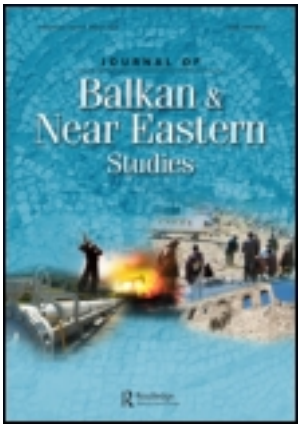

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Turkey's Place in the 'Missile Shield'

Mustafa Kibaroğlu

The critical decision to share the advanced missile defence capabilities of the USA, also known as the 'Missile Shield', was taken at the Lisbon Summit meeting of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in November 2010. Turkey had concerns about the Missile Shield project, which constituted an important item on the summit agenda. Turkey's concerns were addressed properly by the allies, and a key component of the project, namely, the radar site in eastern Turkey was activated in May 2012 at the time of the Chicago Summit of the Alliance. This paper aims to shed light on the background of the development and expansion of the missile defence project of the USA both at national and global scales. In the same vein, technological characteristics and operational principles of air defence systems as well as the reactions coming from other countries, such as Russia, China, Iran and the European allies will be presented. The paper will highlight the deliberations between Turkey and the USA since the 1990s with respect to the deployment of air defence systems on Turkish territory. Finally, Turkey's place in the debate concerning the deployment of the Missile Shield in NATO countries will be discussed with specific references to the role that Turkey could play in enhancing the defensive as well as deterrent capability of the Alliance and itself.

Introduction

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the possibility of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) such as nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and ballistic missiles as their delivery vehicles, as well as the material, technology and scientific knowledge required for their manufacture, passing into the hands of 'countries of concern' (e.g. Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya and North Korea) and also non-state actors (i.e. transnational terrorist networks) prompted the USA to take measures against such contingencies.

One of these measures was the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) programme launched by the US Senate soon after the Soviet Union formally dissolved in December 1991. The CTR programme was also known as the 'Nunn–Lugar' programme after the two senators, namely, Sam Nunn (Democrat, Georgia) and Richard Lugar (Republican, Indiana). The purpose of the CTR programme was to help the former Soviet republics to destroy WMD and the associated infrastructure left on their territories in order to reduce the chances of unauthorized access to the material used in their manufacture.[1] The Nunn–Lugar programme also worked to

ensure that Soviet scientists did not sell their know-how to states seeking to acquire WMD capability.[2]

With respect to the anticipated threats posed by the proliferation of WMD and ballistic missiles capabilities around the world, another measure taken by the USA under the Clinton administration was to revive the so-called 'Star Wars' project, which was initially launched during the Reagan administration in the 1980s with a view to deploying a nationwide antiballistic missile defence system that would be capable of shooting down the Soviet ballistic missiles before they reached the USA.

The political havoc that was created in the international arena in the last phase of the cold war period aside, the 'Star Wars' project was highly criticized by military and security experts with respect to the technical and technological limitations of the systems that were said to be deployed soon. Hence, the project was rather seen by most observers and political analysts as a political instrument that could be used to accelerate the dissolution of the Soviet Union, which was already undergoing internal chaos due to the discontent among the political and security elite emanating from the *Perestroika* and *Glasnost* processes initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev in the mid-1980s.

Being aware of the technological limitations of the 'Star Wars' project, and bearing in mind the threat posed by the proliferation of WMD and ballistic missiles in the immediate aftermath of the cold war period, the National Missile Defense (NMD) project was launched by the Clinton administration in the early 1990s. The NMD was a much more coherent project when compared to its predecessor, which would be developed under the control of the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization (BMDO).[3] Developments in the NMD project throughout the 1990s paved the way to the 'Missile Shield' project in the 2000s, which was later on turned into a controversial project that would be developed under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 2010.

With these in mind, this paper aims to shed light on the background of the development and expansion of the missile defence project of the USA both at national and global scales. In the same vein, technological characteristics and operational principles of air defence systems as well as the reactions coming from other countries, such as Russia, China, Iran and the European allies including Turkey will be presented. The paper will highlight the deliberations between Turkey and the USA since the 1990s with respect to the deployment of air defence systems on Turkish territory. Finally, Turkey's place in the debate concerning the deployment of the Missile Shield in NATO countries will be discussed with specific references to the role that Turkey could play in enhancing the defensive as well as deterrent capability of the Alliance and itself.

Background to the Missile Defence Project

One of the arguments that many international security experts have put forward in the aftermath of the cold war and the dissolution of the Soviet Union was that the East–West antagonism would be replaced by the North–South conflicts.[4] It was argued that in such an international environment, conflicts between countries from the North with their highly developed economies and powerful military capabilities,

and countries from the South, which are less developed, yet possessing chemical, biological and even nuclear weapons as well as ballistic missiles as their delivery vehicles, would continue in a different international political conjuncture. A number of developments that have taken place over the past two decades, such as the Iraq wars, have justified this view.

During the cold war years, the Soviet Union became the world's largest arsenal of chemical, biological and specifically nuclear weapons, most of which were deployed and/or stored in various Soviet republics. Tens of thousands of scientists, experts and technicians have worked in hundreds of scientific research centres and laboratories all over the Soviet Union for the development of these weapons and their delivery vehicles. Yet, the scientific knowledge, material and technology that were used in the manufacture of these weapons were under the strict control of the Soviet central authority.

However, due to a series of political, economic and social developments resulting in the erosion of the central authority following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, a significant proportion of these weapons and the nuclear, chemical and biological materials that are capable of causing large-scale deaths and serious injuries even if used in very small amounts were left in facilities that were not properly guarded or supervised. Thus, the equipment, technology and know-how necessary for the production of WMD that were under inadequate safety and security measures became the focus of attention of countries who have long aspired to developing these weapons but lacked the necessary scientific and technological infrastructure to do so. There are cases that have confirmed that such equipment, technology and material were smuggled to less developed countries in the South.[5]

Throughout the cold war years, under the bipolar system and the 'delicate balance of terror',[6] some countries, which were unable to develop sufficient capacity to match the military power of bigger states due to their inadequate scientific, technical and financial capabilities, could not pursue more assertive foreign policies. When the cold war ended, these countries embarked upon crush programmes to advance their capabilities to develop WMD and ballistic missiles to deliver them to distant targets. Iran and North Korea, among others, seemed more ambitious in this regard and they have eventually tested long-range ballistic missiles.[7] Political and military analysts in the USA in particular have thus pointed at the possibility that in the near future these countries could develop ballistic missiles with ranges up to 5000 km or more.

Iran's as well as North Korea's proven capabilities of developing ballistic missiles that could fly over 2500 km, and their sustained efforts to acquire more advanced capabilities to place WMD on top of these missiles have prompted some countries—primarily the USA and Israel—to develop effective defensive measures. It is this perceived threat that is emphasized as the reason for the USA's initiative to launch the NMD project against the potential ballistic missile threats that the future American presidents could face.

Technical Aspects of the NMD

In theory, air defence systems are designed to shoot down the short-, medium- and long-range missiles flying at a speed of 4–6 kilometres per second (km/s) by colliding

in mid-air with missiles launched from enemy territories. It is like shooting a bullet with a bullet, which, therefore, requires extremely sophisticated high-level scientific and technological capabilities.

By launching the NMD project, the USA initially set a goal to deploy a 100-battery anti-ballistic missile defence system in the Alaska region, to counter the potential threat emanating from countries like North Korea and Iran, which were in the process of developing longer range ballistic missiles than the ones they had tested at the end of the 1990s. It was envisaged to have the first phase of the system (i.e. deployment of 20 batteries) operational by 2005. As such, it was hoped that the entire US territory would be protected against ballistic missile attacks by the end of the second decade of the new millennium. It was equally emphasized that in order for the missile batteries to be used effectively, early warning systems consisting of advanced radars had to be deployed in various parts of the world. The projected total cost for the system was initially pronounced to be in the environs of 60 billion dollars, a figure that was eventually far exceeded.[8]

The first test-flight of the system was successfully carried out in October 1999. However, following the failure of two tests conducted in January and July 2000, some military experts opposed conducting further tests before first receiving sufficiently reliable results from navigation system simulations. The major concern of these experts was that if consecutive tests were to be carried out simply because of political reasons—rather than technical purposes—and failed, then they would create a perception that the air defence system could not be realized anyway. Taking these and other developments, toward the end of his second term, then US President Bill Clinton refrained from making a definitive decision on the project's future, stressing that such a critical decision should be given by the new president who would be elected at the end of 2000.

George W. Bush, who took office following the presidential elections, held in November 2000, had to turn his attention to Afghanistan and Iraq after the attacks of September 11, 2001. Yet, the NMD project would soon be given a new boost by the Bush administration and it would be opened to the participation of the NATO allies as a result of the decisions taken first at the summit meeting of the Alliance in Prague in November 2002 and then in successive summits in Istanbul (2004), Bucharest (2008) and Lisbon (2010). It is expected that the system, which can be deployed on land, sea or air platforms, will be fully operational in 2018.[9]

Reactions to the NMD

When the NMD was first launched by the Clinton administration in the early 1990s, Russia, China and European allies of the USA as well as Turkey were quick to raise their serious concerns about the project. With the US decision to share the NMD with its NATO allies, Iran joined the bandwagon of the critics of the project.

Russia's Objection

Russia, in the first place, was adamantly opposed to the development of any antiballistic missile system regardless of whether it would have only a limited

capability that would be effective against no more than 15 missiles, as was often argued by the American authorities to mitigate the fears of their Russian counterparts. Russian opposition was also based on a legal stance as they perceived the development of any ballistic missile capability by the states' parties to be a clear violation of the Anti Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, which was signed between the USA and the Soviet Union in 1972. According to the ABM Treaty, both the superpowers had agreed not to develop air defence systems, which would annihilate the delicate balance that was attained due to the presence of the 'second-strike capability' on both sides.[10] Security analysts considered that situation as the very basis of the 'Mutually Assured Destruction' (MAD) that kept the cold war from turning into a hot confrontation.

In addition to the politico-military as well as legal considerations, Russia, which was experiencing economic hardship and financial difficulties in the 1990s, did not want to spend tens of billions of dollars out of its highly limited defence budget in order to be able to keep certain parity with the USA. Hence, Russia threatened retaliatory action if the USA did not stop advancing the NMD project by declaring that they would stop pursuing the nuclear disarmament efforts that would require Russia to cut down the number of strategic nuclear weapons[11] as well as to destroy the entire category of intermediate-range nuclear weapons.[12]

China's Opposition

China also raised harsh criticism toward the NMD on the grounds that the project could very well offset the significance of its strategic deterrent that was based on a limited number of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) in its military arsenal.[13] In order to put pressure on their American counterparts not to go ahead with the NMD project, Chinese authorities threatened them with not collaborating in the area of export controls of sensitive material that the USA feared they could pass into the hands of Iran and North Korea, both of which were having good relations with China.

Aside from the military–strategic considerations, Chinese authorities were also concerned about the possibility of mounting pressure that would come from the USA with respect to its internal political issues, such as the human rights conditions all over the country, as well as the domestic security situation in Tibet and the Uyghur regions. In the early 1990s, the Clinton administration was highly critical about the political situation in China and the American politicians and diplomats often preached to their Chinese counterparts as to what they should or should not do about their internal politics. Such attempts coming from the USA reminded the Chinese ruling class of the significance of having and also keeping a viable deterrent against possible outside intrusions.

Iran's Resentments

Conscious of the fact that the US plans to deploy a nation-wide air defence system were primarily motivated by their country's ballistic missile capability, the Iranian ruling elite have since the beginning closely followed the advancement of the NMD

project. Yet, their voices were hardly heard during the 1990s at a time when Russia and China adopted a highly tough stance against the USA that, in some respects, echoed Iran's concerns as well. However, with the US move in the 2000s to offer its NATO allies an elaborate air defence system as a result of the achievements recorded in the NMD project, Iranian authorities have become equally vocal in expressing their resentments about the 'Missile Shield'.

In the wake of the Lisbon Summit of NATO where the decision to deploy an alliance-wide air defence system was finally adopted, Iranian Defence Minister Ahmed Vahidi stated that NATO was trying to contain the influence of the Islamic revolution in the region.[14] Most of the criticisms coming from the Iranian authorities against the Missile Shield were mainly levelled against Turkey, especially in the aftermath of the Lisbon Summit, because of the decision to deploy the advanced radar component of the air defence system on Turkish territory. Among those who commented on the subject matter, again the Iranian Defence Minister Vahidi said, 'We regard the presence of the Americans and the Westerners as troublesome, which would undermine security in Muslim countries and harm their interests.'[15]

European Concerns

Initially, the European allies of the USA also strongly opposed the development of the NMD first as a matter of principle. They criticized the USA for developing an independent defence mechanism suited to its own conditions while also having common defence obligations within the NATO alliance. European members of NATO worried that if the USA deployed the NMD, it could provoke Russia whose reaction would increase the level of tension in international politics and thus raise the level of threat they would perceive from Russia. This would mean that the cold war concerns of the European allies would be revived. Moreover, the Europeans were of the opinion that if and when the USA realized its NMD plans, which would then become self-sufficient in terms of its security, American administrations would become less concerned about the defence of Europe.

To overcome these concerns, American authorities stated that if the missile defence project was successfully realized, then the USA would share the technology and knowledge it would have accumulated by then with its European allies. That offer, however, did not create much excitement among the Europeans initially. First of all, the promise to share technology and knowledge in the future was only verbally made and there were no legally binding guarantees. Second, the prevailing perspective in Europe was that the prospects for erecting an effective missile defence system were limited. As such, the USA would attract unnecessary criticism from Russia and force Russia to take a tough stance on issues pertaining to international security that would result in a dramatic increase in the level of threat posed to Europe.

Turkey's Ambivalence

From the standpoint of Turkey, coming to a conclusion about the *pros* and *cons* of the American NMD project was rather difficult. On the positive side, due to Turkey's

close military and political relations with the USA, the development of an effective air defence capability by the Americans could be considered to have a constructive impact on Turkey's security. Many countries in Turkey's neighbourhood are known for possessing all categories of WMD and ballistic missiles. Hence, should the USA choose to share its missile defence capability with its allies, it could have a positive effect on Turkey's security.

Notwithstanding, Turkey was concerned with the military implications of the NMD project for Turkey. Conscious of the fact that the NMD was originally designed to counter ICBM with minimum ranges of 5000–6000 km, and bearing in mind that Turkey did not perceive a threat from countries that far away, then the NMD would be of no practical use for Turkey's security. It would be much more beneficial for Turkey to host air defence systems, such as the Patriot, Arrow or the S-300 series, which could be effective against the threats posed by the short- and medium-range ballistic missile capabilities of the countries in its neighbourhood.

Turkey was also concerned about the reactions of Russia and China to the development of the NMD by the USA, both of which had made it clear that they would stop cooperating in the area of disarmament and arms control. Russia's threatening statements hinting at the termination of the INF (Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces) Treaty, which required the elimination of all intermediate-range nuclear missiles, might have serious consequences for Turkey, which would remain under the threat posed by the Russian missiles in that category. Just like Russia, effective cooperation of China in the efforts to strengthen the WMD non-proliferation regimes has always been crucial. Hence, Turkey was also concerned with the possibility that China, as a leading country in the area of export controls, would lax the export restrictions in reaction to the plans to develop the NMD project by the USA that would further fuel further proliferation of WMD. Suffice it to say that many of the countries that would take advantage of such a situation are located near Turkey.

From the NMD to the Missile Shield and the Place of Turkey

Most of the issues of disagreement between the USA and its European allies including Turkey have largely been resolved as a result of the successfully conducted tests that have attested to the system's feasibility and thus increased the plan's attractiveness. Moreover, the USA has moved towards a more solid scheme of cooperation. The most concrete development has been the official statements made during the NATO summit held in Bucharest, Romania on 2–4 April 2008 that emphasized serious and extensive efforts to develop the missile defence project within the North Atlantic alliance.

Initially, these measures assigned priority to the protection of NATO troops; then they were eventually expanded to cover the population centres and critical infrastructures as suggested in the 'Missile Defense Feasibility Study' that was launched following the Prague Summit of NATO in November 2002. Soon after, at the Istanbul Summit meeting in June 2004, NATO members jointly decided that 'work on theater ballistic missile defense be taken forward expeditiously'. Later on, the Bush administration proposed deployment of the Missile Shield in the Czech

Republic and Poland at the expense of Russia's threats with countermeasures. In terms of the two key steps in the Missile Shield project, which are the deployment of a radar system in the Czech Republic and missile batteries in Poland, the USA preferred to proceed by means of bilateral treaties.[16] Both the Czech Republic and Poland faced difficulties when making these political decisions, and they encountered threats from former ally Russia, which provoked strong public reaction that put the decision-makers in a tough position in both countries.

The Obama administration, however, revised the threat assessment in 2009, and called off the plans to deploy the Missile Shield in Eastern Europe on the grounds that Iran's advanced ballistic missile capability, which is seen by the USA as the primary source of threat, was not yet advanced to the level that could hit the US territory with missiles that would be launched from Iran. Nevertheless, the Obama administration maintained that Iran could still hit the territories of the allied countries as far away as Central and Eastern Europe from Iran. Such a threat assessment would therefore require the deployment of the Missile Shield's major components (i.e. the radar system and the missile launchers) on the allied territories closer to Iran. Hence, Turkey's geographical place gained prominence in the eyes of the American authorities.

The Obama administration's choice regarding the new sites for the deployment of the Missile Shield resulted in various reactions in the international arena. On one side, Russia and China raised their adamant opposition to the deployment of the Missile Shield in South-eastern Europe and Turkey. For instance, Russian Army General Nikolay Makarov told an international conference on missile defence in Moscow that a pre-emptive strike could be utilized to physically destroy the missile systems. Makarov added that he hoped the use of weapons of destruction would be a measure of last resort in response to the deployment of a missile shield throughout Europe.[17] Similarly, China harshly criticized the decision to deploy the Missile Shield through a declaration of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization by stating that the 'unilateral and unlimited build-up of missile defense by a single state or by a narrow group of states could damage strategic stability and international security'.[18]

On the other side, in Western countries, Turkey was criticized for being reluctant to give its affirmative vote for building an alliance-wide missile defence structure due to a number of conditions that were reportedly imposed by Turkey. The general perception in the Turkish public domain, however, was that the USA and the leading members of the Alliance came up with a proposal to deploy a missile defence on Turkey's territory and asked the Turkish authorities 'are you in or out?' forcing them to take a decision right away. That was certainly not the case.[19]

Indeed, the missile defence issue was not a new topic for Turkish politicians, diplomats or the military, nor was it a new item on the agenda of Turkish–American relations. The issue has been on the negotiation table, initially at a bilateral level with American authorities, since the temporary deployment of the US air defence systems, namely, the 'Patriots', during the first Iraq war in 1991. Since then, Turkish authorities have been more than willing to deploy elaborate air defence systems permanently in Turkey, especially in regions neighbouring the Middle East. Despite the extended negotiations, no consensus could be found in order to go ahead with a joint project.

Turkey's desire back in the late 1990s was to have a share in the development of the ballistic missile defence technology, which was not very welcome by the USA. A similar situation was experienced in the triangular relations among Turkey, the USA and Israel with respect to the cooperation on the development and the eventual deployment of the Arrow-II air defence system as well. While Americans put the blame on the Israelis as being the ones who did not want to share this new and sensitive technology with Turkey, Israelis pronounced almost exactly the same views about the attitude of their American counterparts.[20] All in all, the project was shelved, at least from the perspective of Turkey, for some time to come, which actually has never come to date, due to the deterioration of Turkish–Israeli relations in the late 2000s.[21]

Turkey's Concerns with the Missile Shield Project

The geographical location of Turkey in the vicinity of the volatile regions, and in a rather hostile environment, requires the deployment of air defence systems all over the country against the threat posed by the missile capabilities in the hands of a number of surrounding countries. Notwithstanding their willingness to deploy air defence systems in the country, Turkish authorities still had concerns about a number of issues. Turkey's concerns with respect to the possible deployment of the Missile Shield on Turkish territory were mainly threefold.

First, Turkey wanted the project to be a NATO project, rather than an American project alone based on the lessons learned from the 'Jupiter' missile crisis in 1962. The first decision to deploy American nuclear weapons in Turkey was taken at the summit meeting of NATO held in Paris in December 1957. Though US intermediate-range nuclear Jupiter missiles were first placed near Izmir in 1961, they were withdrawn by 1963 as part of a secret agreement between President John F. Kennedy and Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev to resolve the Cuban Missile Crisis.[22] The Turkish government was not consulted by the Kennedy administration. Such an attitude of the major ally, namely, the USA caused deep resentments among the Turkish political and security elite, which resonated for many years ever since. Hence, Turkey wouldn't want to be left in a one-on-one situation with the USA in such a delicate matter where the parties' weight would be disproportionate in terms of decision-making in case it becomes necessary to activate the system in a future contingency.

Second, Turkey had doubts as to whether the USA would really want collaboration on this matter for protecting Turkey, or whether Israel's security in the face of the threat posed by Iranian missiles would be its real concern. Due to a series of unexpected and unwanted developments recently, Turkey's relations with Israel have much deteriorated in the aftermath of the Gaza offensive of the latter in January 2009 and, more specifically, after the tragic Flotilla incident in the high seas of the eastern Mediterranean in May 2010 resulting in the killing of nine Turkish citizens by Israeli soldiers.[23] Therefore, the Justice and Development Party government in Turkey, headed by Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, seems to be seriously concerned about whether NATO's missile defence capability would also be used to protect Israel in case it is attacked, for instance, by Iran. However, under the current state of affairs

in Turkish–Israeli relations, the Turkish government officials would like to know exactly who would control the operation of the missile defence system of the Alliance. Political sensitivities notwithstanding, the difficulty here is that the NATO-wide missile defence structure will have to benefit to a great extent from the existing American air defence systems that have already been deployed, and are in the process of being deployed, in various places on the ground-based as well as sea-based platforms, will have to be expanded to cover the entire NATO territory, which in turn may require activation of various sub-systems that may also cover the Israeli airspace. Hence, this technical issue, which has political implications, will have to be tackled by the allied countries.

Third, Turkey did not want any country's name to be explicitly pronounced as the source of the threat against which the alliance would be developing the project. Instead, Turkey suggested that the alliance conduct a threat assessment study about the proliferation of ballistic missiles worldwide and its countermeasures that would satisfy the need for installing such a system on NATO territory. There were two reasons why Turkey is sensitive about naming any specific country. One of them was the degree of relations with Iran currently, especially at the level of top political leaderships on both sides, who were concerned about the sensitivities that would be created in the public domain by putting a neighbouring country on target. The other, and probably more important reason, was Turkey's concerns about Iran's possible exploitation of this situation. Turkish authorities believed that if Iran was explicitly cited as the source of threat, then the Iranian leadership would have a justification for further advancing their missile and other military capabilities.[24] Therefore, Turkey's opposition to naming a country was not a result of an emotional attitude, but rather a well calculated and rational decision with a view to putting a halt to Iran's growing missile capabilities. This very point was overlooked by many amid unfounded debates on whether Turkey was drifting away from the West and getting closer to Iran. On top of these major concerns, Turkey also wanted every single square inch of Turkish territory to be covered by the missile defence system once it became fully operational.

Conclusion

Even though Turkey and the leading members of the Alliance did not see eye to eye on every single aspect of NATO's missile defence project, the degree of divergence of opinions was not as wide as it seemed from a distance. Hence, breakthroughs were possible during the Lisbon Summit and Turkey has become an important partner in NATO's missile defence project. A radar site in the Kurecik village in the environs of the city of Malatya in eastern Turkey started to operate as a NATO asset concomitantly with the Chicago Summit meeting of NATO in May 2012.

An important question, in connection with Turkey's decision to take an active part in the Missile Shield project, is whether the deployment of an advanced missile defence capability would positively affect the perception of the Turkish security elite vis-à-vis the threat posed by the nuclear and missile capabilities of neighbouring Iran in particular, and the nuclearization of the Middle East in general. In other words,

would the Missile Shield significantly limit Turkey's potential aspirations towards going nuclear in response to Iran's development of nuclear weapons capability in the first place?

An answer to these questions can be found in the above-mentioned stance of the Turkish government authorities prior to and during the Lisbon Summit meeting of NATO in November 2010. Hence, a reading of Turkey's major concerns with regard to the issue of deployment of the Missile Shield suggests that Turkish authorities do indeed consider the presence of NATO's sophisticated defensive capabilities as highly valuable strategic assets for Turkey's protection against the actual and also potential threats emanating from the proliferation of WMD and their delivery vehicles that are already (and likely to be in the future) in the arsenals of its neighbours, especially in the Middle East.

When high-ranking Iranian officials issued bitter statements with regard to the decision of NATO in December 2012 to deploy the Patriot air defence system in Turkey[25] as a precautionary measure against the Scud missiles in the hands of the Assad regime in Syria, Turkish government officials refrained from entering into a quarrel with their Iranian counterparts over the deployment of the Patriots in Turkey[26] while putting in place the necessary defensive measures vis-à-vis the contingencies in the region that might arise from the ongoing turmoil in Syria as well as the rift between Israel and Iran due to the suspicions of the former about the nuclear programme of the latter.[27]

Hence, it wouldn't be wrong to argue that Turkey will feel more secure with the presence of NATO's defensive assets deployed on its territory that will enhance the extended deterrence provided to Turkey by the Alliance. As a consequence of this, it would be logical to think that Turkey's potential aspirations toward developing its own nuclear deterrent as an insurance policy against a nuclear Iran would be significantly diminished.[28]

Notes

[1] For a comprehensive study of the 'Nunn–Lugar' programme, see the doctoral dissertation conducted under the supervision of the author by Aylin Gurzel, 'The Nunn–Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program: an effective regime to stem proliferation of weapons of mass destruction', unpublished PhD Dissertation, Bilkent University, Ankara, 2012.

[2] John M. Shields and William C. Potter, 'Assessing the disarmament process', in John M. Shields and William C. Potter (eds), *Dismantling the Cold War: US and NIS Perspectives on the Nunn–Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1994, pp. 1–19.

[3] The BMDO was first established in 1974 with the responsibility to coordinate ballistic missile defence efforts of the United States. In 1984, BMDO became part of the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization under the Reagan administration. During the first term of the Clinton administration, BMDO was assigned a new role in developing a theatre missile defence with mobile capabilities.

[4] Within the context of this debate, Western Europe, the USA, Canada and Japan—in the northern hemisphere—are identified as the developed 'North'. The less developed states of Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and South Asia are identified as the 'South'.

[5] For detailed information on this issue, see the website of the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies in Monterey, California, < cns.miis.edu>. For a documentary on the subject matter, see the website of the public broadcast services, <www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/nukes >.

[6] It may be more appropriate to use the terminology of the age (i.e. the 1960s) where stability in superpower rivalry was believed to owe much to the existence of a 'delicate balance of terror', so labelled after the work of Albert Wohlstetter, who was a leading strategist with the RAND Corporation. See Albert Wohlstetter, 'The delicate balance of terror', in Philip Bobbitt, Lawrence Freedman and Gregory F. Treverton (eds), *US Nuclear Strategy: A Reader*, Macmillan Press, London, 1989, pp. 143–167. The text of the original document, which was published in 1958 by the RAND Corporation, a think tank based in Santa Monica, California, is available online at <http://www.albertwohlstetter.com/writings/19581200-AW-DelicateBalanceOfTerror-Unabridged.pdf>.

[7] In August 1998, North Korea tested a Taepo-Dong missile with a range of 1360 km, which flew over Japan. Soon after, in September 1998, Iran tested its first Shahab-3 missile having a range of 1340 km. Iran carried out a second test in July 2000.

[8] See the website of the US Department of Defense Missile Defense Agency at <www.mda.mil/mdalink/html/mdalink.html>.

[9] During a press conference following the Defence Ministers meeting held in Brussels on 5 October 2011, NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said that '... as things stand today, and as we can envisage the development as of today, we would expect [the Missile Shield] to be fully operational in 2018'. See NATO's website at <www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_78812.htm?selectedLocale=en>.

[10] In accordance with the ABM Treaty, the USA and the Soviet Union agreed not to develop or deploy air defence systems on their territories except for two locations (their capital cities and one intercontinental missile silo of their choice). It was envisaged that hundreds of cities and millions of people over the vast territories of both countries would be exposed to a nuclear attack. This situation, which can only be explained with the paradoxical logic of military strategy, aimed to prevent the parties from carrying out a surprise attack against the other by purposefully leaving their most valuable assets vulnerable to an attack. As such, it was believed that the party intending to take advantage of a surprise attack by making the first strike would in the end refrain from doing so, knowing that the other party could retaliate by launching the 'second strike' against the defenceless cities and population of the party that attacked first, with its well-protected nuclear weapons deployed on nuclear submarines, long-range bomber aircraft and ground-based ICBM, also known as constituting the strategic triad, that could survive the 'first strike' of the enemy.

[11] The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty START I (1991) and START II (1993) required the number of nuclear warheads that could be delivered by intercontinental range ballistic missiles to be gradually decreased to 6000–6500 and then 3000–3500.

[12] The Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty of 1987 required the elimination of an entire category of nuclear missiles having ranges between 1500 and 5500 km.

[13] Having successfully tested a nuclear warhead for the first time in 1964, the People's Republic of China produced 400 of them, only some 25 of which are strategic warheads deployed on ICBM whose ranges can reach US territories. However, China's weapons are not held in high-security zones, thus it is argued that in case of an attack by the USA protected by a national defence system, China could lose its nuclear power very quickly. It is a matter of concern that in such a situation, China would be vulnerable to India, its historic rival, which possesses nuclear weapons as well.

[14] See, for instance, harsh criticism about the NATO summit decision about the deployment of the Missile Shield by Iran's Defence Minister Vahidi on 22 November 2010, <http://turkish.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=8909010378>.

[15] 'Iran warns over NATO's radar system in Turkey: minister', *Tehran Times*, 30 November 2011, <http://www.tehrantimes.com/politics/2267-iran-warns-over-natos-radar-system-in-turkey-minister->.
[16] An agreement between the USA and the Czech Republic was signed on 8 July 2008. A similar treaty was signed with Poland on 14 August 2008 in Warsaw.
[17] 'Russia's top general says preemptive strike against Missile Shield possible', *Voice of America* (*VoA*), 2 May 2012, <http://www.voanews.com/content/russia-talks-on-us-missile-defense-system-deadlocked–150017775/369880.html>.
[18] 'China and allies back Russia against US missile shield', *Reuters*, 15 June 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/06/15/us-security-usa-missiles-idUSTRE75E2JZ20110615>.
[19] Mustafa Kibaroglu, 'The "Missile Shield" and Turkey's position in the debate', *Today's Zaman*, 1 November 2010, p. 20.
[20] Conversations with American and Israeli military and diplomatic staff as well as academics on the sidelines of conferences in Turkey as well as in the USA who would not want to be named.
[21] Mustafa Kibaroglu, 'Acceptance and anxiety: Turkey (mostly) embraces Obama's nuclear posture', *Nonproliferation Review*, 18(1), March 2011, pp. 201–217.
[22] Nur Bilge Criss, 'Strategic nuclear missiles in Turkey: the Jupiter Affair (1959–1963)', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 20, 1997, pp. 97–122.
[23] Mustafa Kibaroglu, 'No short-term fix to relations', *Bitterlemons-International*, June 2010.
[24] A similar exploitation could be observed in Iran's using of the threat posed by Israel and the USA for advancing its own nuclear capabilities and legitimizing its actions in the eyes of the public domains in the greater Islamic world and also elsewhere.
[25] Iran's Army Chief of Staff Gen. Hassan Firouzabadi warned NATO on 15 December 2012 that stationing Patriot anti-missile batteries on Turkey's border with Syria was setting the stage for world war. See 'Iran says deployment of NATO Patriot missiles near Syria may start world war', *Atlantic Council*, 16 December 2012, <http://www.acus.org/natosource/iran-says-deployment-nato-patriot-missiles-near-syria-may-start-world-war>.
[26] Yet Turkey has warned Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast, while he was in Turkey for an official visit in late December, of Turkish officials' displeasure over Iran's remarks on the Patriot deployment in Turkey. See 'Ankara warns Mehmanparast over Iran's remarks on Patriots', *En.Haberler.Com*, 26 December 2012, <http://en.haberler.com/ankara-warns-mehmanparast-over-iran-s-remarks-on-249031/>.
[27] See the interview with the author on the possible implications of the decision to deploy the Patriots on Turkish territory: 'Patriots might stay in Turkey longer than expected: expert', *Hurriyet Daily News*, 26 November 2012, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/patriots-might-stay-longer-in-turkey-than-expected.aspx?pageID=238&nid=35439>.
[28] For an extensive discussion on the subject, see Mustafa Kibaroglu, 'Nuclearization of the Middle East and Turkey's possible responses: does Turkey need to be reassured that it does not need to develop nuclear weapons?', *EDAM Discussion Paper Series 2012/5*, November 2012.

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