

TÜSİAD - Brookings Institution

“US Presidential Elections and What They Mean for Turkey and the Region”

October 15, 2012 ISTANBUL

Moderator: Volkan Vural, Member of TÜSİAD Board, President of TÜSİAD’s Platform of International Politics

Speakers: Michael O’Hanlon, Senior Fellow, Director of Research for Foreign Policy, The Brookings Institution

Richard Burt, McLarty Associates, Managing Director for Europe, Russia and Eurasia; US Chair of Global Zero

Soli Özel, İstanbul Kadir Has University, Habertürk Daily, Cengiz Çandar, Radikal Daily

ÜMIT BOYNER (The Chair of TUSIAD)-

Dear guests,

I would like to welcome all of you on behalf of TÜSİAD to our joint conference with Brookings in Istanbul. The Brookings - TUSIAD cooperation started in 2007 and we have already seen the impact we have had on numerous occasions in terms of the Washington's perception on Turkey. I would like to thank all these people who have made this cooperation possible, fruitful and promising, especially President Talbott, Ambassador Parris, director Fiona Hill, Mr. Ömer Taşpınar, our former Washington representative Mr. Akyüz and our current representative Mr. Ornarlı, alongside, obviously, Mr. Soli Özel.

Today the speakers will analyze different aspects of the possible outcomes and effects of the presidential elections in the United States on our bilateral relations and also on our surrounding region. We greatly value the relations between the United States and Turkey, that share a sound and deep rooted partnership since the 19th century. Although the strength of our bilateral cooperation have been tested in a number of cases, like the war in Iraq, the crisis of the Flotilla, the developments in Iran, and the Syrian problem, both countries have had a long standing partnership and they share common strategic priorities in our region.

We can say that we share a common stance on promoting peace and democratic stability in the Middle East, particularly in the civil-war-like situation in Syria. We share a common stance on contributing to the stability, democracy and the prosperity of the Black Sea Region, the Caucasus, Central Asia and Afghanistan, achieving comprehensive and mutual acceptable agreement on Cyprus,

on countering terrorism, including the fight against the terrorist organizations, on increasing understanding, respect and tolerance between and among different cultures, and on strengthening transatlantic alliance on every front. I have to say that Turkey's EU process should also be seen from this perspective.

Our cooperation, which was initially shaped on mutual security concerns, have actually transformed and evolved into a multi-dimensional cooperation in response to changing threats and regional conditions. New institutions, communication channels and a new approach that highlights the common interests and the sensitive to Turkey's domestic priorities are needed to address the challenges of a new era in bilateral relations.

Yes, the US presidential elections are in November. No matter which candidate wins, we must look forward to a more comprehensive relationship. This will indeed necessitate a thorough and frank assessment of our interests. We must re-define the framework of our common interests, devise the new approaches and be respectful of diverging viewpoints. The future of the Arab spring, Turkey's accession to the EU, the promising developments in the long-awaited Cyprus issue, the future of Syria within the broader framework of the transformation in the Arab world, the Israeli-Palestinian relations, and the future chorus of the American policy on these and other possible issues during the next four years will be the main areas of the interests on our side.

Since we are a business association, we attach particular significance to the economic dimension of Turkish-American relations as well. There are many fields of potential cooperation, and energy being the most obvious one. Even though increasing investment and trade volumes in a relatively short period of time is not an easy task to achieve, proposals and approaches should go beyond some everlasting items, such as qualified industrial zones or generalized system of preferences. And both governments should put determined and concerted efforts in making economic relations a relatively significant component of this partnership. That is the reason why we strongly support the work of U.S.-Turkey framework for strategic, economic and commercial cooperation. To this end, a U.S. working group was set up under TUSIAD International in 2010 with the aim of fostering trade and investment relations between the two countries, reaching higher level of partnership between private sectors and relevant government bodies of both countries and realizing concrete and result-oriented business activities. Considering the role of business worlds in both countries, we signed a memorandum of understanding with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, one of the most influential business organizations in the U.S. We also have close contacts with the U.S. Ex-Im Bank, OPIC, and USTDA.

Turkey and U.S. have to let go of outdated strategies and focus on innovative ones aimed at boosting relations between the two countries. We have to work towards implementing coordinated export schemes between the two governments. We believe that joint investments in the 3rd country markets should be encouraged and creating finance facilities in sectors, such as energy, construction and health care is vitally important. We hope that the future of Turkish American bilateral relations during the next president, from either Democratic or the Republican side, will have more room for mutually beneficial business partnerships as well. I believe the contributions in this conference will help us in clarifying our expectations and long term strategies.

I thank you very much for your attention and I leave the floor to our discussants.

VOLKAN VURAL (Member of TUSIAD Board, President of TUSIAD's Platform of International Politics)-

Thank you very much madam President,

Distinguished guests, it is a pleasure to have this meeting, which is extremely crucial for the world and for Turkey. The title of our discussion is "*U.S. Presidential Elections. What They Mean for Turkey and the Region.*" By region, we mean Middle East basically, or Russia, Caucasus and etc.

We have four distinguished speakers. Ambassador Richard Burt, is a very successful, after having a brilliant diplomatic career, is now enjoying the private sector life. Mr. Michael O'Hanlon is the director at the Brookings institution and he is an expert on Middle East. He has recently contributed to a book which called "*Bending History: Barack Obama's Foreign Policy.*" We have Mr. Soli Özel he is an old scholar and columnist, and an advisor of all sorts. He is very famous in Turkey. We have Mr. Cengiz Çandar, who is a former "terrorist" or a "freedom fighter" according to interpretation, who has changed a little bit, not too much, becoming an author, a journalist and a columnist at the Radikal newspaper. He also visits Middle East very often. And he is very friend with people whom I would like to see at all. But he is an expert on the Middle East.

Of course, the U.S. presidential elections which will take place on 6th of November will be taking place in a very chaotic world order. There is a continuing economic crisis throughout the world, now engulfing not only the developed world but also the emerging markets. In political terms, the Middle East is in a period of transition. After the Arab spring or revolution, it is sailing uncharted waters. The new elites in Islamic world, the Muslim Brotherhood or the Islamist parties, have yet to demonstrate their governing capacity. The Syrian tragedy continues with its huge human toll, and there seems no easy end. The controversy over Iran's nuclear program will likely to intensify in the coming

months. Israel's possible reaction to Iran should cause concern for all. The U.S. presidential elections have been cited in many ways as an excuse for inaction in all these important issues.

Our task today is to take a close look at elections and analyze the foreign policy choices of the candidates. Are there important differences between president Obama and the Mitt Romney in their outlook for foreign policy? Will they opt for a more interventionist policy or will they choose hands-off policy? –There is an important question mark.– We know that president Obama and Prime Minister of Turkey, Erdoğan, have showed very close friendship and collaboration. Can this or will this continue if Mitt Romney is elected? And how these affect the Turkish-U.S. relations?

So, these are the issues which we may touch upon during this discussion. I will ask the panelists the speakers to speak about 12-15 minutes maximum, so that we can later on enjoy the question & answers and the discussion.

I will start by giving the floor to our American guests, by starting with Ambassador Burt to explain the situation. How does he see this picture and its implications?

Thank you.

RICHARD BURT (McLarty Associates, Managing Director for Europe, Russia and Eurasia; U.S. Chair of Global Zero)-

First of all I want to thank TUSIAD, as well as Brookings, for sponsoring this event. It is wonderful to be back in Istanbul, particularly this time of the year the weather could not be nicer. I only wish we were maybe outdoors holding this event than in a hotel conference room. But it is wonderful to be here. I am also very happy and surprised when our chairman said we have between 12 to 15 minutes to make remarks. Typically in Washington, on a panel discussion like this, you get 5 minutes. May reflect American attention deficit disorder, but I'll try not to go on too long.

I am going to touch on 5 critical points under this subject. I'll try to present as much analysis as opposed to serve my own personal views as possible. But I want to apologize in advance that may be some of my own personal views may creep in to the analysis.

First of all, touching on the U.S.-Turkish relationship itself, our chairman very correctly, I think, stated that our two heads of government Barack Obama and the Prime Minister Erdoğan have in fact developed what appears to be very close effective working relationship. In fact I would go so far as to say I can't really remember a time –maybe with the exception of the late 1980's the relationship that several members including Ronald Reagan and the other members of the Regan administration had

with Prime Minister Özal— but it has been, I think, a very productive and important constructive relationship in terms of dealing with, what our chairman called, the real chaos that we see unfolding in the region. And I think it is a testimony to the fact that the United States and Turkey have succeeded despite all the disruptions of the last decade, deep disagreements over the war in Iraq, flare-ups over issues like the famous Flotilla incident. I think both sides have recognized that they have common strategic interests in that Turkey as a very influential local player and the United States as an influential global power, have very real stakes in working together and consulting very carefully. I think that is a very deep premise that we need to begin this discussion.

The question rises then, what would happen if Obama is replaced with new Romney administration? And the simple answer to that question in my view is I don't know and I don't know if many people in Washington know. Because not only has this presidential election focused almost exclusively on domestic economic issues, but in Romney-Ryan ticket both the presidential and the vice presidential candidate, do not have a great deal of foreign policy experience or expertise. So there is not a track record you can point to to really make an informed initial assessment of what a Romney administration's approach to the American Turkish relationship or U.S. foreign policy more broadly.

There are some, of course, some pieces of evidence that you can look at the foreign policy theme in the Romney campaign. To some extent I think from a Turkish perspective it is somewhat unsettling. In the sense that, many of the Romney's advisors are so called neo-conservatives, people who either worked in the Bush administration or strongly supported the interventionists in the Bush administration in Iraq and elsewhere in the Middle East, and people who are inclined to take a good deal of their quest in terms of thinking about the Middle East from Israel and the government of the Bibi Netanyahu. And some of Romney's own statements about being led by Israeli thinking, if you will, towards a crafting policy in the broader region by Israeli and Netanyahu's views, are potentially unsettling for the U.S.-Turkish relationship.

That said, Mitt Romney is not an irrational and erratic politician. He has a background as a businessman, as an analyst, as a consultant, and as an investor, tells me that he is basically pragmatic. We may find that as much as we have seen in this campaign Mitt Romney is trying to get the conservatives to support him to get the conservatives comfortable with him within the Republican Party that as president of United States he wouldn't rule or govern so much from the right wing fringes of American politics but from the center. And it is interesting to me that while he has advisors like John Bolton, the former State Department figure, or Dan Senor who very much reflects Bibi Netanyahu's views of the world, that he appoints a man like Bob Zoellick, former senior State Department official

and the President of the World Bank, in charge of his foreign policy transition. So there is a great deal of mystery about where and what a Romney foreign policy would look like and that will have important implications for the ability of a President Romney to work closely with the Turkish government.

That leads me to a related issue, that is their attitude towards the so called Arab awakening or I think might be better to describe as the "*Arab Disruption.*" How they talk about these issues on the campaign trail, but more importantly in terms of how Obama has behaved, and Romney who again hasn't ruled so we have to go on what he said, I think there is a distinction between what Romney likes to call "*shaping events,*" "*exercising leadership by shaping events*" in the Middle East versus what I would say Obama's track record which has been much more reactive and opportunistic in the last 18 months, in the sense that he didn't want the United States to be out front in the western intervention in Libya. In Syria he has clearly been diffident about getting the United States involved in that very complex and complicated situation. My sense is that Obama and his advisors look at the Arab Awakening as a very complex, unpredictable set of different developments, where as much as somebody would like to shape in advance and exercise leadership, that's just beyond the ability of the United States to achieve. What you have is a much more humble, much more non-interventionist approach to the Arab Awakening than you hear at least from Mitt Romney's rhetoric which talks about "exercising leadership" and emphasis on the military instrument in discussing the Middle East. He has in several occasions, most recently in a speech he gave about a week ago, talked about strengthening the presence of the American military and sending carrier forces into the region. My sense is Obama moves in an opposite direction, he likes to use low visibility military power like drones, likes to be over the horizon, whereas Mitt Romney seems to be much more comfortable with what might be called old fashioned, "*gun-boat diplomacy.*"

Moving on to the third issue which is Syria itself, which is clearly connected to these issues of the "*Arab disruption.*" For Turkey, of course, Turkey's foreign policy over the last 2 or 3 years has had to adapt very quickly to the Arab awakening. Some of that adaptation has been in my view very positive, places like Tunisia and Egypt. It has been very challenging for Turkey and Syria. And my sense is, if you look at some of the recent -might be called- escalation, with both the shelling episode from Syria across into the Turkish border, across the Turkish border, now the downing/force-landing of both Syrian and Russian aircraft, and as the conflict in a variety of ways spills over into Turkish territory with groups flowing into Turkey. Turkey seems to be leaning forward in this Syrian crisis. I am not making any predictions here, but my sense is that while maybe President Obama and Prime

Minister Erdoğan were on the same wavelength maybe a month or so ago, on terms of using strong language trying to find a diplomatic solution calling for Assad to step down, Turkey's simple proximity to Syria is forcing the Syrians to raise the temperature. I don't think that's where the Obama administration is at this point. I don't think it as simple as to say that President Obama is somehow restraining President Erdoğan, but I do think that there might be greater differences now in the U.S. and Turkish position than there were just even 10 days ago. The Obama administration in my view is correctly reluctant to intervene in Syria. I think they understand the impact of a full scale civil war in Syria and how it could spill over into a number of countries not just Turkey but Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq. And at the same time, you are hearing a counter-argument that is beginning to be heard from some of the Romney camp, which is that if the United States doesn't begin to take a more active role and perhaps arming the insurgents, supporting the opposition, training and support and that type; that the opposition have very little choice but to turn towards the more radicalized members, forces in the opposition, groups connected to Al-Qaeda. And I see that being in a debate that could very well occupy a good deal of time, in the presidential election over the next couple of weeks particularly given the fact that the 3rd debate between Obama and Romney will focus on national security and foreign policy, and the question of whether the U.S. is doing enough in Syria will be a key issue on that agenda.

That takes me to the forth issue very quickly, that is the relations with Israel and the Middle East peace process. It is no secret that Barack Obama has some deep frustrations with Israeli policy and has personal problems of communication with the Israeli prime minister. His efforts to jumpstart the peace process early on his administration failed. He was placed in a highly embarrassing, even humiliating, position of having to vote against resolutions at the UN, involving the recognition of a Palestinian entity, that were in direct contradiction to U.S. policy. I have to say, rising levels of military support for Israel, which the Obama administration has had to pledge in order to demonstrate to the supporters of Israel in the U.S. that it strongly supports Israeli security have damaged in my view American credibility in the broader Middle East. Romney has not been embarrassed at all to talk about how in his judgment, "Barack Obama has thrown Israel under the bus," as he likes to say, but interestingly in his foreign policy speech that I alluded to earlier, he did endorse for the first time, I think, in the campaign, a two state political solution in the Middle East. So this is where I think we are left thinking about Israel and Middle East peace process. Obama would love to broker a Middle East peace agreement, but politically he cannot. Romney probably could, just like Nixon could go to China as a republican conservative, but he doesn't really want to. The real question is in a second term whether an Obama administration has the necessary political capital to make headway in the Middle East, or would we see

with Romney the diplomatic creativity that could parallel we saw from Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger in the early 1970s. On that question, the jury is out.

Finally I will just make quick point about Iran. In some ways that same question lingers about who would be better positioned to get a solution. The big factor is not in Washington as far as I am concerned. It is not whether it's Romney or Obama, it has to do with the Supreme Ruler in Iran and what his goals are. I believe that there is a potential deal, that could be struck between the Iranian government and the P5+1, I think that deal would be in part, a deal that would guarantee Iran's rights too, under a verifiable regime to enrich uranium. And a deal in which the U.S. who is prepared a find a political formulation that would promise the Iranians that we would not seek regime change in Iran. But again, both Romney and Obama face the same dilemmas in the Middle East peace process. I think Obama is probably more likely to seek such a diplomatic solution, but Romney would be better positioned politically to seek to achieve such a solution. The fact that, Barack Obama, in his speech before the AIPAC conference in Washington earlier this year, gave up deterrents, nuclear deterrents as a policy to deal with Iranian nuclearization, means that at this point Obama has sort of limited himself to either finding a diplomatic solution, or at some point, using force. For Mitt Romney, who is an untested president, who hasn't spelled out his Iran policy, he still has the option of choosing nuclear deterrents down Iran. The key point here though is we have very little time. We have a may be 6 to 9 months window, and the question is, is there going to be time to push diplomacy, or will there be enough time for Romney, perhaps Obama, to get comfortable with the containment and deterrent strategy versus going to war. I think in my own view as much as I'd like to believe that Romney is a practical, capable and pragmatic business figure, is unlikely to seek diplomatic settlement because I think he has for better for worse surrounded himself with a group of hardliners who will, just as in the case of a war in Iraq, I think, push closer and closer in using the military instrument.

VOLKAN VURAL- Thank you very much Ambassador. Now I ask one question, is Ambassador Edelman among the foreign policy advisors of Mitt Romney?

RICHARD BURT- He is indeed. I think he is influential.

VOLKAN VURAL- The floor is of Michael O'Hanlon. Please!

MICHAEL O'HANLON (Senior Fellow, Director of Research for Foreign Policy, The Brookings Institution)-

Thank you. It is also an honor for me, and a great privilege to be here. I appreciate the hospitality, the opportunity to talk with you with all today and again I want to extend a word of

admiration for your country, for what Turkey has been doing, bearing the brunt of much of the recent crisis in Syria, handling so many other challenges in this region. And frankly in my mind, being the single best role model and vision for many of the Arab countries as they go through revolution, Turkey is just a remarkable country and we view of it with great admiration in the United States and it is a privilege to be here today.

Richard Burt has done a great job, not surprisingly, of laying out the key issues. And, I think I agree with him on almost everything he said and he has done a nice tour of the major issues. So I just want to hone in on a couple of specific issues, overlapping to some extent, but trying to compliment and add to what he said as well.

Let me just say by way of background, or may be general interest in passing, I don't know if Richard would agree with me or not, but I think that the U.S. presidential race right now is very very close. And I don't know how to predict the winner. That's no big news, no big surprise, I am sure to those of you who follow American politics, but depending on who you read in the United States, you may read people who say Romney's performance in the first debate was a flash in the pan, it won't last, debates never really matter, there was a return of the momentum of the Democrats and all the polls seem to still show Obama advantages in the key swing states. That's one interpretation. There is another interpretation, which says that Romney finally communicated effectively with the American people in that first debate, in a way he never had before. And it was more than Obama having a bad night, Romney re-defined himself. And frankly, in my opinion, I am a Democrat and I will probably vote for Obama, though I haven't decided for sure. But in my opinion, Romney gave the best debate performance of any American presidential candidate in 20 years in that first debate. Which means that it was more than just good luck, it was more than one good night, and President Obama is therefore still at a disadvantage in my opinion, in the next two debates. Moreover, as those of you know who follow these matters, in the national level surveys of voters, it appears that Romney is at least even with Obama. Some of that could be Republicans finally feeling enthusiasm, to think about voting, to answer their telephone, to respond to the surveys and maybe we shouldn't make too much of a one or two point advantage. But it looks to me pretty even. So I am very glad that Richard spent at least equal time talking about what Governor Romney might do. I am going to do the same thing. Not because I am predicting that he will win, but because we know Obama better. And so let's spend a little time also on the other guy, just as Richard has as well.

Let me begin with Russia, which of course is linked to many of these other topics that Richard has been discussing and that you have been facing in this part of the world. But I just want to say a

couple of things and I am sure you've tracked what Governor Romney and President Obama have said about Russia. But of course we know that Governor Romney wants to be a little less flexible towards Vladimir Putin and show a little more "*backbone.*" I am quoting from not only his debate performance but also his convention speech and his speech last week, a week ago today at the Virginia Military institute. And that was an important statement but it doesn't really tell you what it means in terms of policy. As I try to ascertain where Romney would differ from Obama on Russia, I think of missile defense as one issue, and particularly the 4th phase. For those of you who follow this in detail, I know you do, because you are heavily involved, the 4th phase in the phased, adaptive approach would presumably put capabilities again in Poland and Czech Republic, the same way George Bush had intended originally with the earlier plan. It strikes me that Romney would be very committed to that. I am not sure Obama is equally committed, even though it's his approach, even though it is his form of plan right now. When President Obama says to Medvedev in an offline caught, unintentional comment in Korea earlier this year, there will be more flexibility after the election. I am assuming, it relates to these sorts of issues.

So that is one area of disagreement on Russia policy. Another area though, let me just get it on the table, but I'll come back to Syria in a moment. I believe that, part of why the U.S. is reluctant to get more involved in Syria under President Obama, is because of all of the things Richard said on American politics and American war weariness, but I think there is one more factor, which is a desire not to rock the boat too much with Moscow, in the sense that, if the United States has an indirect role in helping the Syrian opposition, we still retain some maneuvering room, some potential for dealing constructively on this issue with Moscow. Of course we've had very bad luck, with dealing with Moscow. There was a period earlier this year when our top officials use the same kind of language that your foreign minister has been using recently to criticize the Security Council and the Russians in particular. But, the Obama administration really prizes the Russia reset as they describe it. And even with Putin back in the Kremlin, even with the frustrations of working together on Syria with Russia, the Obama administration wants to hold onto some of the progress in U.S.-Russia relations, whereas Governor Romney I think would be less constrained in his Syria policy by Russia. This may be a nuance, or a secondary point, and I'll be curious in the discussion how other people may feel, if they agree with me or not. But as I try to hypothesize where there could be some differences between Obama and Romney on issues that affect this region, I begin with Russia. That's one way in which I could imagine. Because I do believe that part of that the United States does not want to arm the Syrian opposition, or even encourage countries in the region to arm the Syrian opposition with big weapons,

concerns the Russia dimension.

Now let me move on the defense spending. This is where I can try to complement. Richard covered 6 topics very comprehensively in 15 minutes so let me try to do one that he didn't quite have time for and say a couple words about where the candidates may differ on U.S. military spending. I am not going to get into all the details because they can be a little bit arcane and mind-numbing even for those of us who live in Washington when following this whole so-called "sequestration" debate. I am guessing you have heard that word but probably don't know quite what it means, some of us are still trying to make sure we understand exactly what it means. But in short, President Obama in addition to phasing the forces out of Iraq and Afghanistan is also cutting close to 500 billion dollars from the military budget over 10 years. It is not quite 500, if you compare it with growth relative to inflation. If you assume that the defense budget was going to go up with inflation, the cut is more like 350 billion. But relative to earlier plans, it is closer to 500 billion over 10 years. That's what Obama wants to do. There may be another 500 billion dollar cut that occurs with the "sequestration," these automatic cuts that will resolve starting on January 1st, if we cannot come up with the new law to replace what the Congress set in motion a year and a half ago. Romney and Obama both oppose "sequestration" except that Obama actually signed in the law, the plan that will make it happen, if there is no event on the contrary. This is the sort of the disadvantage of incumbency, you're blamed for everything that happens on your watch, even if it was not your first choice. In addition, Romney wants to go beyond these two questions. They both oppose sequestration. Obama favors a 500 billion dollar 10-year reduction in defense that Romney opposes. So Romney does not want that reduction. And then, on his website, and among some of his defense advisors, you'll hear Governor Romney talk about even bigger increases in defense spending, not just keeping that small increase that was previously planned before the Obama cuts, but linking American defense spending permanently to GDP; spending 4 % of GDP on defense indefinitely. To be honest with you, I don't take this seriously. I think this is rhetoric that gives the defense people something to talk about, but Obama took it seriously in the first debate. Because if you watched, as I am sure some of you did, you'll know that Obama said that Romney wants to spend 2 trillion dollars more over 10 years than he, the President, wanted to on the military. 2 trillion! How do you get 2 trillion? The only way you can get that number is if you assume that Romney's aspirations for having military spending stay at 4% of GDP indefinitely are actually real and serious and realized. And Romney did not correct the president. Now the reason I think he chose not to is because he wanted to focus in on the tax issue. He wanted to be very clear, as a good debater must, about his central contention. So Romney wanted to rebut Obama on the allegation that Romney was going to cut taxes

massively in a way benefiting primarily the rich. So Romney stayed focused, he left the defense issue untouched. So I thought, you might be a little confused, do they disagree by 500 billion, do they disagree by 2 trillion, or something in between? I just wanted to give you that context. To my mind, they disagree by 500 billion. But I understand there is a basis for little bit of confusion.

This now relates to the Middle East. I am not going to go over the specifics of, for example Iran, because Richard did a nice job on that already, but with this extra money for the military, Romney wants to build a bigger navy. There are two specific things that Romney has said he will do with this extra money. Build a bigger navy, and then keep the U.S. army and marine corps at their current size. Obama wants to cut them partially, back to 1990's levels roughly. Romney wants to keep them where they are today. Why does Romney want a bigger navy? Well, as Richard pointed out, he may be more of a believer in traditional “*gunboat diplomacy*.” He has also said he always wants to have one aircraft carrier task force in the Persian Gulf and one in the Mediterranean, *all the time*. Obama has been doing that *most of the time*. But it has been straining the navy to do that, and it becomes harder and harder with Obama's policy of re-balancing towards Asia and the Western Pacific where he wants to concentrate somewhat more military resources. So, I agree with Richard, I just want to give you some of the detail behind that. Obama's navy has currently 285 major ships. Under Romney it would grow up to as many as 350 according to some of his advisors. In the short term, Obama will build 9 new ships per year, Romney will build 15. That is what they have said about their differences of opinion on that subject.

I think it really does boil down to how you think about Iran policy and China policy. Those are the two main drivers of military thinking. Just a couple of more points and I'll be done. I think Richard is right to warn of the possibility that with this big navy, and with this neo-con advisors, that Romney may wind up using military force against Iran faster than Obama would. But it has also been interesting to me just to look at the other side of the argument, that when he was in Israel, Romney talked about how he could imagine sort of giving Netanyahu the green light, not trying to oppose an Israeli strike. He didn't really talk about the United States carrying out the strike for Israel, which is obviously what the Israelis would prefer. We have got bases or aircraft carriers much closer to Iran than Israel, we are the big United States, they are a small country of few million people, they are going to have to bear the primary brunt of the Iranian retaliation if they do it, or at least that's more plausible, if they are the initiator, I assume Israel would much prefer that the U.S. would carry out the strike. However, Romney did not offer to do so for Netanyahu. He realized that the American public is tired of war, he was a little bit hesitant about just what he said on this front. And so I think again, building on another part, because

Richard and I are both looking at different dimensions of the Romney team, I would agree with his point that this would seem to be an undecided matter, because, there is still an opportunity for the Romney team to decide that, maybe they can live with Iranian enrichment longer than they were suggesting. Especially if Iran never goes to the point of kicking out the weapons inspectors or the IAEA inspectors and never actually goes to enrich uranium 235 to the 90% that's required for the bomb, maybe we can live with it. And it would be very difficult to decide otherwise.

Now let me conclude on Syria, because Syria is where... I'll make a clear prediction about what happens in Syria, regardless of who wins the American presidential race. Because on this other issues, I can see the argument one way or the other, and there are contending forces that haven't yet sorted themselves out. But on Syria, I don't think the United States is going to do that much more under either president, at least not quickly. My prediction is that neo-cons under Romney, even if some of them are the same people who took us to war against Iraq 10 years ago, they don't want to do it again. Most of them are, I know a lot of them, Richard knows a lot of them, I am sure some of you know some of them, they have strong views but they also are, at least in most cases, somewhat empirical, they realize the Iraq war was extremely difficult, the outcome was muddled. And they are not going to try to repeat that process in Syria. I don't think. That's why I think their more likely intervention is to push the United States to bomb Iran. In Syria, what I think they will do is gradually push us in the direction of what happened in Bosnia in the 1990s. That is a sort of my punch line. American policy towards Syria will gradually resemble US and NATO policy towards Bosnia in the 1990s. What I mean is that, if I am right, this is just a prediction, but it is my best sense of where the politics and the foreign policy converge. What I mean is, every year we'll do a little more than the year before. Because we recognize it's unacceptable to let Assad win. I think that point is true. It is unacceptable in Americans for Assad to win and he still could win, if we don't do much to help the opposition. I don't think that it is inevitable that Assad will fall, at all, personally. So, if we have concluded in the United States, like in many other NATO countries, that it is unacceptable for Assad to stay in power, and yet he retains some degree of control, and continues to massacre his own people, we will have to do more. But we were going to do it begrudgingly. So, first we are going to encourage the Saudis and other friends in the region, to provide more weaponry and we will help training the opposition with that weaponry. But it would be gradual. We have to make sure that the surface-to-air missiles are distributed very carefully because we are nervous about where they could wind up. Maybe we'll give some more anti-tank weapons. And we'll try to do more elaborate training, maybe we will put American special forces on the Syrian soil to do some of the training in greater numbers than previously considered. And then after 6 more months, if

that is not enough, maybe we will do no fly zone. Or maybe we will finally hear the Turkish proposal for a safe area, in the north of Syria that we would propose. Although I don't think that will happen in 2013. My Bosnia model says that that sort of thing would happen two or three years from now.

I am trying to be sort of provocative and a little bit depressing in making the argument that this is where I think we will go, because the only thing the United States really has decided is that it is unacceptable for Assad to stay in power. But we don't really want to do very much about it. And our politics on this resemble the politics of how we handled Bosnia, much more than the politics of how we handled Iraq. And so, over time, I will wrap up on this point, as the greater ethnic cleansing occurs, greater ethnic separation, you have the possibility of enclaves that are defensible for groups that we would support, and then some very limited amounts of air power and maybe ground forces, could ultimately help stabilize those lines between different forces, and we could even wind up with a negotiated power sharing like we saw in Bosnia in 1995. There are a lot of reasons why the analogy is not perfect, and a lot of reasons why I hope I am wrong. But that's the model that I am going to leave you with as I wrap up.

Thanks.

VOLKAN VURAL- Thank you very much for the sobering thought about Syria. In fact, can we all withstand this tragedy without doing much, of course understand the constraints both in the United States and elsewhere but nevertheless, there is this tragedy is going on, and something has to be done. I think Bosnia was not a success story for the West. It was a failure for the West. So, I hope it is not repeated.

I will now ask our Turkish speakers perhaps to describe or to elaborate on how they view the U.S. elections, and its impact on Turkey and the region; is it relevant, the U.S. elections, or the outcome of the U.S. elections, is it relevant or important for Turkey in terms of any policy change, or in terms of Turkey's regional positioning, will this affect us?

I will ask now Soli. Again, you have 10 minutes. And then Cengiz Çandar.

SOLİ ÖZEL (İstanbul Kadir Has University, Habertürk Daily)-

Amerikalı konuklarımızın söylediklerini dinlemeden önce, Mitt Romney'in seçilmemesinin Amerika'yı bilemeyeceğim ama dünya açısından çok ama çok önemli ve hayırlı bir sonucu olacağını düşünüyordum, bugün buna iman etmiş durumdayım. Açıkçası, özel olarak Romney'in şu ya da bu politikayı izlemesinden çok, gerçekten çok büyük bir samimiyetle ve çok detaylı olarak, bize iki

adaydan birinin seçilmesi durumunda izlenecek politikaları anlatan konuklarımızın Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nin geçtiğimiz 12 yıldan çok da ders almadığını bize anlatmış olduklarını düşünüyorum. Özellikle Romney'in Rusya politikası, özellikle Orta Doğu'da zamanın tükenmeyecek bir kaynak olduğunun düşünülmesi, Amerikan iç politikası gerekleri nedeniyle belli bir takım adımların atılmayacak olması ve hala 350 gemilik bir deniz kuvvetleri ve Amerikan savunma sanayine veya Amerikan askeri gücüne dayalı bir dünya liderliğinin arzu edilebiliyor olması, açıkçası benim açımdan hem sadece hayal kırıklığı yaratmıyor, aynı zamanda da yeniden çok tehlikeli bir dünyada yaşayacağımızı gösteriyor. Bütün bunların Türkiye üzerinde de ister istemez hiç küçümsemeyeceğimiz etkileri de olacak. Bunun en önemli sebebi, özellikle son iki üç yıl içinde, 2002-2010 arasında bir hayli özerk dış politika izleme imkanı bulan Türkiye'nin birazdan bazılarına değinmeye çalışacağım nedenlerle, giderek ABD ile çok daha yakın işbirliği yapma zorunda kalması, Amerikan bölgesel politikaları ile Türkiye'nin izlediği dış politikanın geçtiğimiz yıllara göre çok daha senkronize edilme zaruriyetinin ortaya çıkmış olması, ve açıkçası Türkiye'nin bu dış politikayı yönetirken iç politika zaaflarından ve belki de abartmalarından kaynaklanan, risk düzeyi çok yüksek adımlar atmasının şu geçtiğimiz bir, bir buçuk yıl içinde de gördüğümüz gibi ihtimalini yüksek görüyor olmam.

2002-2010 arasında özellikle 2003'den sonra, Amerika'nın Irak macerası Türk dış politikasının daha özerk bir dış politika izleyebilmesinin de aslına bakarsanız belki paradoksal olarak önünü açmıştı. Bu dönem, 2003-2010 arası, ABD ve Türkiye, pek çok konuda ters düşmelerine rağmen; Türkiye son tahlilde Amerika ile varmış olduğu bir anlaşmayı meclisin kararıyla yerine getirmemiş olmasına rağmen; Amerika Birleşik Devletleri özel kuvvetleri, Türk özel kuvvetlerine yerleşik tüm geleneklere ve konvansiyonlara aykırı olarak çok hakaretamiz bir şekilde, saldırganca bir hamle yapmış olmalarına rağmen; Türkiye, İran ve Suriye politikalarında Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nin istediğinden çok farklı bir tutum benimsemiş olmasına rağmen; Türk- Amerikan ilişkileri, aslında, hiç de bozulmadan ve Türkiye'nin önünü açacak bir şekilde, bu geçtiğimiz o 8 yıl içinde yürüdü. Bunun belki, benim açımdan en azından, en net kanıtı, 1999'da başkan Clinton'un TBMM'de yapmış olduğu konuşmayla, 5 yıl sonra 2004 yılında halefi ve Türkiye'ye kızmak için pek çok nedeni olan başkan Bush'un Galatasaray Üniversitesi avlusunda yapmış olduğu konuşma arasında neredeyse hiçbir fark olmamasıydı. Gene benzer bir şekilde, 2009 yılında başkan Obama'nın mecliste yapmış olduğu konuşma da, kendi iki selefinin vermiş oldukları mesajları tekrar eden, onlara belki biraz daha fazla Türkiye'nin İslam'la demokrasiyi bağdaştırma gücüne fazlasıyla vurgu yapan, ve “*stratejik ortaklık*” yerine “*model ortaklık*” deyimini önümüze getiren, ama dediğim gibi temelde Amerika'nın Türkiye'ye bakışı ve

Türkiye Amerika ilişkilerinin hangi temellerde şekilleneceği konusunda da seleflerinkinden farklı olmayan mesajları vermesiydi. Dolayısıyla Türkiye ile Amerika arasında en sorunlu olan zamanlarda bile, çerçevenin bu iki ülkenin yakın işbirliğini desteklediğini özellikle Amerika'nın Irak'ta gerek prestijinin, gerek gücünün, gerekse mali imkanlarının kötü bir şekilde harcanması ardından bölgesel müttefiklerle işbirliğine daha fazla ihtiyaç olduğu da göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, Türkiye-Amerika ilişkilerinin zaten daha da yakınlaşması belki de mukadderdi.

İki konu, İran'ın nükleer programı konusunda Türkiye'nin takındığı tavır ve ardından gelen Arap isyanları ve bunların da ardından gelen, Amerika Birleşik Devletlerinin Irak'tan askerlerini çekmesi, Türkiye açısından Orta Doğu'da izlediği dış politikanın genel çerçevesini de bence çok radikal bir şekilde değiştirdi. Ve belki de bunların da bir sonucu olarak, Suriye'de yaşananı kanımca doğru değerlendirmeyen hükümet—burada da yanlış anlaşılmasın, hükümetin Beşer Esad'ın gitmesini istemesi, Beşer Esad'ın Suriye'nin başında kalmamasını istemesi, bana göre doğru bir tavidir. Ancak buna varmak için hangi politikaların izleneceği konusunda, kanımca Türkiye'de doğru dürüst bir tartışmayı yeterince yapmadık ve hükümetin “ben çok haklıyım” diye bağırması, bana göre de onları haklı kılmıyor.

İran ile ilgili olay şuydu. 2010 yılında, bildiğiniz gibi Türkiye ve Brezilya İran ile bir on maddelik anlaşma imzaladılar. Bunun belki en önemli maddesi İran'ın 1200kg zenginleştirilmiş uranyumu Türkiye'ye teslim etmeyi kabul etmesiydi. Brezilya ve Türkiye, İran ile bu anlaşmayı Tahran'da kotarırlarken, Brezilya'nın başkanı Lula ile Türkiye'nin Başbakanı Erdoğan'ın cebinde Başkan Obama tarafından 20 ya da 21 Nisan tarihli yazılmış ve imzalanmış, 1200kg zenginleştirilmiş uranyumun İran tarafından bir yere yatırılmasının yeterli olacağına dair bir kayıt vardı. Yani Brezilya ve Türkiye, İran ile bu anlaşmayı yaptıkları zaman, maddi olarak, Başkan Obama'nın kendileri için çizmiş olduğu çerçevenin dışına çıkmamışlardı. Bu anlaşma açıklandığı gün, Amerikan dışişleri bakanı, bunu tanımayacağını ve derhal BM Güvenlik Konseyi'ne İran'a yönelik yeni bir ambargo paketini göndereceklerini açıkladı.

Şimdi buradaki sinisizm veya ikiyüzlülük vesaire uluslararası ilişkilerde rastlanmayacak şeyler değildir. Ancak sanırım burada ABD tarafından Türkiye'ye verilen asıl mesaj, “*Gayretlerini anlıyorum. Çok da takdir ediyorum. Ama bu iş senin çözebileceğin ya da yönlendirebileceği bir iş değildir*” mesajıydı. Türkiye'nin bu mesajı almadığı, Haziran 2010 da BM Güvenlik Konseyi'nde Başkan Obama'nın, kişisel olarak Başbakan Erdoğan'ı arayıp rica etmesine rağmen, çekimser kalmak yerine hayır oyu vermeyi tercih etmesiyle ortaya çıktı. O günden itibaren de Türkiye-Amerika ilişkilerinde ABD yönetiminin Türkiye'ye sağlamış olduğu ve kullanmasından rahatsızlık duymadığını belirttiği

özerk alan büyük bir hızla daraldı. G20'nin Toronto zirvesinde Başkan Obama ile sayın Başbakan diplomatik deyimiyile, “*open and frank discussion,*” yani içlerini dökerek birbirileri ile konuştular, bundan 4 ay sonra da Türkiye o güne kadar pek de yakın bakmadığını söylediği füze kalkanı projesine NATO'nun Lizbon zirvesinde dahil oldu. Bu, Türkiye ile ilgili 2009-2010'da şiddetlenen İsrail'e yönelik söylem ve “*Mavi Marmara*”nın ardından iyiden iyiye harlanan “Türkiye eksen değiştiriyor” saçmalığının da fiili olarak sona erdirilmesiydi. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti hükümeti net bir şekilde NATO içinde kalacağını, ve güvenlik anlayışı ve stratejik tercihleri açısından da batılı bir ülke olmayı tercih ettiğini, başka da çaresi olmadığı için herhalde, kabullenmiş oldu.

Ardından Arap isyanları geldi. Cengiz herhalde bunu daha vurgulayarak da söyleyecektir, ben de aynı kanaattayım, Arap isyanları, Kuzey Afrika'daki kolonyal dönemin 19. yy'ın ortasından itibaren, bizim güneyimizde de Osmanlı sonrası kurulmuş olan, İngilizler ve Fransızlar tarafından inşa edilmiş olan düzenin yıkılmasının habercileriydi. Bütün bu tür yıkılışlar gibi, çok sancılı, çok acılı ve çok kanlı olacağına da şüphe yok. Bu tabii, Türkiye'ye iki tür sonuçla yansıdı. Birincisi, az önce Michael O'Hanlon'un da söylemiş olduğu gibi bir “Türkiye Modeli” heyecanı ortalığı kapladı. Tabii hafızası güçlü olanlar bunun ilk kez olmadığını, Sovyetler Birliği yıkıldığı zaman, 11 Eylül'de El-Kaide Amerika'ya saldırdığı zaman da bir “Türkiye Modeli” yaygarasının koparılmış olduğunu hatırlayacaklardır. Bugün yeniden bu çıktı. Şu sıralarda pek duymuyoruz, iyi de oluyor. Fakat bunun ötesinde Arap isyanları ve ardından Amerika'nın Orta Doğu'dan çekilmesi ile Türkiye'de Orta Doğu politikası özelinde kendi gücünün sınırları ile de pek hoşuna gitmese de yüzleşmek zorunda kaldı.

Zaman dar olduğu için ben buradan Türkiye Amerikan ilişkilerinin bundan sonrasına bakmak istiyorum ve bunun Türkiye'nin içine yansımaları bana önemli geliyor. Anlaşıyor gibi bir Romney yönetimi, bugünkü Obama yönetimine göre en azından, hatta belki ileriki bir Obama yönetimine göre, Türkiye ile ilişkilerinde daha fazla sorun çıkartabilecek bir takım eğilimlere sahip olacaktır. Rusya'ya yaklaşımı, Suriye'ye yaklaşımı, İran konusundaki eğilimleri ki Michael O'Hanlon'un veya Richard Burt'un söylediklerinden benim kuşkulanmam için herhangi bir neden yok, Türkiye dış politikasını kanımca zora sokacak şeylerdir. Benim açımdan belki bu aşamada bu tür stratejik dertlerin nasıl çözümleneceği, Türkiye'nin Suriye belası ile Amerikalıların zaman kavramına göre uğraşmak zorunda kalmasının yaratacağı büyük sarsıntıların ötesinde, bir soru daha var, yaklaşık 5 yıl önce, Şuh Naz Yılmaz, Abdullah Akyüz, savunma konularında yaptığı katkılarla Serhat Güvenç ve ben, TÜSİAD için Türk-Amerikan ilişkilerinin geleceğini konu alan bir rapor yazdık. Bu raporda, Türk-Amerikan ilişkileri ile ilgili olarak bize en çarpıcı gelen iki soru şunlardı. Amerika Birleşik Devletleri, Türkiye'yi Soğuk Savaş döneminde olduğu gibi, şark için yeterli bir demokrasi olarak mı görecektir, yoksa

gerçekten bir demokrasi olması için, kendi dış politikasındaki ihtiyacı ne olursa olsun, Türkiye üzerinde bir etkisini kullanmaya çalışacak mıdır? Buna bağlı olarak ikinci sorumuz, Türkiye Orta Doğu'lu bir ülke ve batı ittifakı için özel önem taşıyan bir güç müdür; yoksa batı ittifakının eşit bir üyesi olarak Orta Doğu'da başkalarının yapamayacağı şeyleri yapmaya muktedir olan bir ülke midir? Maalesef ve ben açıkçası O'Hanlen'in sunumunda, gerek Obama gerekse Romney ekiplerinin Türkiye'ye bakışının tıpkı soğuk savaş döneminde olduğu gibi, Türkiye'nin stratejik batıllığının yeterli bulunacağı ve Türkiye'nin siyasi idari batıllığının kulak arkası edileceği sonucuna varıyorum. Bunun, benim tercihlerime göre Türkiye açısından hayırlı olmadığına şüphe yok, fakat bunun 1918-1922 de tasarlanmış Orta Doğu siyasi coğrafyası dağılırken, ya da bunun parametreleri yok olurken Kürtler, geçen gün Barham Salih'in Cengiz'e de söylediği gibi, kendi momentlerinin, kendi zamanlarının tarihsel olarak geldiğini düşünürlerken, ve Türkiye'nin bu sorunu bütün aciliyetiyle ve bütün acılarıyla üzerimizde dururken, Türkiye'ye yapılacak bir kötülük, Amerika'nın dış politika çıkarları açısından da bir akılsızlık olduğunu şahsen düşünüyorum.

Teşekkür ederim.

VOLKAN VURAL- Teşekkür ederim. Cengiz, Türkçe mi İngilizce mi yapacaksın sunumunu?

CENGİZ ÇANDAR- İngilizcem Soli'den hayli geride, Türkçem ise Soli'den çok daha kötü değil. Onun için yüzden ben de Türkçe konuşacağım.

VOLKAN VURAL- Yalnız sözüne başlamadan önce bir sorum var benim, Orta Doğu'da yeni bir Sykes-Picot mu oluyor? Kürtler tarih sahnesine yeni bir devlet olarak çıkıyorlar mı?

CENGİZ ÇANDAR- Benim fazlasıyla antrenmanlı olduğum sorular bunlar, çünkü bir hafta içinde tam da bu iki konuda, ikisi de uluslararası toplantı olan, biri İstanbul Forumu, öbürü de İstanbul Küresel Forumu, *World Forum'da* bu konularda konuşma yapmış olduğum için, bu sorulara cevap verme bakımından en azından kendimi antrenmanlı sayıyorum.

Ama önce bir uyarı ile başlayayım ben buraya gelirken Büyükelçi Richard Burt'ün hemen yanında oturacağımı bilmiyordum, o yüzden, kravatımdaki bir sürü fil deseni herhangi bir siyasi anlam taşıyor, onu baştan söyleyeyim. *It is not a political statement that I have this.*

BURT- Polar bears.

CENGİZ ÇANDAR- İkincisi, şuradan girme niyetindeyim; kendi yetişkin hayatımda bu konularla ilgilenmeye başlayalı, sanırım şimdi söyleyeceğimde istisna teşkil etmiyorum. Amerikan başkanlık seçimlerinin Türkiye'de bu kadar az ilgi uyandırdığı ve hatta ilgilenilmediği, bunun

Türkiye'ye ne tür etkileri olur hiç üzerinde fazlaca tartışılmadığı, düşünülmediği bir başka seçim hatırlamıyorum, bu şimdiki seçim gibi. Yani, bırakın ortalama bir Türk'ü, bu konularla ilgili varsayılan Türk entelijansiyasının herhangi bir unsuruna “Romney ne savunuyor; Obama ne savunuyor; aralarındaki farklar nelerdir; ve bunların seçim sonucunun Türkiye üzerine ne türlü etkileri olabilir?” sorularını sorsanız vereceği cevap yok. Yani, “*who is who, who is doing what*” diye bir soru sorulsa, iyi kötü bundan önceki seçimlerde, “şu başkan adayının ekibi şu kişiler, bunların yaklaşımları eğimleri bu, öbürkünün şu” gibi bir genel bir cevap verilirdi. Şu anda, Başkan Obama'nın, ne de başkanlık yarışındaki Mitt Romney'in pozisyonları ve ekiplerinin özellikleri konusunda Türkiye'de bu işlerle meşgul olduğu varsayılan kişilerin bile çok açık, net bir görüşü, hele Türk siyasi elitinin hiç yok. Yani Ankara'ya gidip siyasi parti yönetimleri ile konuşsanız onların hiçbir fikri yok gibi geliyor bana.

Bu aslında çok yakın iki müttefik olduğu sürekli belirtilen, aslında oldum olası yapısal olarak problemlili ilişkilere sahip olan iki müttefikin seçim sonrası ilişkilerinde de bu hal, en azından ihtiyat payıyla söyleyeyim, pek olumlu bir etki bırakmayacak gibi geliyor. Bu problematik ilişki, daha da sıkıntılı bir hal alacak gibi geliyor. Türkiye'nin ve Türklerin Amerika'yı ve Amerikalıları kavramak ve izlemekteki zaafi aynen Amerikalılar için de zaten söz konusu. Onlar hep Türkiye'ye olan hayranlıklarını sempatilerini belirterek söze başlarlar, az önce Michael da sözlerine öyle başladı. -“*he expresses his admiration to Turkey*”- Bu bana, Poul Wolfowitz'in çok sık buraya geldiği dönemlerde hep Kore savaşında Türk askerinin ne kadar kahramanca, hür dünya için, Amerikan askerlerinin yanında savaştığını anlatarak söze başlamasını hatırlattı. Her seferinde de ben, gerçi beni pek dinlemedi ama, Poul Wolfowitz ile ahablığımızdan yararlanarak, “Poul Allah aşkına, Kore savaşı ile başlama söze. Türkiye için iyi bir anı değil Kore savaşı. Kimse zaten hatırlamıyor bunu ve Türk ordusunun kahramanlıkları da şu siyasi atmosferde en son referans verilmesi gereken nokta” diye uyarılarda bulunuyordum. Keza, bundan 13 yıl öne ben Amerika'da iki yıl geçirdiğim süre içinde eski büyükelçi Morton Abromowitz'in editörlüğünü yaptığı Türk-Amerikan ilişkilerini konu alan bir kitap, ortak bir kitap yazımı sırasında, Abromowitz -ki kendisi ki Turgut Özal'la George Bush başkanlık dönemine, yani Türk-Amerikan ilişkilerinin olabildiğince sıcak ve iyi olduğu bir döneme denk gelen bir dönemdi onun büyükelçiliği- kendi büyükelçiliğinden yola çıkarak o kitap yazılımındaki sohbetlerin hemen her seferinde Türkiye'nin ABD için hep bir baş ağrısı olduğunu, o çok sıkı müttefiklik ilişkisinin görüldüğü gibi olmadığını, örneğin kendi büyükelçiliği döneminde -genellikle büyükelçiler dışişleri bakanlarını ya da başkanları görev yaptıkları ülkeye getirilince kendi kariyerleri için önemli bir katkı sağlamış olabilirler- ne zaman kendisi yarım ağızla Amerikan Dışişleri Bakanı'na, bir dönemde George Schultz, daha sonra James Baker- Türkiye'ye gelmeyi düşünmez misiniz diye sorduğunda, “Allah

aşkına bizi şimdi Türkiye'ye getirme, kocaman bir talep listesiyle gelir bu Türkler; O talep listesinin 4/3.5'u kongre tarafından kıyamet koparılacak unsurlar taşır, ziyaret ilişkileri geliştireceğine daha da sıkıntıya sokar, sonuç çıkmaz” diye bu talebinin karşılandığını söylemişti. Sonra, şartlar gereği ilişkilerin içeriği, yönü değişti ve sık ziyaretler, özellikle hiç tahmin edilmeyecek şekilde, Türkiye'de şu andaki iktidar partisinin döneminde bir hayli arttı. Fakat o da yeni dönemlere denk geldi. Ve bir ara Amerika'da “Who lost Turkey” tartışması çok hararetlendi. Türkiye eksen kayması, *axis shift*, ile beraber artık Amerikan önderliğindeki uluslararası ilişkiler sistemini, o bloğu, terk edip ayrılıyor gibi, ki çok da yanlış bir tespit değildi ki açıkçası. Yani 1970'lerde “bağlantısızlar camiası” varken, bir bağlantısız ülkenin, Amerika ve Türkiye'yi ortak ilgilendiren konulardaki yaklaşıma, kullanılan dile ve reflekslere baktığımız zaman, 2000'li yılların Türkiye'sinin 1970'lerin, 1960'ların ikinci yarısının bir “bağlantısızlar bloku” üyesi ülkeden pek de farkı yoktu. Yani eksen kayması çok yanlış bir şey değildi ama bu Türkiye'de heyecan yaratıyordu. Derken birdenbire yine şartlar değişti ve bu “Arap Devrimi,” “Arap Ayaklanması,” “Arap Aydınlanması,” ne deniyorsa, başladıktan sonra da bu sefer de “*role model*” diye ifade edilmeye başladı Türkiye. Ve biz Türkiye'de, “public intellectuals” diyeyim, şeye şaşırdık: sürekli bir sallanma ve dalgalanma halinde... Bir zaman “hayır eksen kayması yok” diyip bunu söyleyen Amerikalı çevrelere karşı asabi tepkiler gösteren, ondan sonra da birdenbire gururu okşanan “evet biz *role modeliz* biz böyle bir ülkeyiz” diye ve Türkiye'deki iktidar konfigürasyonu da aynı şekilde durumu hissetmeye başladı. Bu dalgalanma Amerika'da da geçerliydi. Değerli dostum eski arkadaşım, Phil Gordon, Ömer Taşpınar ile birlikte Brookings'de kitap yazarken “*Who Lost Turkey*” idi kitaplarının adı. Transkripti bana göndermişlerdi, “bir bak ne diyeceksen de” diye. Daha transkript bendeyken birdenbire iklim değişti, iklim değişirken ve kitap matbaadayken kitabın adı da değişti “*Who Lost Turkey*”den yanılmıyorsam, “*Allies in need*” gibi, daha şık ve daha müttefikliğe uygun bir başlığa dönüştü. Bu, Türkiye ve Amerika arasındaki ilişkiler sıkı ittifak ilişkilerinin aldatıcı görüntüsünün arkasında her zaman problemli olmuştur, problematiktir ve yapısında bu ilişkilerin bu durum vardır ve önümüzdeki dönemde Türkiye'nin içinde bulunduğu bu *neighborhood*, bu alanın özellikle Suriye üzerinden yaşadığı ve nereye nasıl yol alacağı belli olmayan gelişmelerle birlikte daha da fazla artacaktır.

Buradan hareketle, Amerikan başkanlarının hangisi, ne olursa ne etki yapar sorusuna gelirse, Soli'nin Romney konusundaki endişelerinin bir miktarını Richard Burt'un sözlerinin dağıtmış olması lazım. Romney'in pratik ve pragmatik birisi olduğunu söyledi ve dünyanın bu kadar krizli bir bölgesinde, yine de formel bir ittifaka sahip iki tarafın, ilişkilerinde Romney de iş başına gelse, reel politikanın kuralları, beş aşağı beş yukarı hükmünü icra eder ve ilişkiler rayından çıkmaz. Zaten yapısal

olarak problematik olan ilişkiler daha fazla bozulmaz diye düşünebiliriz. Ama, oturum başkanımızın az önce sorduğu, “Eric Edelman var mı?” sorusu çok meşru bir sorudur. Bu Amerikan filmlerinde “tanığa başka sorum yoktur sayın hakim” demesi gibi avukatın, Richard Burt'un “evet” demesi üzerine, Volkan Vural'ın herhalde “başka sorum yok teşekkür ederim” demesi gerekirdi. Çünkü Eric Edelman, buradaki herkesin sanıyorum bildiği gibi, Türkiye'deki mevcut iktidar sahipleri ile bir takım tatsız ve acı anılarla buradan ayrıldı. Ama ben daha vahim bir isimden en azından buradan görüldüğü kadarıyla vahim bir isimden söz edeyim, yanlış bilmiyor isem şayet, geçen yıl öyleydi, bu yıl hala devam ediyor mu bilmediğim için şayet yanlış bilmiyorsam dedim, Michael Rubin'in de, özellikle Orta Doğu konusunda başkan adayı Romney'in danışman kadrosu içinde olduğunu duymuştum, Okumuştum. Michael Rubin, Tayyip Erdoğan'ı Usama Bin Ladin ile kuzen kabul edecek kadar... Öyle bir bakış açısı var. Ak Parti iktidarı ile El-Kaide arasında fazla ayırım gözetmeyen, ve hatta bunların bir de iş ilişkileri var, karşılıklı mali maddi çıkar ilişkileri var diye bakıp, bunun üzerine dünya kadar yazı yazmış birisi. Şimdi Romney, bu kişilerden ne kadar etkilenirse, önümüzdeki dönemde, bu kişilerin etkisiyle reel politiğin kuralları ne ölçüde çelişir hangisi egemen olursa, o kadar Türk-Amerikan ilişkilerini etkileyecek demektir. Ama, şunu söylememiz icap ediyor, Amerika gibi, tek kutuplu uluslar arası sistemin o tek kutbu olan, tek süper devlet olan bir ülke ile, bu bölgede onun en önemli müttefiki konumunda bulunan Türkiye gibi bir ülke arasındaki ilişkilerde basit bir nüans bile buraya çok şiddetli ve olumsuz etkiler yapar.

Bundan birkaç yıl önce *Council on Foreign Relations*'ın o dönemde başkanı iken Leslie Gelb ile Amerika'da bir buluşmamızda, “az önce bana bir Çin heyeti geldi” dedi. “Okyanusun öbür tarafından gelenler gibi, sizin gibi” dedi, Türkleri bizi kastederek, “hemen” dedi “parmaklarını, *fingerpointing* yaparak, '*you have double standards*' diye lafa girdiler.” dedi. “Ben de elimi masaya vurduğum “no” diye bağırardım” dedi. “Onun üzerine çok şaşırdılar bu kadar açık, aleni bir gerçeğe niye itiraz ediyorum diye, durdular. Ben de dedim ki '*not double, triple, quadruple, quintuple*' '*we can afford it you pay the price*' dedim” dedi. Şimdi, ABD ile herşeye rağmen bizim gibi, bu bölgede ve müttefik bir ülke makas uçları ayrılarak ters düşmeye başlarsa, onun buraya son derece olumsuz etkileri olur. Ve Romney Başkanlığı, dediğimiz unsurları içerdiği ve onun etkileri, eğer etkili olursa o unsurların, Türkiye Amerika ilişkileri ve Türkiye'nin iç politikası dahil olmak üzere, etkileri pek de iç açıcı olmaz. Ve o anlamda, Soli söylemedi ama, Türkiye'nin demokrasi karnesini hiç umursamayacak bir Amerikan yönetimi olursa, onun bambaşka, Türkiye'nin iç dengelerine ve Türkiye'nin bugün bu bölgede sahip olduğu pozisyon nedeniyle bütün bölgeye son derece olumsuz etkileri, hem Kürt meselesi itibariyle, hem Alevi meselesi itibariyle, Türkiye'nin şu anda *confront* ettiği rejim bir Alevi mezhebi karaktere

sahip bir rejim. Bütün bu işler Türkiye'nin demokrasi karnesini umursamayan bir Amerikan başkanlığı altında ve hatta Türkiye ile sürtüşen bir Amerikan başkanlığı altında ciddi sıkıntıya gelir.

Bir iki noktaya daha temas edip tamamlayayım. Bu, Suriye ve Sykes-Picot meselesinden hareketle –bu benim kendi hipotezim, umarım yalnız değildir, doğru çıkarsa yalnız olmaktan memnun olurum, bu hipoteze sahip olmakla “ne adammış” gibi, “o söylemişti” gibi olur ama, tahmin etmiyorum yalnız olduğumu bu hipotezde– bu, Arap Ayaklanmaları Amerikan medyasının “Arap Baharı” diye isimlendirdiği, benim baştan beri reddettiğim, çünkü, olayın içindekiler kendilerini, yaptıkları işi “Arap Devrimi” diye tanımlıyorlar. Az önce Volkan Vural'ın beni tanıtırkenki sözlerine de gönderme yapayım, bu bir eski “terörist”in devrimcilik arzusundan kaynaklanmıyor, durum öyle, ama en azından “Arap Baharı” değil bu. “*Arap Ayaklanmaları,*” “*Arap Aydınlanması,*” “*Arap Devrimi,*” ne dersek diyelim –Richard Burt “*Arab Disruption*” dedi, olabilir– fakat netice olarak bu, Birinci Dünya Savaşı sonrasında Sykes-Picot aforizması ile tanımlanan tarih sürecini, tersine çevirme süreci gibi gözüküyor. Ve tabi yaklaşık 100 yıllık, bölgenin fragmente edilmesi üzerine oturtulmuş bir yapının temellerinden sarsılması ve yıkılmasından söz etmiş oluyoruz. Tunus'ta başlayan işin Mısır'da zirvesine ulaşması ile -Mısır'da ulaşmasaydı, Suriye olmazdı- ama, Mısır ile yönünü belli eden bir gelişme, fakat bir şeyi bilmek durumundayız, bu yüz yıllık bir yapının yıkılmaya başlaması, onunla birlikte bütün otokratik, totaliter yapıların sarsılması ve yıkılmaya başlaması Tunus ve Mısır'da görüldüğü kadar centilmen olmayacaktı ve Suriye'de gördüğümüz kadarıyla da zaten olmuyor. Yalnız bu çok uzun sürecektir, öyle anlaşılıyor. Ve Suriye'nin ötesinde Irak'ı Ürdün'ü Lübnan'ı, Filistin sahasını, Filistin-İsrail alanını ve Türkiye'yi de etkileyecektir. Ve ben, Michael O'Hanlen'in az önceki Bosna modeline, “keşke öyle olsa” diyeceğim ama, iki üç yıl içinde o Bosna modelinin, Dayton anlaşmasının uygulanacağı Suriye'yi biz bulamayabiliriz. Suriye'nin öyle bir yapısı var ki, bu terazi bu sikleti çekmez diye Türkçe bir laf vardır, Suriye'deki, şu andaki olayların gelişmesi, ivmesi, iki üç sene daha Suriye'yi bu haliyle bir Dayton Anlaşmasının empoze edilebileceği bir durumdan çıkarır. Bunun imkânı yok, böyle devam edemez. Beşar Esad rejiminin gidebileceği, devrileceği mutlak değil ama bir şey mutlak, Beşar Esad'ın bu ülkeyi yönetme kabiliyetini kaybettiği de bir mutlak gerçeklik halinde. Yani 15 Mart 2011'e bu filmi geri çeviremezsiniz. Zaten şu anda bile, bu kadar uluslararası destekten yoksun olmasına rağmen, Suriye'deki muhalefet, şu anda ülkenin %70'ini, en az %70'ini Beşar Esad rejimi tarafından yönetilemez, fiilen yönetilemez hale getirmiş durumda. Bu ne kadar sürerse, istikrarsızlığın Türkiye'ye de sirayet etmesi ve Türkiye'de şu anda çok sağlam gözükten yapıların dahi, iktidarı kastediyorum, erozyona uğraması kaçınılmaz gibi gözüküyor. Ne kadar erken Suriye bir şekil alırsa hem bölge istikrarı hem bizzat Türkiye bakımından bu çok önemli...

Sonuç olarak söyleyeceğim şu: Bu Amerikan seçimleri bakımından Türkiye ile Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ilişkileri bakımından, ne ifade eder sorusuna, çok kaba bir cevap vermek durumundayız çünkü, bir Romney başkanlığı, *Romney presidency*, az önce yine Richard Burt'un söylediği gibi *mysterious* bir şey, bilmiyoruz. Ve Suriye'de ne olacağını da bilmiyoruz. Kimse bilmiyor. Beşar Esad da bilmiyor, Vladimir Putin de bilmiyor, Barack Obama da bilmiyor, ne kadar ateşli demeçler veriyor olsa da Tayyip Erdoğan da bilmiyor. Bilmiyor. Şu anda biz, inşa edilmekte olan tarihin inşa edilme sürecinin içindeyiz. Bilmiyoruz. *Unpredictable chaotic, complicated complex*, Suriye. Böyle bir durumda bir de bilmediğimiz ve bilemeyeceğimiz bir Romney başkanlığının ne şekilde Türkiye'ye ve bölgeye etki yapacağı tamamıyla bir soru işaretidir. Obama'nın seçilmesi halinde beş aşağı beş yukarı şimdiki durumun devamını ve evrilmesini görebiliriz.

En son şunu söyleyeyim sanıyorum Michael onu söyledi, Amerika'nın *reluctant* olduğunu Suriye'ye müdahalede; Türkiye'de şu anda hüküm süren bütün ateşli tartışmaya rağmen Türkiye Amerika'dan daha *reluctant* Suriye'ye müdahale etmek konusunda, Amerika'nın daha fazla sorumluluk almamasına ilişkin olarak da *resentment* halinde. Yani Obama başkanlığının yenilenmesi halinde, bu *reluctance* devam edecek, Amerika'ya karşı da *resentment*, belki, artarak sürecektir.

Öbürü de, dediğim gibi tamamıyla bir *mystery*. Buna kim cevap veriyorsa onu “Nostradamus 2012” olarak tebrik etmekte yarar var diyorum.

Teşekkür ediyorum.

VOLKAN VURAL- Thank you, thank you very much. I will ask the speakers to, perhaps elaborate, two-three minutes on what has been said before.

But before that, let me say few things, one, we don't know who is going to win the US presidential election. It is likely, I mean both candidates seems to have equal chance in winning the election. Second, if Romney is elected, his outlook would be a bit neo-conservative but also pragmatist. He will not “rock the boat” as a prudent businessmen. On the other hand, we know what president Obama has stood for, what he has done, so it is more predictable from our perspective. The third question is unlike our distinguished journalist or scholars, I don't believe that neither the winning of the Mitt Romney would be a catastrophe for Turkey, nor losing of President Obama will be catastrophe for Turkey. Because Turkish-American relations are not dependent on the win of the presidents or the prime ministers of Turkey. There are realities, on the ground. I think they are dictated by certain realities. I agree that in this partnership between Turkey and the United States, we are not equal. To pretend that we are equal would be an illusion. On the other hand, Turkey has always pursued a certain

foreign policy which is somewhat more independent within the general framework. I mean president Özal has pursued policies, foreign policy options, which were quite independent, innovative in many respects. Prime Minister Erdoğan also is trying to pursue certain policies. But we have immediate dangers. Before, the Syria is an important crisis, it is not a foreign policy issue, it is also a domestic policy issue for Turkey. I agree with Soli Özel when he said that if the Americans do not attach importance/care for Turkey's democracy, human rights record, freedom of expression etc, and concentrate only on the security issues, this is not good for Turkey, this is not good for our region. Therefore, I think the American policy must also address these issues I don't think this has been done by the Obama and administration thoroughly but, in view of the record of the republicans on the security issues, it is likely that they may concentrate on security more than the democracy and so forth. This will be a bad case, bad situation for Turkey.

Noting that, I really hate the word of “Arab Spring” etc., the changes in the Arab world of course disbanding of some totalitarian regimes, they are being replaced by new authoritarians. And we are still far away from democracy in anywhere. And unlikely, this process most certainly democratization process will take time if you consider that Turkey has been experiencing democracy for the last 100 years and still has problems, it would be unfair to expect some countries to start democracy immediately. So we are seeing a new process, but this will, as what Cengiz has said, this will take time. The turmoil will not end easily

So, we are all in a situation, in a very changing, fast moving situation, I think here, perhaps, Turkish American relations, assume a much far greater role, far greater importance than before, not only, it is not a domestic, bilateral issue, it is a regional issue as well.

Now as far as Israel is concerned, I think the Iran Israel concern, personally I see a real threat of new crisis in the Middle East that would be very difficult to control if some intervention is taken place, we know the ability of Iran to retaliate, not in kind but in different ways and therefore, this will prove to be a very nasty process for all of us, especially those of who are living in the region.

So having said this, please if you have any comments to the speakers.

BİR KATILIMCI- I want to thank all the speakers for the great expose, but I want your inference on the US presidential elections having some kind of effect on Turkish local politics. Can you extend your forecasting or analysis powers to say, what do you see happening in the Turkish local politics? I can make that more concrete by saying, where do you think the Kurdish problem is going? What do you think the Romney attitude would be to the Fethullah leader who lives in Pennsylvania?

And who do you think will win the Turkish presidential elections, that were up in 2014?

I would like Cengiz's view as well. I do not only mean the American view I mean from all speakers.

RICHARD BURT- Those are not really easy questions. I am going to say something that covers all the questions and, I am going to say it from my own particular vantage point because the issue of whether the United States should look at Turkey only as a security partner, should worry about Turkish democracy and the rule of law on so on. I think, I am personally tired, and I think it is counter-productive for the United States to nag people all the time about their domestic politics. We have enough problems with our own domestic politics to figure out, we have a lot of dis-functionality in American politics right now. And so, I am a realist in foreign policy in generally. So, I think these issues about how you manage the Kurdish minority, whether they should, what kind of rights and roles and responsibilities they should have within Turkish society; whether they should have their own; their language should be more open and have their own television channel and all of that stuff. Speaking as an American all of that more inclusive approach strikes me as a basically a good idea, but I don't know enough about it, most Americans don't know about it, that is a Turkish decision, it is not an American decision. And we should not as private individuals or as a government dictate to the Turks in those kind of questions.

As for this character in Pennsylvania, I know very little about him, and his movement, and his religion. I know it is very sensitive and controversial issue. I guess because the United States is a place where people like that can go relatively easy. And you know increasingly at the death of this guy from South Korea Reverend Moon, who bought newspapers and married hundreds of thousands of people in big mass ceremonies including in New York city. I mean that kind of crazy stuff happens in America and so again I don't have a judgment on it, it makes life in America interesting. But again I hope that these sorts of developments don't have too much domestic impact on the broader U.S.-Turkish relationship, because we had too many more important issues to really resolve. I was with a very good friend, some of you would know his name, he is a very gifted German journalist, academic; he teaches at Stanford, Joseph Geofey, he is a very old friend of mine. I was with him at a conference in Berlin recently and I said "Joe, what do you think of the US- German relationship these days. Because you can't really get anybody to talk about it" and he said "That's because we are an old married couple" "we have resigned ourselves to this relationship. Both sides get irritated but we have learned to live with it. And it's like, we are too old to get excited and go out and look for somebody else, so we are going to live with relationship." But what is interesting to me about the U.S.-Turkish relationship: we are not an old married couple. It is still an exciting kind of a relationship. We are still learning new secrets about

each other.

CENGİZ ÇANDAR- How we cheat each other. And some of them are shocking to us, others are attractive to us. The economic dimension, the business dimension, the relationship is in my view is much too nearly based in the past on a kind of a defense relationship alone now is broadening out into a lot of different areas. So, it is a vibrant, maturing relationship. And I think should think of it in those terms. We still have strong incentives to stay in this relationship it seems to me.

Finally in the terms of American politics, domestic politics' impact on Turkey, I think the big way, is we are still a kind of thought leader on how people manage and run political campaigns. And if you went and look at this campaign, and Michael can and I am sure will agree with this, the degree in which they now targeted down to the kind of voter you are, whether you go to church every week, all these information you can obtain from people's credit cards and all of this other information to determine where you live almost within your neighborhood they know whether you are a republican or democrat, they know whether you are evangelical Christian, or you don't go to church they now how to shape the arguments so that it appeals to you. It is kind of micro-marketing. And I think that's the wave of the future and every other democratic country. I mean we are turning this thing for better or for worse I am not saying it is necessarily good, but we are turning this into a kind of a way in which you sell in market retail goods.

ŞERİF EGELİ- Thank you. It was a very interesting panel discussion that I have heard being somebody very occupied since many years with United States, and the Middle East. But, TUSIAD is a businessmen association. And when I have look at it as a businessman's way, there are two aspects that Soli and Cengiz didn't touch on, Michael touched on a little bit. Now, we have heard and we know that Syria will not be solved very soon. So as long as Syria is not solved, on the business side, we have two problems in Turkey, one is Russia. If we get cross with Russia and Putin being very strong and determined man, Turkey can be in one day dark and cold. All the gas will go. Michael told about different politics of different presidents in the United States that they can apply to Russia, I would like to ask Soli and Cengiz what should we apply with Mr. Putin, he just canceled his trip to Turkey and probably will come beginning of December I hope. If he doesn't come, we will see that there is something going on.

The second problem is Iraq, our comparative advantage to reach the rich Middle Eastern markets, Gulf, Saudi Arabia and everything is our trucks. When Iraq was in war, we turn to Syria to pass our trucks to reach those markets. Now Syria is in problem, we don't have a trucking root

anymore. And if we are very close with Mr. Maliki, United States has left Iraq. So, he is alone, and Iranians are running Iraq at the moment. Iraqi armies are run by Iranian generals, Mr. Maliki gets his orders from Iran everyday and acts accordingly. This is why he went to Moscow to make a 4 billion dollar weapons purchase agreement. And, Turks cannot get projects, they give projects to Turks at the moment in Iraq, but they freeze them immediately. So if we are on a bad mood and attitude to Mr. Maliki and if he stops Turks getting into the Iraq market and through the Iraqi roads into the Gulf, we will have a lot of problems with our exports. So that now Europe is going down and we are proud of finding markets in the neighborhoods outside of Europe. What would you think of Russian politics and Iraqi politics I would like to hear it.

Thank you very much.

MICHAEL O'HANLON- Thank you. I'll start on Iraqi politics and maybe leave Russian politics to others if that is OK. I appreciate your vantage point on the way Prime Minister Maliki is influenced. I share some of those worries, but I am not nearly as persuaded that Iran essentially calls the shots in Iraq. For example, we all know their history, but beyond the ancient history of the Iran-Iraq war, we also know that Prime Minister Maliki went after a number Iranian sponsored militias in the crucial period from 2007 through 2009. And, I would personally interpret a lot of his behavior as simple nationalism. I think for him, it is important for him to make it clear that he is not the stooge of the United States. And obviously from the point of view of Turkey or Jordan or Saudi Arabia, then there is also the Sunni-Shia issue which makes him want to establish a little bit of independence. And I agree with your concern that we have to watch very carefully the inner linkages between Iran and Iraq. But I personally don't see Iranian domination of Iraq right now.

I will say one last thing on the weapon sale. I think it is a good example of where Americans need to just learn to take that kind of news with understanding. We did not invade Iraq to create a puppet, and now we have a chance to prove it. We are going to have to live with the world in which Iraq is not even that close of a friend. But as long as they are not developing nuclear weapons massacring their own minorities, or attacking their neighbors, we can quarrel with them over other policies and probably we can live with it.

SOLİ ÖZEL- Şimdi, Rusya konusu bana göre önümüzdeki dönemde çok daha çetrefil bir hale gelecek. Ben açıkçası geçen çarşamba yaşadığımız uçak indirme olayının tam ne anlama geldiğini, neyin nereden çıktığını, bunun İsrail veya Amerika'yla koordineli bir yeni yönelimin parçası olup olmadığını, anlamış değilim. Ruslar, çelişkili bir takım tepkiler de verdiler. Fakat, sizin dediğiniz gibi,

Putin'in 3 Aralık'ta geleceğini söylemesi en azından şimdilik, şu ya da bu nedenle, Rusların bunu bir mesele yapmayacağını düşündürüyor insana. Aynı zamanda tarih olarak 3 Aralık'ın verilmesi, Rusların da Amerikan seçimlerinin bitmesini bekledikleri anlamına herhalde geliyor. Ve Michael O'Hanlon'un Suriye konusunda hiç bir şey yapılmayacağını söylerken, kendi bulunduğu konum itibarıyla çok doğru bir değerlendirme yaptığından şüphelenmiyorum, fakat, bana öyle geliyor ki, Ruslar bile bu işin biraz daha fazla uzamasının maliyetini yavaş yavaş görmeye başladılar. Şimdi, Amerika 3 yıl beklesin. Cengiz söyledi. Şimdi bu Bosna değil, çünkü Bosna'da zaten savaşan tarafların kendi çatışmalarını yayabilecekleri bir alan kalmamıştı. Ürdün çökmek üzere. Lübnan patlamak üzere, Irak zaten kırılğan olan bir düzeni nasıl tutacağım diye uğraşırken, “Bosna'yı yaparız üç yıl sonra, hele bir herkes birbirini bir temizlesin çıksın ortaya *enclaveler*” diye beklemek, Amerika'nın durduğu yerden çok da sakıncalı görünmeyebilir, çok da mantıklı da görünebilir ona bir diyeceğim yok ama, bu bölgede yaşayan bizim ve Rusların buna pek tahammül edemeyeceklerini şahsen düşünüyorum.

Siz ekonomi konusundan da bahsettiniz, o önemli, vakit de yoktu. 2002-2010 politikası neydi? Özal'ın bir heves olarak başlattıklarının 1990'ların sonunda artık güçlenmiş, 2001 de artık yeniden yapılanmış bir Türkiye ekonomisine yapılabilesinin görüldüğü bir dönemdi. Yeni pazarlar bulmak bizim için önemliydi, bunlar yapıldı. Şimdi jeopolitik durum, Türkiye'nin bu ekonomik atılğanlığının da önünü kesebilecek bir tehlike arz etmeye başladı. Yaşanan karmaşadan hemen bir ekonomik büyüme çıkması bu bölgede zaten söz konusu değil. Ve her şeye rağmen de Irak politikasının yönetilmesi Suriye'nin zaten devre dışı kalması, Türkiye'nin ekonomik olarak da hayli saldırıya açık bir duruma gelmesine de yol açtı. Şimdilik, mesela Azerbaycan'la geliştirilen ilişkiler dolayısıyla ikame edilebiliyor, Azerbaycan-Trans Anatolia boru hattı vs gibi ama, dediğim gibi, 2002-2010 rahatlığını Türkiye'nin daha uzunca bir süre bulabilmesi mümkün değil. Ben bunun tüm ekonomik sonuçlarını kendi içimizde tartıştık mı, ondan da emin değilim. Ama, başta ben de konuşurken dedim ki, biz Amerikalıların zaman kavramını paylaşabilecek bir durumda da değiliz, Dünya da, ya da bu bölge de değil, oradan bir sorun çıkacağını düşünüyorum.

CENGİZ ÇANDAR- Çok kısaca, Rusya konusunda ben de Soli gibi, neyin niye olduğunu anlayamayanlar arasındayım. Yani “*what was the wisdom of the whole thing,*” gerçekten anlamış değilim. Orada askeri malzeme var falan.. “*so what*” demek gerekiyor. Yani o kargodaki askeri malzeme uluslararası ilişkiler bakımından bu kadar riskli bir adım atmaya icap ettiriyor muydu, çok emin değilim. Çünkü netice itibarıyla Rusya zaten çok sıcak bir ilişki yokken hali hazırda, Suriye nedeniyle ve radar, NATO nedeniyle, şimdi daha da öteye geçen bir risk almayı rasyonalize edecek ne var, onu anlamakta zorluk çekiyorum. Ama hükümetin, belki bir yere bir mesaj bu, bizim de o kadar

kolay tokat atılacak görüntü vermemiz açısından elzemdi diye bir argümanı var anladığım kadarıyla, ama sonuç itibarıyla Türkiye-Suriye ilişkilerinden farklı bir biçimde Türkiye-Rusya ilişkilerinin daha ötede bozulmasının *contain* edilebileceği kanısındayım. Çünkü yanlış da yapsalar rasyonel aktörlerin taraf olduğu bir denklemdir bu. Şimdi Suriye'de bir rasyonel aktör bulamazsınız. Bir *survival instinct* ile kendisiyle birlikte ülkesini ve bütün bölgeyi ateşe atmayı göze almış bir yapı var ve devlet geleneği olan bir yer değil orası. Devlet değil orası. Sykes-Picot sonucu oralarda bir takım entiteler oluşmuş, Irak, Suriye, Ürdün, Lübnan, Suudi Arabistan, bunların çoğu ABD'nin sıkı müttefikleri anlıyorum ama, bunlar devlet falan değil!! Tarihi olarak da format olarak da devlet değil bunlar. İran devlettir mesela o ayrı bir mesele, Türkiye ve Rusya devlet. Bunlar devletler ve -burada uzun yıllar Moskova'da büyükelçilik yapmış Volkan Vural herhalde bu soruyu hepimizden daha ehil cevaplayacak durumda-Rusya ve Türkiye ilişkilerinin bir *damage* var mıdır bu işte; vardır ama *contain* edilebilir gibi geliyor bana.

Irak'a gelirse orada daha karmaşık bir durum var. Ben, Micheal'ın, zamanında Maliki'nin Muklada El Sadr'a karşı harekete geçmiş olmasından elde ettiği *credidential*'ların şimdiki durumu okumak için yeterli olduğu kanısında değilim. Ve, *Arab Nationalism*den ziyade, *sekte*lerin *shiisim'i* temsil eder bir görüntüsü var Maliki'nin, ve orada Tahran ve Şam ile beraber bir anti-Sünni eksenin, aksın üzerinde hareket ediyor gibi. Nitekim, ve Amerikalıların -tam da Michael O'Hanlon'un bakış açısından hareket eden- *appeasement* siyasetlerinden de cesaret alarak bazı hamleler yaptı. Bu arada hemen bir parantez olarak bir anektod sıkıştırırım, Celal Talabani, Irak Cumhurbaşkanı bundan birkaç yıl önce, bir sohbet sırasında dedi ki, geldiğinde Chaney Bağdat'ı ziyaret ettiğinde Talabani'ye demiş ki, "bu Maliki nasıl bir adam" demiş, "beş para etmez" falan, bir sürü olumsuz şey söylemiş. "Peki burada en güçlü siyasi figür kim?" "Maliki" demiş. "Ee, az önce sen beş para etmez demiştin. Şimdi nasıl en önemli siyasi şahsiyet olduğunu söylüyorsun?" "Ee, hem İran'ın hem Amerika'nın üzerinde keşiştiği başka kimse yok" demiş "bütün dünyada," "Hem İran destekliyor hem siz destekliyorsunuz" demiş Maliki'ye. Maliki'nin böyle bir özelliği var ve bu, *appeasement* politikası Biden'ın son fiske etmeye kalktığı oradaki denklemi, Amerikan askerlerinin çekilişlerinden hemen önce, öyle imkanlar verildi ki Maliki'ye, Maliki'nin ilk işi askerler çekildikten sonra sistem içindeki Sünnileri kovalaması oldu. Tarık El Haşimi Türkiye'de yaşıyor, diğer Sünnilerle de kavgalı durumda. Suriye dediğimiz olay bir sürü katmanın üst üste gelmesi... Batı-İslam; Şiilik-Sünnilik; Türkiye-İran; Suriye bir mücadele alanı. Keza Irak da öyle ve o noktada Maliki bir eksen üzerinden hareket ediyor, buna karşı da Türkiye istemediği halde, Sünni ekseninin bir aktörü gibi hareket etmeye girişti. Maliki Tahran irtibatına karşı -Haşimi'yi tutamazsınız, Haşimi zaten Türkiye'de- Ankara-Barzani eksenini var. Bu, Şerif Egeli'nin sorusuna bir

şekilde cevap biraz zaman istiyor ama, bir *oil bonanza* hali var orada. Irak Kürdistan'ının petrol ve doğalgaz üzerinde yüzen bir hali var. Ve Türkiye'nin Irak Kürdistan'ına ve bizzat Barzani'ye yönelik politikası belli Türk dogmalarını aşarak, geleceğe dönük enerji hesaplarıyla da ilgili bir politika. Yarım öbür gün Rusya nedeniyle üşürüz diyorsanız, *contain* edilebildiği ölçüde Rusya'yla ilişkiler, birkaç yıl içinde Kürdistan petrol ve doğalgazıyla da ısınabiliriz. Onu kompanse edebilir.

RICHARD BURT- I wanted to answer your question and I will just say it briefly about Russia. I don't think that Turks have anything to worry about considering the Russians. I think that Russia views Turkey as probably in terms of a future, and a second most important market after Germany. Unlike the Russians, Turks have demonstrated over the last 30 years that they have a marvelous entrepreneurial instinct. And the Russians on the other hand have really failed conspicuously to diversify their economy away from extracted industries: oil and gas and minerals. So they need to do business with Turkey. They need Turkish entrepreneurial know-how. And of course they are interested in energy distribution but perhaps their biggest weakness right now is one of the most dysfunctional business institutions in the world, which is gas problem. So much money is stolen, from gas problem. It is such an inefficient company and with shale gas coming on line in North America and now incrick going to happen in Europe. Not to mention Qatar. The basically Russians need to sell their energy much more than Turkey needs to buy it. I think strategically Turkey is in a very strong position in the fact that a plane coming from Russia to be forced to land, isn't going to change that equation.

VOLKAN VURAL- On that question, let me say that as a old Russian hand, I didn't understand the reason why this plane has been down. But I agree that this can be contained because, Russia has more interests in Turkey than Turkey has. I mean Turkey is an important market for Russia. I don't think they will jeopardize this situation. But on the other hand, knowing the Russians, they have noted this incident and it may take another form to retaliate, but in a very subtle way. But, the more important I believe that Turkish foreign policy started with the premise that we should create a peaceful environment in our area so that our trade can flourish. But the circumstances have reached a point where this premise has not been proven great. I mean, it is not Turkey's fault but the situation has come to that point both in Iraq, in Syria, Iran, now less Russia I don't think it will be jeopardized, but still, this whole situation proves to be a big big challenge for Turkey especially this year and the coming year.

BİR KATILIMCI- The panel did not spend much time on Obama's foreign policy if he is reelected. And of course they did so, on the assumption that his foreign policy orientation is quite well known. But, does this mean that if he is re-elected we will see the same foreign policy approach and

practices, especially in our region? Or shall we expect some change some bolder actions in the certain areas if he is re-elected or does this a wishful thinking? Thank you.

MICHAEL O'HANLON- Thanks I'll be quick because I am sure others want to comment. I think over all his actions will be slightly less bold than in his first term, where he tripled forces in Afghanistan, authorized an assault on Osama Bin Laden's compound in Pakistan, contributed to the NATO intervention that targeted Muammar Gaddafi in the end. That was his first term. We have already seen a transition to a slightly less forward leaning foreign policy, which Governor Romney and Congressmen Ryan have picked up on. And for them it is not that effective of a critique, because the American people basically agree with Obama. But it has a little bit of attraction over this Benghazi scandal and on a few other issues. But the overall point is that, that's the overall trend I think. But Iran is the big potential exception. Whatever we say about other trends, if either Barrack Obama or Mitt Romney winds up as the second great doer from the White House in the Middle East in the 21st century, attacking Iranian nuclear facilities to prevent them from further enriching, that will dominate any other trend and trump any other trend. And so what I just said initially will be proven wrong.

RICHARD BURT- I am tempted to use the old line after hearing Michael here, about, if you only consider military power as your only instrument of influence, than every problem looks like a nail. If the hammer is the only thing you can rely on, then you are going to use it. And rather than use the word Obama going to be more "bold" I rather raise the question as are you going to be more "creative?" Because there are some, or boldly creative! Because, if you go back, and look and what I think was probably the greatest period of American post-war foreign policy, the Nixon administration, with Henry Kissinger as National Security Advisor, and Secretary of State. Some very bold steps taken but they didn't have just simply to do with the use of military power, military intervention. They had to do with figuring out the way to extract ourselves from Vietnam, which was enormously difficult, engineering an opening with China, and negotiating arms control agreement with Russia, that was a bold strategy, but it did not involve military intervention. Now could Obama be that creative? On one hand, I think he could, I think there is a diplomatic solution that could potentially be reached with Iran. It is going to be highly debatable at home, because I think it does have both a technical component with the working out a regime which Iranians would be able to enrich to 3.5 or 5%, and it would have a political dimension, where we make the Iranians believe that we are not seeking regime change. Could he, by doing what he failed to do in his first term that is when his famous effort to get an Israeli settlement freeze and then because of Israeli and Israel lobby reaction in the U.S. back off to that, would he be prepared to use American carrots and sticks to get the peace process back on track. That's

another area where I think he has Qatar entirely walked away from that issue.

I think also he would be bold if he was prepared and, Michael points out, I think it was purely American domestic politics that led Obama to escalate in Afghanistan. I think he was afraid he got boxed in by the American military, they wanted 40,000 troops, he ended up sending 30,000 surge in Afghanistan. And I think NATO and the U.S. including public opinion would likely get out sooner than 2014 and I think we should seriously investigate how to do that. There is no strategic rationale for why we are still in Afghanistan as far as I am concerned.

So there are some boldly creative things, now remember I started my answer off on the one hand. Now I am going to give you the other hand very briefly. His biggest task in the next administration is to reach a compromise involving the budget and the deficit. And that must be something in my view is going to resemble the famous Simpson-Bowles package, where you had both new revenues, ie. some tax increases, which and it is not enough just to increase taxes for the rich, you are going to have to increase taxes for everybody in my view. And you are going to have to also cut government spending that means cutting into the famous entitlements. That kind of compromise is going to take up a huge amount of political capital for Barack Obama if he is re-elected. And it is his job number one. So, the real question is: “could he do that and then move on to these other creative areas of foreign policy?” That point would be... that’s really asking a lot when the presidents starts to become a “lame duck” as he moves into his third year of his presidency.

VOLKAN VURAL- Thank you very much. I think this meeting today, this discussion prove once again how useful the cooperation between TUSIAD and Brookings institution. I wish to thank all the distinguished speakers for their contribution. And I conclude the meeting.

Thank you very much.