



Turkey's role in Europe

Looking beyond the membership question – social cohesion, shared values and parallel security interests

Madrid, Thursday 8 May 2008

Casa de Galicia

Casado del Alisal 8

ROUNDTABLE AGENDA

09.30 – 10.00 Registration

10.00 – 10.15 **Introduction and words of welcome**

- *Pierre Schori*, Director General, FRIDE, Spain
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10.15 – 11.30 **Panel on Turkey in Europe**

Chair:

- *Pierre Schori*, FRIDE, Spain

Panellists:

- *Ingmar Karlsson*, Swedish Consul General Istanbul, Turkey
 - *Nilufer Narli*, Chair Sociology Department, Bahçeşehir University, Istanbul, Turkey
 - *Luis de Grandes Pascual*, Member of the European Parliament, European Democrats, Spain
 - *Sami Faltas*, Executive Director, Centre for European Security Studies (CESS), the Netherlands
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11.30 – 12.00 Coffee break

12.00 – 13.45 **Debate – How can the EU and Turkey co-operate beyond the membership question?**

Moderator:

- *Maija Lähteenmäki*, Ambassador of Finland to Spain

During this session the roundtable participants have the opportunity to discuss with the panel of experts the following issues:

1. What is the state of play in EU-Turkey relations and will there be institutional consequences as a result of the Lisbon treaty that was recently concluded? Is there a change in EU popular and government opinions on the Turkish accession question? And in what direction has public opinion shifted in Turkey since membership talks have started?
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2. While radical Islam has become a serious concern in most, if not all, EU-member states, this issue has also become part of a broader debate on integration of Islamic minorities in EU countries resulting in rising support for radical nationalist sentiments. Meanwhile the issue of the role of religion in society and on the other hand countering extremism is not new to Turkey. During the summer Turkey underwent a political crisis over the appointment of President Gül of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) and currently another crisis is unfolding over the Chief Prosecutors' filed lawsuit against the ruling AKP over the headscarf issue. Is there a parallel to the developments in Turkey and Western Europe? What can the EU and Turkey learn from each other in fostering religious tolerance and countering radicalism (both religious as well as nationalism)?
 3. Turkey is centrally located between the EU and countries that participate in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP): in the northeast to the Southern Caucasus countries and to the southeast Lebanon, Jordan and Syria are in Turkey's vicinity. Would it make sense if the EU would engage Turkey in the ENP programme, not as a beneficiary state but as a complimenting factor to cross border programmes that the ENP tries to promote? If so, in what fields (democratisation, energy, trade etc) could Turkey play a role?
 4. Turkey and the EU share many security concerns, most notably the threat of terrorism and transnational crime. Moreover, Turkey is sometimes regarded as a buffer in-between the EU and the highly unstable Middle East bordering Iraq, Iran and Syria. Next to being a NATO member Turkey might further engage in the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). How should both partners go about further co-operation and in what aspects of security?
 5. Linked to the latter security discussion and the Turkey membership question is the internal security situation in which the Turkish Armed Forces still play a significant role that exceeds national defence and peacekeeping missions. To what extent is the internal 'guardian role' that the military fulfils an obstacle to EU-Turkey relations or a 'blessing in disguise' that counters radical Islam in the secular republic?

Rapporteur:

- **Jos Boonstra**, Senior Researcher, Democratisation Programme, FRIDE, Spain

13.45 – 14.00 **Concluding remarks and word of thanks**

- **Pierre Schori**, Director General, FRIDE, Spain

14.00 – 15.00 Lunch at Casa Galicia
