especially in relation to the provision of essential services; the past record suggests that the private goals of profitability often take precedence



over the supposed commitment to the reduction of poverty and injustice; vital public services such as drinking water and infrastructure, education and health should be prudently addressed so that earlier mistakes are not repeated.

- Rethinking the function of accountability procedures, introducing a new emphasis on accountability of governments to their own societies, both people and legislative institutions, and in a reversal of priorities, only a secondary ensuring accountability to donors, investors, and international agencies such as the World Bank, IMF, and WTO.
- Attention to trade distortions, especially resulting from agricultural subsidies in developed countries that disrupt efforts by FDCs to achieve food security and reduce vulnerability to food dumping and market instabilities.
- Sustainable development of the agricultural sector is crucial, and should be envisioned within the framework of maximal ‘food sovereignty’ for these countries; special efforts should be made to encourage small scale farming reinforced by producer associations and cooperatives, which would also have the benefit of supporting women. Improving the quality of agricultural activity is of vital importance for almost every FDC. Therefore it is imperative to seek sustainable and indigenous agricultural methods, and to avoid to the extent possible reliance on foreign owned agrobusiness dependencies.
- To accord high value and respect for local knowledge, instead of privileging western oriented development projects, especially for agricultural and infrastructural development.

- To avoid the adoption of rigid templates of sustainable development premised on the faulty logic of one size fits all. Each FDC has its own originality, including distinctive historical and cultural resources, which gives rise to a particular mix of challenges and opportunities. It is crucial to understand and respect these differences and avoid stereotyping.
- Climate change effects FDCs, and hampers development prospects, but requires more dedicated efforts by the developed countries to take concrete and obligatory steps to cut carbon emissions to ensure that there are no further buildup of GHG (greenhouse gasses); action at the regional and global level is essential in coming years to avert catastrophic climate changes, but the responsibility lies with the major carbon emitters, past and present, and not with these poor and frequently geographically disadvantaged countries.
- International legal commitments on climate change already take some account of the FDCs vulnerabilities, limited capabilities, and developmental priorities. As yet, however, needed financial commitments by more affluent countries have not been forthcoming. We will seek more effective funding in relation to climate change, and sustainable development generally.
- Millennium development goals are in jeopardy because of the impacts of climate change. If these goals are to be achieved, it is essential to realize that climate change is a threat multiplier not only for FDCs but all political actors.
- It is imperative to initiate a renewed evaluation of the debt burdens of these countries, seeking restructuring and cancellation as appropriate so as to free the energies and resources of the FDCs;
- Respect for sovereignty, national governance, local knowledge, and people-oriented policies seems inconsistent in many settings with imposition of external and paternalistic conditionalities linked to performance.
- Inquiry should be directed at financing schemes that might move the relationship between FDCs and the world community in a more mutual and reciprocal direction.

CONCLUSION

In moving forward, we must be guided not only by what is feasible, but also by what is necessary and desirable when it comes to addressing these fundamental challenges of poverty and inequality. We need to have confidence that rapid development and economic growth is beneficial to the whole of world society, and not just privileged segments, and we need to do this with greatly increased mindfulness as to the relevance of ecological limits and the shadows being cast by harmful forms of climate change. We live in an age of globalization, financial, political and environmental problems impact on all of us without respecting diplomatic borders. There is no better platform on which to initiate our ethical responsibilities that stem from being part of humanity than meeting this special set of challenges associated with enabling FDCs to fulfill the needs of their peoples and begin to realize their dreams of a better life. I am reminded of the words of the French philosopher, Jacques Derrida, who formulated the greatest task facing humanity as learning to live well together on this planet.

ENDNOTES

1. Bülent Aras, “Turkey’s Policy in Africa: Frontiers of a New Imagination”, *Hürriyet Daily News*, 1 June 2012.
2. Richard Falk, “Turkey Hosts UN Mega-Conference for Least Developed Countries”, *Today’s Zaman*, 6 May 2011.

Center for Strategic Research of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey (SAM) is a think-tank and a research center which is chartered by law and has been active since May 1995. SAM was established as a consultative body to provide Turkish Foreign Policy decision makers with scholarly and scientific assessments of relevant issues, and reviews Turkish foreign policy with a futuristic perspective.

SAM conducts research, organizes scholarly events relevant to the ever expanding spectrum of Turkish Foreign Policy in cooperation with both Turkish and foreign academicians, its counterparts from around the world as well as various universities and government agencies. SAM provides consultancy to the foreign ministry departments as well as some other state institutions in foreign policy issues while also establishing regional think-tank networks.

In addition to its role of generating up-to-date information, reliable data and insightful analysis as a think-tank, SAM functions as a forum for candid debate and discussion for anyone who is interested in both local and global foreign policy issues. Increasingly, SAM has become a center of attraction since it successfully brings scholars and policy makers together for exchange of ideas in panels, in-house meetings, seminars and training programs for young diplomats.

SAM has a widening range of publications. Along with its traditional publication, Perceptions, which is a quarterly English language journal that hosts distinguished Turkish and international scholars within its pages, SAM recently initiated Vision Papers which expresses the views of H.E. Prof. Dr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, and SAM Papers that will cover the current debates of foreign policy by various scholars.

With its commitment to contribution to the body of knowledge and constructive debate particularly in Turkish Foreign Policy, SAM will continue to serve as an indispensable think-tank and research center given its role promoting interaction and mutual benefits among the MFA, NGOs, other think-tanks and the broader scientific community and hence strengthen the human and intellectual capital of Turkey.

Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs Center for Strategic Research
Dr. Sadık Ahmet Cad. No. 8 Balgat- 06100 Ankara / Turkey
www.sam.gov.tr strategy@mfa.gov.tr
Tel: (+90) 312 292 40 76 Fax: (+90) 312 253 42 03