

## Military Disengagement from Politics in Turkey: Lessons for Pakistan

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**Abstract** *The armed forces had a predominant role in the Turkish polity until 2002. During 1960 and 2002, the military had staged direct coups, i.e. 1960, 1971, 1980 and 1997 and maintained an indirect role in internal and external politics through various institutions such as National Security Council (NSC), National Unity Command (NUC), Military courts, Military corporations (OYAK), and Military Pension Fund (MPF). However, the rise of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) has replaced the hitherto predominance of the army in Turkish polity. This research paper highlights that AKP has been successful in disengaging the military from politics with mass support, continuous successes in elections, and managing internal and external threats. Further, the manuscript explored the quest of Turkey to become a member of the European Union, great powers support to Tayyab Erdogan on ensuring human rights, and the principle of republicanism have contributed to the AKP project of civilian supremacy over the armed forces.*

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### Introduction

Modern states are composed of various organizations and institutions, each of which is supposed to work within its own constitutional domain. Civilians are responsible for running the political affairs of the state, while the military of a state is constitutionally assigned the duty to defend it against internal and external threats. The interaction between civilian and the military is essential for the maintenance of the modern nation-state system (Finer, 2002). Civil-military relations mean a continuation of distribution and separation of decision-making powers between the unarmed and the armed men in society (Croissant, Kuehn, Lorenz, & Chambers, 2013). More precisely, it describes the relationship between the civil authority of a given society and its military (Wogu & Ibieta, 2014). The relations between civil and military institutions are considered stable, friendly or balanced when they constitutionally perform their allotted duties. Further, there are two different poles that determine the nature and pattern of civil-military

relationships in a state (Chambers & Croissant, 2010).

One pole describes the domain of civilians' duties, and the other determines the sphere of the military. The civilians are authorized in their own domain to make rules and policies and can also change them without feeling any pressure or threat of toppling from the military. Likewise, the armed forces are bound to perform their duties within the domain prescribed by the constitution of a state. Welch observes that when the interaction between civilian and military institutions is friendly or civilian institutions run political affairs of the state, the state is often considered stable and democratic. He further argues that when the armed forces occupy dominant positions in the political administration of a state, it turns autocratic or praetorian (Welch, 1976).

Until 2002, the Turkish armed forces remained highly influential in the state administration. During 1923-2002, they frequently violated modern democratic tenets

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that resulted in a praetorian Turkish polity. For nearly eighty years, the Turkish armed forces remained entrenched in the republic either directly or indirectly. The armed forces staged direct coups and toppled down elected governments in 1960, 1970, 1980 and 1997, respectively. Moreover, the Turkish army indirectly remained entrenched through various institutions like National Security Council (NSC), National Unity Command (NUC), Military courts, Military corporations (OYAK), and Military Pension Fund (MPF). However, after 2002 with the emergence of Justice & development party, the era of transformation in civil-military relations started that reduced the hitherto enhanced influence of the armed forces. A detailed account of civil-military relations in Turkey in pre and post-2002 scenarios are given below.

### **Civil-Military Relations in Turkey Before 2002**

After the establishment of Turkey as a republic in 1923, the Turkish armed forces occupied a central place in the political system. They had exercised a dominant position in internal politics, foreign policy, economy and education ([Toktas & Kurt, 2010](#)). The constitutional history of Turkey unveils that there have been frequent military interventions in politics. For the first time, Turkish armed forces staged a coup in 1960, the second time the military entered into politics in 1971, for the third time coup d'état took place in 1980, and the last military incursion happened in 1997 ([Özpek, 2014](#)). However, the role of the armed forces did not come to an end here; they started further entrenchment in social and economic spheres. The Turkish military has become a major factor in the economy and has affiliated itself with companies inside the society. In 1960 the army associated itself with various Turkish private economic enterprises like automobiles, steel, and small industries ([Lautemann, 2000](#)). Moreover, the military has become so entrenched in the political, economic, and social spheres of the Turkish society that till 2002 it was unimaginable for civilian institutions to keep them detached from politics. Further, the military projected itself as a sacred institution and left no room for public criticism ([Özpek, 2014](#)).

The armed forces of Turkey have established certain institutions by which they have gained and exerted power over the political system.

Among them, the National Unity Committee (NUC) 1960, 1961 and 1982 Constitutions, National Security Council (NSC) 1961, Armed Forces Mutual Assistance Fund (OYAK), Armed Forces Pension Fund 1960, and various working groups associated with the military were the formal institutions which were used by the military for the purpose of gaining strength in the society (Thomas, 2005:6). Consequently, these institutions expanded the role of the army in the Turkish polity. The performances and functions of all these institutions were beyond parliamentary control ([Lenze, 2011](#): 206). These institutions and organizations were performing different functions.

First, the National Unity Committee had a dual-task; it had worked as a cabinet in the interim government of 1961 for 17 months, and as a constituent assembly, it had replaced the constitution of 1924 with a new constitution in 1961. Second, the Armed Forces Mutual Assistance Fund (OYAK) is an institution established for the purpose of protecting the military's corporate interests. The military and civil servants are contributing 10% of their salary to it in return for a retirement pension. OYAK has gained the status of an industry in Turkey. It has established its partnerships with different industries through joint ventures like OYAK-Renault in the automobile industry. It is now a business enterprise for retired military officers and their families. Through OYAK, the military in Turkey has got financial independence.

Unlike western democracies, the military in Turkey was independent of the civilian government's financial support. Third, the National Security Council (NSC) was mainly concerned with the formulation of foreign and domestic policies. It was authorized to advise and recommend policies to the Council of Ministers regarding internal and external issues. Till 2002, the Council of Ministers was unable to regret the policy guidelines of NSC. The national security policy document has been the special privilege of NSC. Unlike western democracies, the document was held secret, and no one could reach it ([Lenze Jr, 2011](#)). The NSC initially started its work as an advisory body, but later on, it became the primary means in the hands of the military by which they could thrust its policies on the government. Until 2002 these institutions had greater impacts on the political system of Turkey.

Further, the Turkish military has also established its own courts whose proceedings

could not be questioned. The Janus-headed judiciary in Turkey was reflected in the coexistence of civil and military courts. The military's judicial autonomy was legally secured under the law of military criminal procedures of 1930 and through the establishment of military courts and the court of appeals. The jurisdiction, composition and function of the military court of appeals impaired the independence of civilian courts. Autonomy in judicial prosecution made the military personnel untouchable before the law and resulted in massive human rights violations ([Sooyler, 2015](#)). Hence, the establishment of military courts in Turkey has replaced the civilian sphere of the domain in the political system.

It is a fact that Turkish armed forces enjoyed a hegemonic position in the political system and remained beyond democratic control till 2002. There were multiple factors that contributed to the strength of the military and debarred the civilian institutions from the application of democratic control. Kemalism, the philosophy of Mustafa Kamal, was used by the armed forces as a protective shield against civilians. Huntington opines greater attachment to a nation's ideology results in stable civil-military relations, while detachment from the ideology gives way to unstable and imbalanced relationships between civilian and military institutions ([Huntington, 1981](#)). The paradox in Turkish society was another factor that contributed to the enhanced position of the military. It implies that there existed a paradox between secularism and political Islam, republicanism and authoritarianism. Likewise, the armed forces in Turkey had established certain institutions like NSC and NUC that played a significant role in military entrenchment in politics. Further, the armed forces were pursuing their corporate interests through OYAK, military business attitude. Geographical significance and major powers assistance during the cold war has also been a factor for the strength of the Turkish military. Finally, Turkish public and societal support had also added to the strength of the military in Turkey.

### Civil-Military Relations in Turkey after 2002

With the emergence of AKP in Turkish polity in 2002, the pattern of civil-military relationships has undergone several changes. The praetorian military nature in the republic has reduced to a

larger extent. Its role in politics has minimized after the civilian control over the army is materialized. Now, civil institutions like parliament (Grand National Assembly), political parties, and civil society are gaining momentum while the military has remained with its prime duty of securing the borders against existential threats. Thus, civilian supremacy has replaced the praetorian and tutelary role of the military in the Republic of Turkey.

The civilian institutions, through various reforms, are successful up to a greater extent in minimizing the role of the army. A new penal code has been adopted, which has revised the anti-terror law and abolished the state security courts. The role of NSC has been reduced to an advisory/consultative body. In addition, its composition has also been changed in order to give a majority to civilian members. Likewise, it has been decided that the post of Secretary-General would no longer be reserved exclusively for a military person. In order to enhance the transparency of defence expenditures, the court of auditors has been authorized to audit the accounts and transactions of all types of organizations, including the state properties owned by the armed forces. This has allowed for civilian supervision over the military budget. The provision in the law on Higher Education, which allowed the General Staff to select one member of the Higher Education, has been annulled ([Toktas & Kurt, 2010](#)). These reforms have dramatically reduced the role and dominance of the military in Turkish politics. Thus, Turkey has started its journey towards bringing democratic control over its armed forces.

Though the Turkish armed forces made intervening attempts in 2007 and 2016, respectively, they remained unsuccessful in the face of the public who chanted slogans of democracy. "No Sharia, no Coup, we want a democratic Turkey". Various factors like Turkish nation support, factionalism inside the Turkish military, EU eligibility criteria, great powers support, and AKP's policy have deterred the army to sabotage the reform process undertaken by AKP.

### Transformation of Civil-Military Relations

There are variously internal and external factors that have contributed to balanced civil-military relations in the political system of Turkey. The emergence of AKP and its policies like conjoining

Islam and secularism, economic reforms, Erdogan's charisma, the continuous victory of AKP, factionalism inside the military, space in Kemalism, i.e. reformism and republicanism and public support for democracy as internal and Turkey's relations with major powers and neighbouring states, external and internal threats, and the rising trends of Europeanization and globalization as the external factors which have played a significant role in Turkey's journey towards substantial democratization and making the military subservient to the dictates of civilian authority.

### Performance of AKP

Mustafa Chowdhury argues that when civil institutions obtain mass support, the influence of the armed forces in politics can best be reduced ([Chowdhury, 1988](#)). Popular support has provided a solid foundation to AKP for bringing social, economic, and political reforms, which have significantly affected civil-military relationships in Turkey (Keyman, 2012). AKP has won the hearts and minds of the people by addressing the economic crisis in 2002. Before 2002, Turkey was facing widespread unemployment, currency devaluation and low GDP rate. It was a proper time for the party to gain popularity by delivering services and overcoming the economic meltdown of 2002 (Jenkins, 2007). The party won 34.3 percent national vote and the majority of seats in the Grand National Assembly (GNA) in the 2002 elections. Since the emergence of AKP, it has been successful in addressing the economic crisis. During AKP's rule, per capita income reached from \$3660 to \$11,500 and further infrastructural, educational, and social development programmes were undertaken (Cassano, 2011).

After these accomplishments, the party went on further victories in the elections of 2007 and 2011 (Jenkins, 2011). According to Ijaz Khattak, Professor of International Relations in the University of Peshawar, the party performance and continuous victories in the elections have enabled it in the pursuance of widespread reforms in the republic (Personal communication, January 11, 2017). Bican Şahin, a Turkish Professor of Hacettepe University, based in Ankara, also argued that the AKP under Erdogan has delivered services that have greatly satisfied the demands of Turkish people (personal

communication, January 9, 2017). Thus, in the face of public support and AKP successes, the military has remained with no other choice but to surrender to the civilian government and its reforms agenda. Moreover, better socio-economic conditions provide for better civilian oversight of the military ([Wogu & Ibieta, 2014](#)) and have observed that better socio-economic conditions of the people result in a viable civilian control over the armed forces.

### Continuity in Political Process

The AKP has assumed power in 2002 after winning 34.28 percent of the popular vote in the general election. That victory landed AKP with two-thirds of the seats in Grand National Assembly (GNA) under an electoral law that limited parliamentary seats to political parties are earning at least 10 percent of the popular vote ([Güngör, 2016](#)). AKP's victory was sweeping by the standards of Turkey, which was historically accustomed to rule by coalition governments. In July 2007 general elections, AKP won another landslide victory. Since 1950, AKP has been the only party that has gained 41.6 percent of votes and acquired 341 seats out of 550 in the Parliament ([Güngör, 2016](#)). Shortly after the election, on August 28, 2007, an AKP member, Abdullah Gül, was elected as the 11<sup>th</sup> President of Turkey. AKP's continuous electoral successes continued till the 2011 parliamentary elections, where once again it obtained 49.83 percent of votes and 326 seats in the parliament. Three times consecutive victories have made the party capable of bringing drastic reforms in the republic. Thus Turkey's transformation towards civilian supremacy over the armed forces has been characterized by the continuity of the democratization process under the same political party, AKP.

### Factionalism inside Military

Different factions have emerged inside the Turkish military during the 1970s. One group was known as absolutists, also known as traditionalists, and the other was called gradualists known as liberalists. The former was the proponent of the status quo, while the latter was the advocate of liberalism. The liberalists supported a modern Turkey and thus backed the AKP pro-west and Europeanization policies ([Aydinli, 2009](#)). Bican Şahin is of the opinion that four factions have been observed inside the



Turkish armed forces. These are pro-NATO, pro-China, Russia and Iran, Kemalists and Islamists. He argues that though factionalism has affected the professionalism of the military, it has provided the civilian government with an opportunity to initiate stern reforms like civilian control over the armed forces. Moreover, factionalism within the military can hinder the possibilities of military interventions in politics. As we have seen it on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2016, the attempted coup remained unsuccessful due to the existence of varying groups inside the Turkish military (Personal Communication, January 9, 2017).

Although factionalism can create uncertainty, it can also help establish equilibrium by putting different groups against each other and fracture cooperation among those seeking to undermine democratization. As discussed above, factionalism within the Turkish military during the 1970s ensured that no faction could marshal sufficient support to affect a full takeover of the government. So long as one strong faction within the military remains committed to democracy, it can facilitate democratic progress and also assist in the extrication of the military from politics by allowing politicians to seize upon and exploit divisions within the military (Varol, 2013). And when a group inside the military is committed to secularism and authoritarianism, it will create obstacles in the way of civilian government. It is a fact that in 1997 a sort of soft coup was staged against the Refah Party since the party attempted incorporation of Islam in its internal and foreign policies (Varol, 2013).

The military has been regarded as a trustful institution in Turkey. However, the emergence of division inside the armed forces has adverse impacts on them. Moriss Janowitz says armies with fractured or weak internal cohesion will have a lesser capacity to intervene in domestic politics (Janowitz, 2017). In Turkey, the civilian government under AKP found factionalism as a launching pad for bringing reforms in the system. The party picked up those like-minded officials from the top brass who did not oppose the Europeanization process. Erdogan developed friendly relations with them and appointed them in important positions. Chief of Staffs, General Ozkok (2002-2006), General Buyukanit (2006-2009) and Basbug (2009) are those military generals who have never tried to sabotage the reforms process undertaken by AKP in Turkey

(Aydinli, 2009). Buyukanit's Chief of Staff statement reflects the gradualist outlook towards the AKP government. He stated,

*"In October 2007, the Prime Minister asked our opinions about the operation in Northern Iraq covered in the resolution. We submitted our opinion on 1st Nov 2007. Thereby, we communicated our proposal to the Prime Minister. The PM and Ministry of Foreign Affairs are currently working on these proposals. This will turn into a government directive and will be transmitted to us. Indeed, that is the normal planning procedure. Now, the authority resides with the government. They will assess. If they deem that an operation is necessary, then they will say that 'such operation should be made, we now wait for the government directive. We will do what is necessary according to that directive. There is no delay in the process'".*

This statement of the Turkish military's chief has clearly shown that the gradualist faction in the military supports democratization, i.e. democratic control over armed forces.

### The Principle of Republicanism

Mustafa Kamal, leader of the Turk nation, had restructured the political system, after the abolishment of the Caliphate in 1923, on six principles, popularly known as Kemalism. Kemalism was a changing step for Turkey towards embracing western and modern culture. Ataturk tried to establish a new, modern and western type of Turkey (Bardakci, 2013). He led the Turkish nation out of the Ottoman Empire through republicanism, secularism, nationalism, statism, reformism and moved it towards a modern world (Zürcher, 2017). The principles of republicanism and reformism have played a significant and contributing role in the reforms process commenced by the AKP. Turkey implemented these reforms, which have altogether changed military supremacy. The military, which is the harbinger of Kemalism, has naturally accepted AKP's reforms.

Republicanism implies the rule of law, rights, equality, justice, liberty and public participation. It implies democracy which is replacing authoritarianism in Turkey (Heper, 2011). All the past military's encroachment in Turkish politics was caused by the pertinent threat to the sacred philosophy of Kemalism. Wherever the junta felt any threat to the untouchable principles of Kemalism, they did not hesitate to step into

civilian affairs. Thus, Kemalism as an ideology has played the role of a double edge razor. On the one hand, it has caused military interventions in Turkish politics; on the other, the principles of republicanism and reformism have promoted the recent reforms undertaken by AKP. Consequently, these two principles, i.e. reformism and republicanism, have put the military subservient to civilians who, since 2002, are deriving their strength from them. Of course, as a reaction Turkish military made coup attempts in 2007 and 2016; respectively, however, they did not succeed in the face of civilians.

### European Union Accession

Geographically Turkey is a gateway to Europe. Since the 1990s, Turkey has been struggling to get membership of the European Union (EU), but the internal political mechanism and issues like human rights violation, lack of accountability, non-observance of the rule of law, and unbalanced or unfriendly civil-military relations hindered her bid for the membership ([Toktaş & Kurt, 2010](#)). These internal institutional issues had been the main obstacles for Turkey in her quest for EU membership. EU summit was held in Helsinki, capital of Finland, in 1999, in which Turkey's candidacy for the EU was conditioned with addressing the above issues. Hence, Europeanization and Turkey's quest for it devised civilian supremacy in Turkey. The civilian governments in Turkey started reforms accordingly in the light of Helsinki and Copenhagen criteria ([Karaosmanoğlu, 2011](#)).

The EU demanded that the position and role of the Chief of Staff would be minimized; second, it was demanded that structural changes were to be made in the NSC, which meant numbers of civilians to be increased and NSC would take a secondary role in the security affairs and state security courts were to be established, and limitations are imposed on laws regarding the state of emergency ([Heper, 2011](#)). Sheheryar Khan, a Pakistani scholar, having expertise in Turkish polity, argued that AKP quickly embraced the proposed reforms after entering into parliament in 2002. The AKP has been successful in bringing democratic reforms in light of EU proposed criteria. He further argued that the Turkish experience had highlighted the importance of democratic international

organizations in normalizing domestic civil-military relations. Again, he opined that it was a proper opportunity for the party to embrace EU conditions by which it could easily keep the military detached from politics (Personal communication, January 3, 2017).

AKP has modified Article 118 of the 1982 Constitution, which has limited the role of NSC only to an advisory/consultative body. Further, the composition of the NSC has also been changed with an increase in the number of civilian members ([Kayaoglu, 2012](#)). In addition, the Court of Auditors is now authorized to audit the transactions of the armed forces. New provisions have been made for the transparent use of public expenditure. For the first time, the Turkish parliament has been able to keep an oversight on the activities of the armed forces ([Karaosmanoğlu, 2011](#)). Under the reforms, the military men are no more eligible to occupy portfolios in civilian boards. According to Bican Şahin, the NSC members on the supervisory Board of Cinema, Video, and Music have been withdrawn, and military members on the Higher Education Board and the Higher Broadcasting Board have also been removed. He further said that the armed forces are now not in the position to exercise their influence on the policies concerning education, arts, and broadcasting (personal communication, January 9, 2017). The state security courts had also been abolished in 2004.

These developments have altogether changed the dominance of the military, which was considered as the guardian of Kemalism, in Turkish politics ([Heper, 2011](#)). According to Ijaz Khattak, the rule of law is taking its roots in Turkey, human rights are being guaranteed and protected in the republic, the public now enjoys the right to express their opinion, political parties are getting maturity, and above all, democracy is replacing authoritarianism in Turkey (personal communication, January 11, 2017). EU has provided a major impetus for adopting legal and constitutional/institutional changes to curb the influence of the Turkish military. The demands to subordinate the military to civilian leaders came primarily from the EU ([Aydinli, 2009](#); [Varol, 2013](#)). Thus, the criteria set out for the entrance of Turkey into the EU has played a catalytic role in the transformations of civil-military relations in the Republic of Turkey.

## International Support to AKP

AKP has learnt a lesson from the past experiences of military adventurism in the republic. All the previous military interventions into politics had been caused particularly by the government Islamists policies (Toktaş & Kurt, 2010). Nevertheless, AKP, which emerged in 2002, is the conglomeration of traditionalists and innovationists. AKP was established in August 2001 as a result of the divide between 'traditionalists' and 'innovationists' within the Islamist Virtue Party (*Fazilet Partisi*) (FP). After the Constitutional Court's decision to ban FP in 2001, traditionalists formed the Felicity Party (*Saadet Partisi*) (SP) under the leadership of Necmettin Erbakan and Recai Kutan, while innovationists formed the Justice and Development Party (*Adaletve Kalkınma Partisi*) (AKP) under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (Usman Khan & Jamal Shah, 2021).

After the establishment of AKP, its leaders followed a deviation from the Islamist experiences and sought readjustment of its policies towards politics and religion. The party adopted a secular, liberal, and moderate approach towards internal and external politics (Yilidirim, 2010). The parliamentary elections of 2002 marked the end of the critical juncture where AKP's leadership renounced Islamist roots and saw the EU accession process and democratization reforms as proof of their transformation from Islamists to the pro-western political elite. Consequently, this policy has served as a protective shield from possible military intervention and an opportunity to curb the influence of the military in the political affairs of the republic (Sooyler, 2015).

Moreover, this approach of AKP has significantly attracted the support of the international community (Altunışık, 2008). The assertion of regional Turkish soft power, designed and implemented by AKP, has led to widespread international support for the government. AKP has skillfully handled the issue of political Islam and secularism. It has taken a liberal stance on political Islam. The party leadership has adroitly balanced secularism and political Islam. This policy has been greatly appreciated by the international community, particularly US and EU (Altunışık, 2008).

Likewise, AKP has adopted a liberal and pro-western modernization approach. It has presented Turkey as a modern, democratic,

secular Muslim state and has been seen as the primary designer and projector of Turkey's soft power. Erdogan, who is the brainchild of an Islamist party, has also changed his policy and mindset regarding political Islam during the ongoing war against the radical Islamists. His outlook towards politics got altered as a result of the major powers rivalry against the radical Islamists. These developments have enabled Erdogan's political party to get international recognition which made him a popular leader worldwide (Keyman, 2012).

## External and Internal Threats

Michael Desch argues that external threats greatly influence the civil-military partnership of a state. He contends that lesser external and internal threats pave the way to an unpredictable civil-military relationship (Desch, 2008). This implies that when a state confronts low internal and external threats, civilian control cannot be explained in explicit terms. In other words, when a state is receiving lesser or no external and internal threats, the civilian control over the armed forces may either be weak or strong. In the case of Turkey, the civilian control over the armed forces is gaining strength, as evident from reforms undertaken by AKP, which has pushed the military back to barracks. According to Bican Şahin, the neighbouring countries do not pose any threat to the territorial integrity of Turkey. Cyprus has not remained a threatening issue anymore between Turkey and Greece. President Erdogan has adopted a policy of friendship with his neighbours. On internal threats, he commented that the Kurdish terrorist organization (PKK) had posed threats to internal security during the 70s and 80s. However, the Turkish armed forces have successfully overcome PKK terrorist activities these days (personal communication, January 9, 2017).

Moreover, Sheheryar Khan also commented that Turkey's relations with her neighbouring states were friendly after the emergence of AKP in 2002 (personal communication January 3, 2017). Both the scholars were of the opinion that political Islam had not remained any more an internal threat to the security of the republic. Further, they contended that the influence of the armed forces concerning foreign policy has also been reduced up to a greater extent. Turkey has taken several steps 'through zero problems with her neighbour policy' towards bringing friendly

relations with these neighbours (Zafar, 2012). Bican Sahin argued that no doubt Turkey has been experiencing unfriendly relations with Syria on account of civil war and migration; however, Turkey's civilians and military are having unanimity towards Syria (personal communication, January 9, 2017). It implies that civilians and the military are on the same page towards Syria, which ensures civil-military cooperation in Turkey. Thus, the internal and external threat perceptions have greater impacts on the civil-military relationship of Turkey. In Turkey, the civilian government is gaining strength over the armed forces as a consequence of lesser internal and external threats.

### Lessons for Pakistan

Pakistan shares a similar pattern of civil-military relations with Turkey. Like Turkey, the armed forces of Pakistan have staged four direct coups, i.e. 1958, 1969, 1977 and 1999, and has an indirect influence on the Pakistani state politics despite the presence of elected assemblies. This role can be minimized, as has been the case in Turkey if Pakistani political parties and political leaders play the role like AKP and Tayyab Erdogan has done in Turkey in the last two decades. Further, the political parties can get mass support, a *sin qua non* of civilian supremacy, only when they focus on the problems of common and poor Pakistani. Again, internal threats emanating from extremism and terrorism can be managed only when politicians keep Pakistani citizens engaged in statecraft. The alienated and disenfranchised often opt the way of extremism and terrorism. The socio-economic betterment of the marginalized paves the way to institutional trust, which can lead to the supremacy of the civilian as has happened in Turkey. Further, external threats can be countered through robust foreign policy decision making as AKP has done with Greece in the case of Cyprus. Pakistani civilian policymakers can learn a lesson from Turkey, which managed their external relations with their neighbours. Last but not least, continuity in the political process is the best panacea of the civil-military conundrum of a state. Four consecutive electoral victories of AKP have enabled it to keep the military detached from politics. Pakistani civilian and political leaders are required to learn from the mistakes

and may come up with a policy of mutual toleration and compromises in order to erect a barricade in the way of future military adventurism in state politics.

### Conclusion

To sum up, till 2002, the Turkish armed forces exercised a dominant position in the Republic of Turkey. They removed civilian governments four times, i.e. the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1997 after staging coup, d'état. Moreover, they maintained their influence through various institutions like NSC, NUC, military courts, education institutions etc. They also had dominance because of OYAK, military business and corporate interest, and Military Pension Fund (MPF). Similarly, the military's budget and its policy documents remained highly confidential. Various factors like Kamalism, a paradox in the political system, military established institutions, corporate interests and a cold war between the communists and non-communists had contributed to the strength of the military that had debarred the civilians from bringing democratic control over the armed forces.

However, with the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, civil-military relations in Turkey have undergone a process of transformation. This transformation has successfully reduced the praetorian's nature of the armed forces. The civilian has been gaining supremacy over the armed forces in Turkey. Multiple factors have been contributing, since 2002, to the civilian in bringing democratic or civilian control. For instance, Europeanization, i.e. EU accession, the performance of AKP, continuity in political processes, international support to Erdogan, the charisma of Erdogan, lesser internal and external threats, friendly relations with neighbours, better socio-economic conditions, and factionalism inside the military have made possible Turkey's successful journey towards bringing democratic control over her armed forces. Though the armed forces have attempted several coups, like in 2007 and 2016, respectively, it remained unsuccessful and abortive because the Turkish nation has strongly condemned the attempts and supported Erdogan against military adventurism. The story of civil-military relations in Turkey gives interesting lessons to Pakistani civilians and political leaders.



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