

NORTHERN IRAQI KURDS IN
TURKEY-IRAQI RELATIONS
(1945- 1991)

AUTHOR
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PREFACE

This work, which addresses the factor of the Iraqi Kurds within the context of Turkey–Iraq relations, emerged from the idea that publishing my master’s thesis—submitted at Karabük University in 2024—would be beneficial. I would like to express my sincere gratitude, first and foremost, to my thesis advisor and the editor of this book, Prof. Dr. Ersin MÜEZZİNOĞLU, as well as to Prof. Dr. Hacı Bayram SOY, Prof. Dr. İsmail ŞAHİN, and Dr. Abdül Samet ÇELİKÇİ, who generously shared their knowledge and experience and contributed to this work.

Melike EKİZ KILIÇ

1. TURKEY-IRAQ RELATIONS BEFORE WORLD WAR II

Before discussing Turkey-Iraq relations before World War II, it is necessary to address Iraq's political and geographic structure. Home to diverse civilizations and diverse cultural, ethnic, religious, and sectarian groups, Iraqi territory was recognized as under Ottoman sovereignty with the Treaty of Qasr-I-Shirin signed between the Ottoman Empire and Iran in 1639. Iraq remained under Ottoman rule until 1918, but with the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire as a result of World War I, control over the region was lost.¹ The Ottoman Empire administered Iraq as three separate provinces: Baghdad, Basra, and Mosul. These three provinces came under British mandate in the early 1920s and gained independence in 1932.² Iraq is geographically bordered by Turkey to the north, Saudi Arabia to the south, Iran to the east, and Syria and Jordan to the west.³ Iraq, which has rich oil resources and is located in the Middle East, is divided into four regions with significantly different climatic characteristics and surface formations: the mountainous region in the north and east, the Al Jazeera region extending to the foothills of the mountains, the desert region extending to Saudi Arabia and Jordan in the west, and the region covered by the alluviums formed by the Shatt al-Arab between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers.⁴ Divided into four different regions, most of Iraq's population today is Arab. After Arabs, the largest ethnic groups in the region are Kurds and Turkmen, respectively. The Iraqi population consists of 55% Shia Arabs, 22% Sunni Arabs, %19 Kurds, %3 Turkmen, and the remaining 1% comprised of other groups.⁵ According to the 2021 census, the country's

¹ Hayati Doğanay& Selçuk Hayli, "Irak'ın Başlıca Coğrafi Özellikleri ve Petrol Yatakları", Uluslararası İkinci Ortadoğu Semineri (Dünden Bugüne Irak), 27-29 May 2004, Elazığ, s.2.

² Hasan Emir Aktaş, "Irak Siyasi Sisteminin ve Hükümet Yapısının Meşruiyet Meselesi", Kafkas Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi, Vol 1, Issue 1, (2020): s. 231.

³ "Irak Ülke Profili", TC Ticaret Bakanlığı Dış Temsilcilikler ve Uluslararası Etkinlikler Genel Müdürlüğü, https://www.sto.org.tr/Portals/15/dis%20ticaret/ulke/Irak_Ulke_Profil.pdf

⁴ Erdoğan Akkan, "Irak "Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/irak--ulke#2-ortacag-musulman-cografyacılarına-gore-irak>

⁵ Haydar Karaalp, "Farklı Etnik, Dini ve Mezhebi Bileşenlerin Mozaigi; Irak", Anadolu Ajansı, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/farkli-etnik-dini-ve-mezhebi-bilesenlerin-mozaigi-irak-/1641558>

population is around 41 million.⁶ While Iraq, encompassing diverse groups, is officially the Republic of Iraq, its current form of government is a federal parliamentary republic.⁷ As with other colonial territories, Britain maintained control of decision-making mechanisms on critical issues in Iraq. on the other hand, the coups that took place in 1936, 1941, 1958, 1963, and 1968 hindered the establishment of political and social stability in the country.⁸ At the same time, political and religious conflicts between ethnic groups within the country hindered the unity of the region's people.

1.1. Iraq's Establishment Process and Kurdish Expectations

With the conquest of Baghdad, Basra, and Mosul during the reigns of Sultan Selim I and Suleiman the Magnificent, a significant portion of present-day Iraq came under Ottoman rule. With the Provincial Regulation Law adopted on October 8, 1864, Basra and Mosul, formerly provinces, were made sanjaks and annexed to Baghdad. However, Basra became a province in 1884, and Mosul in 1886. At the beginning of the 20th century, it is difficult to speak of political and social unity within these three provinces that constitute present-day Iraq.⁹ Therefore, in Iraq, which had not yet formed a integrity prior to the British mandate, cannot be considered a state or a nation. According to Article 22 of the League of Nations, the duty of ensuring the welfare and development of communities lacking self-governance required that they be placed under the protection of a mandatory state until they attained the capacity to govern themselves. Deprived of this capacity following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I, Iraq was placed under British mandate following the San Remo Conference held in April 1920. For the British government, which assumed control of Iraq, one of the first challenges it faced in the region was to end the conflict between the diverse and socially fragmented communities. In particular, conflicts between the Arab and Kurdish populations posed a significant obstacle to maintaining order in Iraq.¹⁰ Gertrude Bell, who was working on a unified Iraq plan, was warned by an American missionary that she was ignoring a deep-rooted history:

If you try to draw a line around Iraq and call it a political entity, you're ignoring four thousand years of history! Assyria always looked west,

⁶ "Iraq", Undata, , <https://data.un.org/en/iso/iq.html>

⁷ Irak Ülke Bülteni, DEİK, (2017): s. 1.

⁸ Aktaş, op. cit., p. 232.

⁹ Gürkan Pamukçu, "Yapay Bir Devlet Olarak Irak'ın Kuruluşu", Social Sciences Studies Journal, Vol 4 Issue 19, (2018): p. 2362-2363.

¹⁰ İsmail Şahin & Cemile Şahin & Samet Yüce, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı Sonrası İngiltere'nin Irak'ta Devlet Kurma Çabaları", Gazi Akademik Bakış, Vol 8 Issue 15, (2014): p.117-118.

east, and north, while Babylonia looked south. They've never been a single entity. You need to take your time to unite them, and this should be done gradually. They don't yet have a sense of nationhood.¹¹

Because Iraq's population is ethnically and religiously diverse, as a country creating a single nation have occurred difficult. Along with the Arabs, who constitute the majority of the population, the Kurds, who have their own language and culture, consider northern Iraq and the neighboring regions of Turkey and Iran their ancestral homeland and desire to maintain their cultural and political autonomy. In this direction, the Kurds resisted the centralization and assimilation efforts of the British mandated Iraq. This situation shaped the ongoing struggle in modern Iraq from its founding to the present day. The difficulties in integrating Iraq's diverse communities into a single state arose with a tribe rebellion in June 1920. The rebellion was emerged by anti-British sentiment, and foreign auspice over Iraq was rejected. In the months-long uprising, Britain suppressed the rebellion, but suffered significant losses in troops and capital.¹² The primary objectives of the Cairo Conference of March 12, 1921, which played a significant role in the creation of the modern Iraqi state, were to reduce the number of British troops in Iraq, to reduce Britain's financial burden, and to determine the regions of Mesopotamia that should be retained.¹³ Britain then began searching for a ruler who would be accepted by the majority of the Iraqi population. To this end, Emir Faisal, an internationally renowned Arab, a member of the Hashemite family, and a descendant of the Prophet, was appointed king of Iraq in 1921.¹⁴ When King Faisal was crowned under British protection in August 1921, the situation on the country's northern borders was uncertain. For the Kurds, whose fate would be determined by the decision made regarding northern Iraq, a common expectation was the continuation of tribal autonomy. With this expectation, the Kurds demanded the continuation of tribal autonomy even if they were incorporated into Iraq or Turkey. Kurdish tribal leader Sheikh Mahmud Barzanji demand was the establishment of a Kurdish state under British protection or the guarantee of Kurdish autonomy.¹⁵ An agreement signed between Britain and Iraq on October 10, 1922, stipulated that Iraq would consult Britain before making decisions concerning matters affecting

¹¹ David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, Henry Holt and Company, New York 1989, s. 451

¹² William L. Cleveland, *Modern Ortadoğu Tarihi*, (translated by Mehmet Harmancı), Agora Kitaplığı, Istanbul 2008, p.230,231.

¹³ Şahin & Şahin& Yüce, op. cit., p. 126.

¹⁴ Cleveland, op. cit., p. 232

¹⁵ Pamukçu, op. cit., p. 2371.

Britain, that British officials would be appointed to key positions, and that British intelligence and military privileges would continue. Thus, Britain secured its interests in Iraq. By 1930, Britain had secured its rights over Iraq and somehow decided to end the mandate. Consequently, Iraq joined the League of Nations as an independent state on October 3, 1932.¹⁶ Kurds had periodically engaged in struggles for self-determination both before and after the independence of the Iraqi state. However, although the Kurds had the idea of establishing an "independent Kurdistan", their tribal leaders' desire was to protect and expand tribal interests rather than to preserve Kurdish identity. This ideology prevented the development of a national consciousness that would mobilize all Kurds.¹⁷

1.2. The Mosul Issue

The starting point for the Iraqi regime's relations with Turkey was the Ankara Treaty, signed because of Mosul in 1921. Mosul, which means "crossroads of roads or tributaries of the tigris river," history of Mosul dates back to many different civilizations, from the Babylonian kingdom to the Persians. The region came under Muslim Arab rule during the reign of Caliph Omar, when Islam began to spread rapidly. From this date on, Mosul acquired its identity as a Muslim city and came under Ottoman rule during the reign of Yavuz Sultan Selim.¹⁸ Today, Mosul is a region in northern Iraq, has the rich oil resources of the Middle East and a convergence of important trade routes. Due to its geographical location and rich mineral resources, the region has always attracted the attention of foreign powers. Consequently, Britain attempted to take Mosul and Kirkuk from the hands of the Ottoman Empire, which was defeated in the First World War.¹⁹ Following the division of the Ottoman Empire's territories in the Middle East between Britain and France through the Sykes Picot Agreement during World War I, the ceding of Mosul to France was described by British President Lloyd George as a "mistake" due to the importance of the region.²⁰ This mistake was rectified before it was too late, and, in accordance with Britain's wishes, France ceded Mosul to Britain at the San Remo Conference on April 24, 1920. The primary reason France

¹⁶ Şahin & Şahin & Yüce, op. cit. , p. 127,128,129.

¹⁷ Zülfü Dağdeviren, "Türkiye ile Irak Kürdistan Bölgesel Yönetimi Arasında Siyasi İlişkiler: Devlet Hükümet İlişkileri", Akademik Tarih ve Araştırmalar Dergisi, Vol 3 Issue 2, (2020): p. 202.

¹⁸ *Türk Tarihine Dair Yazılar II*, Editörler: Alparslan Demir, Tuba Kalkan, Eralp Erdoğan, Gece Kitaplığı, Ankara 2017, p. 187-189.

¹⁹ Remzi Kılıç, "Kerkük ve Musul'un Tarihi Coğrafyası", Türklük Bilimi Araştırmaları, Issue 28, (2010): p. 247-258.

²⁰ *Türk Tarihine Dair Yazılar II*, p. 191

did not respond negatively to Britain's request was to secure British support in the Middle East.²¹ Despite Ottoman Army Commander Ali İhsan Pasha's refusal to accept the surrender of Mosul to the British and the withdrawal of Ottoman troops from the region, Britain occupied Mosul on November 1, 1918, based on Articles 7 and 16 of the Armistice of Mudros.²² While the War of Independence was ongoing in Anatolia, Turkey made several attempts to recapture Mosul, which had been occupied by the British and was considered within the borders of the National Pact. To this end, Mustafa Kemal ordered:

Faisal's desire to establish a government in Iraq, and the British's desire to keep Mosul under political mandate, is evident from the political activities undertaken. For this reason, some forces Sending some forces to the Rawandız region to liberate Mosul, which was essentially within the National Pact borders.²³

This task was assigned to District Governor Şefik (Özdemir Bey). The British government announced that it had settled indefinitely in Mosul, which it occupied in violation of international law, on February 1, 1922. In line with these developments, Özdemir Bey achieved success at Rawandız, but because military units needed to be maintained in Western Anatolia and the Straits, these units were forced to be moved westward by order of the General Staff on December 23, 1922. Thus, the possibility of a Turkish-British-Iraqi war ended, and diplomatic channels began to be used to resolve the issue.²⁴ Turkey considered Mosul an integral part of its territory and included it within the National Pact borders, thus characterizing it as a non-negotiable issue. However, the signing of the Mudanya Agreement, war fatigue, and the complexity of Turkey's situation necessitated deferring the matter to the Lausanne Conference.²⁵ During the Lausanne negotiations, the Turkish delegation argued that Mosul was not under British occupation at the time the Armistice of Mudros was signed,

²¹ Payman Abdullah Hamad LAK, "Türkiye- Irak İlişkileri (1920-2010)", Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Master's Thesis, Kahramanmaraş 2015, p. 19-20.

²² Ahmet Eyicil & Peyman Hamadlak, "Türkiye-Irak İlişkilerinde Musul Sorunu", KSÜ Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, Vol 2, Issue 12, (2015): p. 69, For Articles 7 and 16 of the Armistice of Mudros, see: <https://ttk.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/7-Mondros.pdf>

²³ *Türk Tarihine Dair Yazılar II*, p. 191.

²⁴ *İbid*, p. 191.

²⁵ *Türkiye Dış Politikasında 50 Yıl Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı ve Balkan Paktı (1923-1934)*, TC Dışişleri Bakanlığı Araştırma ve Siyaset Planlama Genel Müdürlüğü, p.74

that Turkey did not separate Turks from Kurds, that the Turkish Grand National Assembly Government also includes the Kurds, claimed that Mosul should remain within Turkey by incorporating it into the National Pact borders.²⁶ However, the British delegate, Lord Curzon, insisted that the region remain within Iraq's borders. On January 31, 1923, Ismet Pasha conveyed his views on the current situation to the London representative, Yusuf Kemal Bey, and issued the following instructions regarding the Mosul issue:

We pledge to establish mutual friendship and security with England. It is impossible to foresee any further goal than this. The British have not yet demonstrated a position that would grant us security, whether in matters of Kurdish affairs, the caliphate, or economic relations. The outcry is inadequate. It must be assumed that they have abandoned the idea of intervention in Turkey and are committed to equal treatment. It is my personal desire to elevate relations with England to the level of alliance. However, the reason for expressing this desire is to avoid weakness, to be confident that the British will abandon their harmful influence in our country, and because I consider the alliance of a country with limited resources with great powers dangerous and submissive, I consider this idea remote for now.²⁷

With these words, Ismet Pasha stated that an alliance should be formed in Turkey's relations with England, but since England did not inspire confidence, she considered this idea distant for now. Negotiations between Turkey and Britain regarding the Mosul issue began with the Golden Horn Conference on May 19, 1924.²⁸ In the meeting held between Parliament Speaker Fethi Bey on behalf of the Turkish delegation and the British delegation's high Commissioner Sir Percy Cox, the Turkish delegation proposed a partnership in oil on the condition that Sulaymaniyah, Mosul, and Kirkuk remain within Turkey. He also emphasized that Turks and Kurds were brothers and added that Mosul could not be separated from Turkey. Percy Cox, however, rejected the offers and pushed his demands even further, demanding the Hakkari region

²⁶ Ersin Müezzinoğlu & İsmail Şahin, "Lokarno ve Musul Kıskaçında Türk Dış Politikası", *İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Vol 5, Issue 4, (2016): p. 660.

²⁷ *Türkiye Dış Politikasında 50 Yıl Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı ve Balkan Paktı (1923-1934)*, TC Dışişleri Bakanlığı Araştırma ve Siyaset Planlama Genel Müdürlüğü, p.77-78.

²⁸ Ferhat Güngör, "Orta Doğu Denkleminde Irak Türkmenleri ve Geleceği", *Uluslararası Sosyal ve Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi* Vol 1, Issue 2, (2014): p. 15.

as well.²⁹ Britain's primary objective at the conference was to broaden its demands to strengthen its bargaining power, ensuring that Mosul remained within Iraq's borders and creating the impression of a state that would not compromise. Due to the disagreement at the Golden Horn Conference, the view that the issue should be referred to the League of Nations gained strength. Therefore, a telegram was sent to İsmet Pasha:

His Excellency the Grand Vizier Pasha.

A telegram just received from Nusret Bey in Istanbul states that Monsieur Henderson, in a letter he sent to him again, stated that the referral of the Turkey-Iraq border issue to the League of Nations Assembly must be made from London by August 6th. He also stated that if the Turkish government were to propose a proposal to facilitate a resolution of the issue between the two governments, this would need to be communicated to the British government by August 4th.³⁰

The conference failed to produce any results, and the issue was brought before the League of Nations, of which Britain was an influential member, as desired. Thus, the Mosul issue began to be discussed in the Assembly of the League of Nations on September 20, 1924. As disagreements continued between Turkish and British factions in the Mosul region, it was decided to establish a neutral commission to resolve the issue. A report was prepared accordingly by various experts. The report, prepared to end the conflict in the region, established a temporary border, and this border line, known historically as the “*Brussels Line*”, was adopted by the Assembly of the League of Nations on October 29, 1924.³¹ The commission's report recommended the League of Nations the following: “*Mosul should be considered part of Iraq, Iraq should be placed under British mandate for 25 years, and the Brussels line should be accepted as the Turkish-Iraqi border.*” The Turkish people and Turkish representatives in the LN

²⁹ Gökhan Cetur, “Saddam Hüseyin’in I. Döneminde Türkiye- Irak İlişkileri (1979-1991)”, Marmara Üniversitesi Orta Doğu ve İslam Ülkeleri Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Master’s Thesis, İstanbul 2020, p. 30.

³⁰ *Türk Dış Politikasında 50 Yıl Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı ve Balkan Paktı (1923-1934)*, TC Dışişleri Bakanlığı Araştırma ve Siyaset Planlama Genel Müdürlüğü p.83-86-87

³¹ Aydın Beden, “Türk Basınına Göre Türkiye Irak İlişkilerinde Türkmenler (1926-2001)”, Akdeniz Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Doctoral Thesis, Antalya 2011, p. 32.

reacted strongly to these recommendations.³² While negotiations on the Mosul issue were ongoing, the Sheikh Said Rebellion, which emerged as a serious threat to the regime in Turkey on February 13, 1925, and lasted for about two months, was recorded in the report as a development against Turkey. On December 16, 1925, the League of Nations adopted the Brussels Line as the border and transferred Mosul to Iraq. This decision was influenced by Britain's dominant role in the League of Nations, even before Turkey was a member, the Sheikh Said Rebellion, and Turkey's inability to risk a new war.³³ Following a multifaceted and arduous struggle between Turkey, Britain, and Iraq from 1918 to 1926, the Mosul issue was finally resolved with the signing of the Ankara Agreement between the three powers on June 5, 1926. With the Ankara Agreement, Turkey renounced its rights over the Mosul province, and the Turkish-Iraqi border was definitively defined. At the same time, the people of Mosul were considered Iraqi citizens, but those over 18 were given the right to choose their own citizenship within two months.³⁴ Although Turkey was unhappy with the decision, believing it had been treated unfairly, it did not want to engage in any conflict because Turkish foreign policy strives to resolve issues through diplomatic and peaceful means.³⁵ Two days after the signing of the agreement, Foreign Minister Tevfik Rüştü Aras made the following comment about the agreement:

The country is in a delicate situation. We are emerging from a nine-year period of war. Failure to recognize the decision regarding Mosul would inevitably drag us into a new war. Fascist Italy was ready to march. Gazi (Atatürk) and his government knew this very well. That is why, with heavy hearts, we agreed to abandon Mosul.³⁶

Although Aras was disturbed by the handing over of Mosul to Iraq, he believed that signing the Ankara Agreement was an appropriate decision, as Turkey had just come out of a war and could not afford another one. Iraqi Foreign Minister Nuri Said Pasha, who assessed Turkey's security challenges prior to the Ankara Agreement, provided some information about the Agreement and the future course of relations

³² *Türk Dış Politikasında 50 Yıl Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı ve Balkan Paktı (1923-1934)*, TC Dışişleri Bakanlığı Araştırma ve Siyaset Planlama Genel Müdürlüğü, p.92

³³ Dağdeviren, op. cit., p. 159

³⁴ Cemal Kemal, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı ve Sonrasında Musul Meselesi", Ankara Üniversitesi Türk İnkılâp Tarihi Enstitüsü Atatürk Yolu Dergisi, Issue 40 (2007), p. 680.

³⁵ Müezzinoğlu & Şahin, op. cit., p. 662.

³⁶ Eyicil & Hamadlak, op. cit., p.77

between Turkey and Iraq. Nuri Said argued that Turkey lacked sufficient knowledge of Iraq and had not been properly informed about the developments taking place there. He attributed this to the fact that bilateral relations had not yet been established. However, he believed that the Agreement would built relations well. Nuri Said responded to journalists' questions about the draft prepared before the agreement was signed by saying, *"I understand that the situation is very good. Thanks to the goodwill shown by the parties, I can say that the matter is over. There is no reason not to be happy."*³⁷ Considering that Iraq will gain both a significant territory and oil revenues with the agreement, it can be said that it is a profitable agreement for Iraq. Therefore, it was welcomed by the Iraqi government and the people. As a result, the Mosul issue was resolved to Turkey's detriment and has come a controversial issue to this day. Turkish-Iraqi relations between 1918 and 1926 were generally mediated through Britain, as Iraq was under British mandate. After the Mosul issue was resolved, Turkish-Iraqi relations became closer, and embassies were opened in both countries.³⁸ Following the cession of Mosul to Iraq, the documentation and registration process for the territories ceded to Iraq began, in accordance with Article 139 of the Treaty of Lausanne. To this end, the Iraqi government initially requested records pertaining to the regions in northern and northeastern Iraq and a few lands along the Turkish border. The Turkish government responded that it could provide copies of the records for 16,950 lira, not the originals. However, when it became clear that locating the records and producing copies would take a considerable amount of time, it was announced on November 30, 1927, that the documents in question would be sent to Iraq. Similarly, after Burning of the foundation records in Iraq after World War I, the Iraqi government sent a delegation to Turkey and requested the records. Following the handover of the official records, the issue of the two countries exchanging ambassadors was raised. Nuri Said, who wanted to send a representative to Turkey as soon as possible, stated the following: *"After the Mosul Agreement passes the Parliament, political relations will be officially established between the two states. Thus, foreign relations with Turkey will be established for the first time."*³⁹ In this context, the Iraqi government made significant efforts to improve relations with Turkey after the Ankara Agreement, and the first post-Agreement meetings between Turkey and Iraq took place on November 5, 1927. Iraqi King Faisal invited Turkish Ambassador Ferit Tek to meet with

³⁷ Beden, op. cit., p. 60-61.

³⁸ Tahir Kodal, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı Sırasında Türkiye-Irak İlişkileri ve Irak Hakkında Bilinmeyen Bir Kaynak: Ziya Karamürsel'in Irak Seyahat Notları", AÜ. Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi, Vol 16 Issue 40, (2009): p. 395.

³⁹ Beden, op. cit., p.77,78-80.

him at the Hyde Park Hotel in England. Through Ferit Tek, Faisal sent a message of friendship to Turkey.⁴⁰ Mustafa Kemal quickly responded to Faisal's message. Upon his second election as President in 1927, Mustafa Kemal also sent a letter to King Faisal, the same letter he had sent to all foreign heads of state. The letter stated that Turkey would gladly fulfill all its responsibilities to improve relations between the two countries. Tevfik Rüştü Aras also offered a glimpse into the future of Turkish-Iraqi relations. Aras stated that there were no border disputes with neighboring countries, except Syria, and that relations with Iraq were continuing in a very friendly manner. He also added that, as a result of the Ankara Agreement, the issue of mutual representation between the two states was being considered.⁴¹ In 1928, King Faisal sent former Ottoman commander Sebih Neşet to Turkey as the Iraqi representative. Neşet made considerable efforts to ensure friendly relations between the two countries, and Mustafa Kemal was pleased with Neşet's efforts. Consequently, Turkey sent Tahir Lütü Tokay to Baghdad on October 21, 1929, to begin his work. Tokay, who played a significant role in developing relations, worked for ten years.⁴² At the same time, on June 12, 1929, Turkey opened an honorary consulate in Mosul, and Necip Çadır, President of the Mosul Chamber of Commerce, was appointed to the post.⁴³ On September 17, 1930, İzzettin Tuğrul was appointed as the Vice-Consul of Mosul.⁴⁴

1.3. Mutual Visits and Iraq and Turkey's Joining to the League of Nations

During this period of positive bilateral relations, King Faisal hosted a banquet at the palace on February 17, 1930, in honor of Tahir Lütü Bey, Turkey's new ambassador to Baghdad. At the dinner, Faisal stated that Mustafa Kemal's friendly policy toward Iraq fostered the sincere feelings of friendship and security in his own hearts and in the hearts of all Iraqis, and that Turkey and Iraq were one family.⁴⁵ In April of that same year, Iraqi Defense Minister Jafar Pasha visited Turkey. During his visit to Ankara, Jafar Pasha admired and admired the developments and improvements he saw there. The Turkish government also expressed its deep gratitude to

⁴⁰ Tahir Kodal, "Adnan Menderes Dönemi Türkiye- Irak İlişkileri (1950-1960)", Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılâp Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi, Vol 2, Issue 18 (2019): p. 1508.

⁴¹ Beden, op. cit., p..80

⁴² Hamad Lak, op. cit., p. 27.

⁴³ Presidential Republican Archives (BCA), File No: 4-35-12, Date: 12.06.1929

⁴⁴ BCA, File No: 58-26-20, Date: 17.09.1930

⁴⁵ BCA, File No:- 258-738-18, Date: 17.02.1930

Jafar Pasha.⁴⁶ In October 1930, Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Said Pasha visited Turkey. The Pasha's statement, published in newspapers on the day he returned from Ankara, was as follows: *"It is reported that he expressed his gratitude for the kindness and sincerity shown to him in Turkey and his admiration for the renewal and progress he saw in the new Turkey and the high-profile activities of His Excellency the Ghazi and his state."*⁴⁷ Following the visits of Iraqi officials to Turkey, Iraqi King Faisal also informed the Turkish Embassy in Baghdad of his desire to meet with Mustafa Kemal and visit Turkey.⁴⁸ In a letter sent to Ankara on December 15, 1930, the ambassador stated the following:

In my conversations with King Faisal and his high officials, it is stated explicitly that King Faisal expressed his desire to go to Ankara and offer his respects to Gazi Mustafa Kemal. Even in my conversations with the Queen and Princesses, my companions stated that they preferred Turkey to any other country because it was their homeland and that they wanted to spend their summers there, but they postponed this until their father left. It is clear that I am obliged to obey the orders of the state in this regard.⁴⁹

The Turkish government stated that the King's request would only be accepted if it were notified by the King. The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs responded to the letter sent to Tahir Lütü Bey in response to Mustafa Kemal's request:

If King Faisal by himself expresses his desire to come to Ankara, it is natural for you to use language to suggest that the Government of the Republic would be pleased with this visit. However, it is inappropriate for you to offer any encouragement in this regard. If the King wishes to visit His Excellency the President and be received, it is permissible to inform him of the situation, provided that it is an actual offer.⁵⁰

Thereupon King Faisal expressed his desire to come to Turkey, in accordance with Mustafa Kemal's request. On May 25, 1931, he met with the Turkish Ambassador and, due to his discomfort with the Barzani tribe and the British, requested to go to Ankara to discuss these matters. The matter was expressed king Faysal's mouth by Tahir Lutfi Bey with following

⁴⁶ BCA, File No: 258-739-1, Date: 08.05.1930

⁴⁷ BCA, File No: 258-739-15, Date: 02.10.1930

⁴⁸ Kadir Kasalak, "Irak'ta Manda Yönetiminin Kurulması ve Atatürk Dönemi Türkiye Irak İlişkileri", *Askeri Tarih Araştırmaları*, Vol 5, Issue 9 (2007): p. 196-197.

⁴⁹ Beden, op. cit., p. 85.

⁵⁰ Beden, op. cit., p. 85.

words:

Nuri Said Pasha, based on his promise to the Turkish Government last year, is demanding immediate military action against the Sheikh of Barzan. The British are also encouraging this. However, I do not find this initiative appropriate right now, as the Hoybun Society is a force opposing the Assyrians there and is not subject to British influence. It is likely that the British consider this action, intended to destroy that force, to be appropriate for this reason. I will go to Mosul on Saturday, perhaps meet with the Sheikh of Barzan, and try to persuade him to support the government, not to seek refuge with certain individuals disapproved of by the Turkish Government, and to always be friendly and charitable to Turkey. In this way, I will strive to maintain the Barzan Sheikh's force against the Assyrians and to ensure that this force is always worthy of Turkey's trust and confidence; if I fail, I will adopt Nuri Said Pasha's advice regarding military operations. 2- We are deeply affected by British intrigues. We admire Gazi Mustafa Kemal's policies and success in this matter. That great man is a sacred figure for me and for the entire East. Indeed, our politics is inspired by Turkish politics. We are two brothers living in separate rooms of a house. Our interests are common, and our politics is one. Turkey is our guide. I want to go to Turkey this year to kiss the hand of Gazi Mustafa Kemal and to offer him my unwavering respect and appreciation. If your government consents, I will be there on October 17th when I return from Switzerland, where I will be undergoing treatment this summer. Upon this statement from the King, I am obliged to follow the instructions of the states.⁵¹

Faisal's request to visit Turkey was accepted after he submitted it. King Faisal's visit to Ankara, his first official visit to Turkey, was reported in the *Cumhuriyet* newspaper on July 7, 1931, under the headline "*A Noble Guest in Ankara: King Faisal Hazrat.*" A sincerity akin to brotherhood was evident between the people of the two countries, and hopes were expressed for developing relations with the young Iraq.⁵² Negotiations began between Turkey and Iraq for a Residence and Trade Agreement. It was observed that both states sincerely implemented the measures taken to ensure the safety and security of the Turkish-Iraqi border, yielding positive results. During the conversation, when the cession of Mosul to Iraq was mentioned, Faisal said, "*But in return, you have won all of Iraq, and now the streets of Baghdad are filled with Gazi's admirers and worshippers.*"⁵³ Faisal's arrival in Istanbul on July 9 was greeted with demonstrations of affection by

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 85- 86.

⁵² Yunus Nadi, *Cumhuriyet*, 7 July 1931, p. 1.

⁵³ *Cumhuriyet*, 9 July 1931, p. 1-6.

the Turkish people. As Faisal stepped off the station, the crowd greeted the king with thunderous applause. Faisal said that she was very pleased with the sincere cheers of the people and expressed them gratitude.⁵⁴ Faisal's visit to Turkey was followed by a session to erase the traces of past bad events between Iraq and Turkey and to develop relations, for the signing of the Friendship and Trade Agreement.⁵⁵ Faisal's visit to Turkey was discussed in various articles published in Iraqi newspapers as follows:

Iraq was formerly a part of the Ottoman Empire. It experienced both bitter and sweet times under this empire. However, Turkey, the mother of the East, was shaken under Ghazi's hand. Just as the Arabs were shaken by King Hussein and later by his son, Faisal. ...The world, East and West, will be preoccupied with the three-day ambassadorship King Faisal will spend in Ankara with Gazi Pasha. And the eastern governments will be transformed from humiliation and disgrace to the arenas of agreement. Only skill, influence, and honor can be born in these arenas.⁵⁶

As can be seen from articles published in Iraqi newspapers, Faisal's visit to Turkey was supported by the idea that it would improve bilateral relations. Following his visit to Ankara, Faisal conveyed his positive impressions of Turkey to the Turkish Ambassador to Paris, Munir Bey, on the morning of September 1931. He expressed his pleasure at being accepted by the Turkish government for the visit, his appreciation of the progress made in Turkey, and his intention to strengthen friendly relations between the two countries. Munir Bey also stated that the Turkish government shared the same feelings towards both them and their nation.⁵⁷ Faisal's visit to Ankara was an important stage in Turkish-Iraqi relations. Ankara began to be seen as a capital in the international arena. Faisal's visit was also important in terms of contributing to the easing of the tension between Iraq and Turkey arising from the Mosul issue.⁵⁸ Following the visit, in the speech made by Faisal at the opening ceremony of the Iraqi National Assembly, the agreements to be signed with Turkey were mentioned: *"Our government is working to conclude agreements with Iran and Turkey on the regulation of trade and good neighborly relations and we hope to present these agreements to you at this meeting."*⁵⁹ In this regard, three agreements were signed between Turkey and Iraq in 1932 after the visit: the Extradition Agreement (January 9, 1932) the Settlement Agreement

⁵⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 10 July 1931, s. 6

⁵⁵ Hamad LAK, op. cit., s, 28

⁵⁶ BCA, File No:258-740-7, Date: 05.07.1931

⁵⁷ BCA, File No: 258-740-14, Date: 10.09.1931

⁵⁸ Beden, op. cit., p .89

⁵⁹ BCA, File No: 258-740-20, Date: 24.11.1931

(January 9, 1932) and the Trade Agreement (January 10, 1932).⁶⁰ Baghdad Ambassador Tahir Lütfi Bey was assigned to exchange the documents of the "Extradition Agreement" signed with the Iraqi government in Ankara.⁶¹ Nuri Said Pasha made the following speech upon the approval of the agreements signed between Turkey and Iraq in the Iraqi parliament:

The purpose wasn't just these three agreements. There were other objectives in my determination for Turkey. The first of these was the opening of the Turkey-Iraq trade route, the second was providing an outlet for Iraqi dates in Turkish markets, and the third was certain matters related to the security of our northern borders. I received every permission from the Turkish government, led by His Excellency İsmet Pasha, a prominent figure in Turkey, and from this esteemed person, and I found everything possible regarding the interests of Iraq and the future.⁶²

During the debate in the Turkish Grand National Assembly on the bill ratifying the Residence Agreement, Kocaeli Deputy Sırrı Bey eloquently explained the content of the agreement. He emphasized that Turkish citizens would not feel alienated in Iraq, nor would Iraqi citizens feel alienated in Turkey, saying, *"Just as a Turk will feel at ease and happy in Baghdad under the shadow of the crescent and star, so too will an Iraqi feel prosperity and freedom in Turkey, as if sitting under the shadow of the black and green banners."*⁶³ The Extradition Agreement is of great importance for Turkey, which is constantly subjected to border violations. Armed groups or individuals have periodically entered the country along the Turkish-Iraqi border, causing conflict.⁶⁴ Towards the end of 1931, the Sheikh of Barzan, who was living in Iraq, wished to come to Turkey and serve, and to this end, he sent a letter to the Turkish government. In the letter, he expressed his readiness to serve the Turkish government and expressed his willingness to make an agreement to this end. However, it was stated that no agreement would be made with the Sheikh of Barzan. It was also added that if it were determined that he had entered the country's territory, necessary action would be taken.⁶⁵ In addition to Faisal's visit to Turkey and the agreements signed thereafter, another event that brought the two countries closer together was the admission of Turkey and Iraq to the League of Nations in 1932. On July 6, 1932, LN General Secretary Sir Eric Drummond called on Turkey to *"become a member of the LN and benefit from the valuable*

⁶⁰ Cesur, op. cit., p. 32.

⁶¹ BCA, File No: 35-27-12, Date: 19.04.1933

⁶² BCA, File No: 259-741-4, Date: 09.04.1932

⁶³ Beden, op. cit., p. 92.

⁶⁴ Ibid. p. 92.

⁶⁵ BCA, File No: 113-768-6, Date: 26.12.1931

*cooperation of the League.*⁶⁶ When the proposal for Turkey's joining to the LN was made, sincere speeches praising Turkey were made in the Association. Cumhuriyet newspaper columnist Yunus Nadi said the following on the proposal made to Turkey:

Even before entering the League of Nations, we are a nation that has implemented in our lives and in our surroundings the principles that should be its goal. We will enter the League of Nations—whether permanently or not, we do not yet know—as a member of its parliament. We will enter it with the broad and prevailing atmosphere of peace and security.⁶⁷

At the invitation of the LN, Turkey joined the alliance on July 18, 1932.⁶⁸ Britain, as required by the 30 June 1930 Agreement, applied for the lifting of its mandate over Iraq and for Iraq to become a member of the LN. The LN granted a two-year period to review this decision and complete certain political and legal procedures. Based on the investigation, the LN concluded that the reports submitted by Britain were insufficient for Iraq to achieve independence. The League commission emphasized that the Iraqi government should undertake to apply the laws in force fairly to the Iraqi people if the mandate were lifted. Iraq subsequently submitted the requested undertaking to the LN, and it was accepted on January 28, 1932. On May 30, 1932, Prime Minister Nuri Said announced in Baghdad the acceptance of Iraq's LN membership.⁶⁹ Iraq's LN membership The annual report of the Turkish Ambassador to Baghdad included the following remarks:

Until recently, Iraq was under British mandate. By a decision of the League of Nations last year, the British mandate was lifted, Iraq became an independent state, and it became a member of the League of Nations. From that date on, the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty, signed in June 1930, came into force. In accordance with this treaty, the British government bound Iraq to itself with very strong ties and subjected it to itself in all matters. The influence and influence that the British government had previously enjoyed over Iraq as a mandate continued after the mandate was lifted, as an "ally" and "protector." And the British government prefers this alliance to a mandate. Because now, as a mandated government, it is free from the "harassment" of having to explain and account for Iraq before the League of Nations every

⁶⁶ Ebubekir Sıddık Kaplan, "Türkiye- Irak İlişkileri (1918-1960)", Kırıkkale Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Master's Thesis, Kırıkkale 2011, p.132

⁶⁷ Yunus Nadi, *Cumhuriyet*, 9 July 1932, p. 1.

⁶⁸ Kodal, op. cit., p. 396.

⁶⁹ Beden, op. cit., p. 94-95.

year and being subjected to various complaints.⁷⁰

The report stated that with the lifting of the British mandate over Iraq, the British government began to view Iraq as an "ally," and since Iraq was no longer under British mandate, the British government was relieved of a burden by not having to explain Iraq to the League of Nations. During negotiations for Iraq's joining to the League of Nations, French member M. Paul Boncour expressed his dismay at the lack of consideration for administrative autonomy in favor of the Kurds in Iraq. Meeting with the Turkish Ambassador in Baghdad, Iraqi High Commissioner Sir Francis stated that the League of Nations had categorically rejected the Iraqi Kurds' demands for independence and that the French member's statements were a provocation.⁷¹ Tahir Lütfi and Nuri Said Pasha met regarding the Christian minorities in Iraq, and Lütfi Bey conveyed his impressions. Nuri Said blamed Britain and France for the recent problems with minorities in Iraq, saying: "... *The aim of the French is to create a murderer between Muslims and Christians. In this way, it is preventing Iraq from joining the League of Nations and, at the very least, establishing a European mandate or protectorate over the Christian population.*"⁷² With these words, Nuri Said emphasized that the British and French aimed to create a conflict between Muslim and Christian groups and to establish protection over the Christian population. Consequently, both countries' membership in the LN, pursuing pro-Western policies, and the agreements signed in 1932 improved Turkish-Iraqi relations and brought the two countries closer together. Tevfik Rüştü Aras stated that Turkey was extremely happy with Iraq's membership because its history with Iraq was blended with Turkish history itself, and that the centuries-old bond between the two countries was progressing in an atmosphere of mutual affection. He congratulated the young Iraqi state and wished it prosperity.⁷³ Meanwhile, the death of Iraqi King Faisal in 1933, with whom friendly relations had been maintained, caused sorrow in Turkey, as he was seen as the leader who initiated relations between Turkey and Iraq. After Faisal's death, his only son, Emir Ghazi (Ghazi I), succeeded him. The change of leadership in Iraq did not change Turkey-Iraq relations. The good relations initiated by King Faisal with Turkey were continued during the reign of his son.⁷⁴

1.4. Sadabad Pact

During King Ghazi's reign, the army was considered a key element

⁷⁰ BCA, File No: 259-742-10, Date: No day/ No months/ 1933

⁷¹ BCA, File No: 259-741-12, Date: 18.07.1932

⁷² BCA, File No: 258-740-8, Date: 08.07.1931

⁷³ *Cumhuriyet*, 5 October 1932, p. 1-5.

⁷⁴ Beden, op. cit., p. 111.

of a strong state, and was given considerable importance. The army hoped that Britain's authority would diminish following Iraq's accession to the LN. However, these demands were not fully realized, leading to turmoil in the country. This political turmoil led to the belief that the army should intervene in politics. To this end, Hikmet Suleiman approached Bekir Sıtkı, an influential figure in the army, and aimed to overthrow the government.⁷⁵ Thus, while negotiations for the Sadabad Pact were ongoing, General Bekir Sıtkı's coup, Iraq's first military coup, took place in 1936. In accordance with Bekir Sıtkı's instructions, King Ghazi appointed Hikmet Suleiman as Prime Minister, and a new government was formed. One of the new government's goals was to develop good relations with non-Arab states.⁷⁶ Unlike previous governments, the Hikmet Suleiman cabinet, which believed that the establishment of the Arab League would not benefit Iraq, stated that its primary goal was to focus on its own internal affairs. The new Iraqi government sought to establish close relations with Iran and Turkey rather than Arab countries.⁷⁷ The Bekir Sıtkı coup, in its early days, caused unease in Iraq's neighbor, Turkey. This was primarily due to Turkey's concerns about how the incoming government would react to the idea of signing an agreement involving Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan. Representatives of the new government said the following to reassure Turkey: *"Turkish officials and the public must know that Iraq is a friend of Turkey. A change in government will not create any change in relations between the two countries."*⁷⁸ As understood, the new Iraqi government has stated that relations with Turkey will continue without any difference. The foreign policy, national defense, education, and economic programs of the newly formed Iraqi government included strengthening the bonds of friendship between Iraq and the Republic of Turkey and working on signing an agreement between Iraq, Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan, which pledges to reciprocate any aggression.⁷⁹

Hikmet Suleiman's government was quite interested in Turkey, and he wanted to implement reforms in Iraq, similar to those Atatürk had implemented in Turkey. Indeed, Suleiman, who spent several months in Turkey in 1935, was impressed by the developments he observed in every aspect of the Republic of Turkey and conveyed this admiration to

⁷⁵ Hamad Lak, op. cit., p. 30.

⁷⁶ Onur Öztürk, "Türkiye-Irak İlişkileri ve Kürt Sorunu", Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Master's Thesis, Ankara 2010, p. 45

⁷⁷ Onur Akdoğan, "Irak'ın İlk Askeri Darbesi: 1936 Bekir Sıtkı Darbesi", Türkiye Ortadoğu Çalışmaları Dergisi, Vol 8 Issue 2, (2021): p.143-144.

⁷⁸ BCA, File No: 259-745-17, Date: 12.01.1937

⁷⁹ Ibid.

newspapers. He cited Turkey as an example for Iraq, adding that Turkey should follow its path.⁸⁰ Due to Bekir Sitki's anti-Arab stance, opposition to Sitki, especially among Arab nationalists in the officer corps, rose, and an assassination plot was hatched. The Arab nationalists' long-awaited opportunity presented itself when Sitki stopped in Mosul on his way to visit Turkey. While Bekir Sitki and Air Force Commander Muhammad Ali Javad were resting in Mosul, they were assassinated by a soldier named Muhammad Ali Tal-Afari. Prime Minister Hikmet Süleyman immediately ordered the conspirators to be brought to Baghdad, but the Mosul Garrison Commander disobeyed. Because the troops stationed in Baghdad shared the same sentiments as the Mosul Garrison Commander, the possibility of a civil war in the country arose. Due to the increasing rebellions and the possibility of civil war, Hikmet Süleyman was forced to leave office by the army that had brought him to power, and he resigned on August 17, 1937.⁸¹ Following the assassination, Iraqi Ambassador Naci Şevket stated the following regarding the unrest in Iraq:

According to the news I received from Baghdad, the situation is calm. Public order is in place. The government is in control. There are no incidents that cause concern. The cabinet in Iraq may change. There may be changes. But no Iraqi's feelings of love for Turkey will change. Iraq's policy toward Turkey will always remain the same. History proves the bond between the two nations.⁸²

These words indicate that the assassination will not lead to any changes in relations between Iraq and Turkey, and that the existing positive sentiments toward Turkey will continue. After the Bekir Sitki Coup, Iraqi Foreign Minister Naci Esili wanted to visit Turkey to discuss the extension of the second part of the 1926 Treaty and to sign a new agreement. To this end, a diplomatic note was first sent to the Turkish government. Accordingly:

Your Excellency, due to the expiration of the provisions of the second part of the Turkish-Iraqi Treaty signed in Ankara on June 5, 1926, between the three parties, on July 18, 1936, I have the honor to propose, at the request of the Government of the Kingdom of Iraq and the Government of the Republic of Turkey, that the provisions of the said part be continued in force solely between them until the conclusion of a new and comprehensive agreement to regulate neighborly relations between the two countries, and in accordance with the wishes of the Government of the Kingdom of Iraq and the Government of the Republic of Turkey, and

⁸⁰ BCA, File No: 259-744-13, Date: 13.12.1935

⁸¹ BCA, File No: 259-744-13, Date: 13.12.1935

⁸² *Ulus*, 19 August 1937, p.3.

in accordance with my Government's decision on this matter, to extend the validity of the provisions of the second part of the said treaty between the Government of the Kingdom of Iraq and the Government of the Republic of Turkey, starting from July 18, 1936, by exchange of notes, with the conditions and amendments set forth below...⁸³

The Turkish government also wrote the following in response to the note:

...I have the honor to confirm to your excellency the approval of the Government of the Republic of Turkey regarding these proposals. I also confirm that, in response to your note, this response constitutes an official agreement between the Republic of Turkey and the Kingdom of Iraq on this matter, effective today.⁸⁴

Accordingly, the Iraqi Foreign Minister visited Turkey on April 25, 1937. The station where the Minister arrived was decorated with the Iraqi and Turkish flags, and the national anthems of both countries were played. Esili made the following statements during his visit to Ankara:

I am really pleased to have visited the headquarters of the Republic of Turkey, a great friend of Iraq. All my Iraqi citizens and I are proudly watching Turkey's new life march with great strides toward a bright future. The respect and affection Iraqis hold in their hearts for Turkey, and especially for Atatürk, knows no bounds. Indeed, Atatürk was instrumental in the rebirth and revitalization not only of Turkey but of all the nations of the East.⁸⁵

During the meeting between Naci Esili and Tevfik Rüştü Aras, a consensus was reached on the extension of the second part of the Ankara Agreement signed on June 5, 1926.⁸⁶ During the talks between Turkey and Iraq, which took advantage of Esili's presence in Turkey, Turkey's oil need were also discussed. The exchange of some Turkish products with Iraqi oil was also underway.⁸⁷ With the "1936 Extension Protocol of the 1926 Ankara Agreement" signed between Turkey and Iraq, it was decided that if the border-related articles in the 1926 Agreement were not brought to the agenda within two years, the relevant articles would be accepted indefinitely.⁸⁸ Thus, relations were strengthened with the 1936 Protocol in

⁸³ Kaplan, op. cit., p.133- 134.

⁸⁴ Kaplan, op. cit., p. 134.

⁸⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 27 April 1937, p. 1.

⁸⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 30 April 1937, p.7.

⁸⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 1 May 1937, p. 5.

⁸⁸ Enes Demir, "Türkiye'nin Irak'ın Kuzeyine Yönelik Askerî Harekât ve Stratejisinin Tarihsel Arka Planı", *Türk Tarih Kurumu*, (2022): p. 199.

the process leading to the Sadabad Pact. Following the signing of the agreement between Turkey and Iraq, bilateral relations remained positive, but the world faced the threat of revisionist powers Germany and Italy.⁸⁹ Mustafa Kemal also believed in the need to improve relations with neighboring countries during this period. Turkey had sought to sign a similar agreement with Middle Eastern states in 1931, but this did not happen due to border disputes between Iraq and Iran. Italy's invasion of Abyssinia in 1935 accelerated the implementation of this project.⁹⁰ Between June 21 and 25, 1937, Tefik Rüştü Aras and Celal Bayar visited Iraq to discuss the pact and strengthen friendly relations. The Turkish delegation was greeted with demonstrations of affection in every city they visited in Iraq. The Iraqi Broadcasting Office commented on the matter as follows:

The warm welcome shown to the Turkish delegation once again confirmed the strong friendship between Turkey and Iraq. This visit opened a new era in Turkish-Iraqi relations. This friendship will endure forever. Today, all Iraqi newspapers emphasize the sincere ties the Iraqi nation has toward Turkey and publish lengthy articles about the development achieved in the new Turkey thanks to Great Leader Atatürk.⁹¹

The affection shown to the Turkish delegation once again clearly demonstrated the strong friendship between the two countries. At banquets held in Baghdad in honor of the Turkish delegation, mutual friendship was expressed in the simplest and most effective terms. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs explained the friendship between the two neighboring countries as follows:

Iraq, which harbors the Turkish-Iraqi friendship naturally born of historical and geographical factors and also appreciates the noble Turkish nation's noble virtues, has always wished for Turkey's prosperity and happiness and rejoiced in seeing Turkey's rise. It is because it has drawn nourishment from such mutually sincere sentiments that the Turkish-Iraqi friendship has immediately blossomed and has always been convinced that it will remain so.⁹²

As the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated, the visit furthered Turkish-Iraqi relations, and it was hoped they would remain so forever. Following the official ceremony welcoming the Turkish delegation, the delegation proceeded to Mosul and Kirkuk. The warm welcome shown to

⁸⁹ Abdül Samet Çelikçi & Can Kakışım, "İtalyan Faşizmi ve Tarihsel Gelişimi", Muş Alparslan Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, Vol 1, Issue 2, (2013): p. 92

⁹⁰ Hamad LAK, op. cit., p. 31.

⁹¹ Beden op. cit., p. 114.

⁹² Yunus Nadi, *Cumhuriyet*, 26 June 1937, p.1.

the Turkish ministers by the Iraqi Turkmen in Mosul and Kirkuk caused unease within the Iraqi government. On the day the delegation stayed at the Station Hotel, an arrest warrant was issued for the Turkmen who had spent the night around the hotel. Nuri Sad Pasha, observing the Turkmen's interest in the Turkish delegation, argued that the Turkmen needed to be suppressed because of the danger of Iraq falling under Turkish influence, just as the Abbasids had previously fallen under Turkish rule.⁹³ The Iraqi Foreign Minister's speech regarding the Turkish delegation's visit was as follows:

... Your visit coincides with the oppressive heat of our country. I hope that this heat will be forgotten alongside the warmth of the feelings of friendship and brotherhood in our hearts toward Turkey and your esteemed individuals. With these fervent feelings, I feel a great honor and happiness in raising my glass to the honor of His Excellency Atatürk, the great guiding president of Turkey and a highly esteemed genius of the Turkish nation. I also feel a great sense of honor and happiness in drinking to the health and happiness of our brotherly Turkish nation, the noble cause and prosperity we always desire to see enhanced, and to the health and happiness of Prime Minister İsmet İnönü, for whom I have deep respect, his excellency the state, his excellency Celal Bayar, and your other esteemed friends.⁹⁴

Ministers to Iraq was welcomed by both countries and paved the way for the Pact. In this context, the Non-Aggression and Friendship Agreement was signed between Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan at the Sadabad Palace in Tehran on July 8, 1937. The final agreement reached by these states, who understood that good neighborliness was achieved above all else through good borders, was greeted with joy. With the agreement, the four states agreed to consult on matters of mutual interest.⁹⁵ It was also a friendship agreement that prevented the parties from attacking each other. The signing of the Pact was very positively received by the Iraqi people.⁹⁶ An Iraqi newspaper wrote the following on the subject: "*This agreement is clear proof that Turkey and Iraq continue their peaceful intentions.*"⁹⁷ Despite the positive and constructive comments made, the signing of the Pact led to criticism in the Iraqi House of Representatives. The main reason for this was the belief that the decisions taken in the Pact would create an obstacle to making agreements with Arab countries.

⁹³ Beden, op. cit., p. 121.

⁹⁴ BCA, File No: 200-363-9, Date: 08.07.1937

⁹⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 10 July 1937, p. 1.

⁹⁶ Kasalak, op. cit, p.201.

⁹⁷ Bostancı & Bashar, op. cit, p. 2517.

Despite the opposing views, the Pact was approved by the Iraqi Parliament on March 6, 1938. Although the Sadabad Pact was claimed to be an important agreement, it remained weak in practice. The main reason for this was the disagreements between Iraq and Iran and the approach of World War II.⁹⁸ Relations progressed along positive lines with reciprocal visits between the two states, the signing of the Sadabad Pact, and the 1936 Extension Protocol to the 1926 Ankara Agreement. By November 10, 1938, Mustafa Kemal's death had caused deep sorrow in Iraq. The Iraqi government sent telegrams of condolence to Ankara, Iraqi newspapers wrote articles about Mustafa Kemal, who led Turkey and the nations of the East, and the Turkish embassy was visited. Concerning the atmosphere created by Mustafa Kemal's death in Iraq, Turkish ambassador Tahir Lütfi Tokay wrote the following to Ankara:

The tragedy of Atatürk's death has had a very painful impact on all classes of people here (in Iraq). Flags in official and unofficial offices were lowered to half-mast, and the entire press considered him to be missing and wrote articles to that effect. The Master of Ceremonies came to the Embassy on behalf of His Majesty the King, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs came to me and expressed his condolences on behalf of the Government. All foreign ambassadors, many of the country's dignitaries, and the Chaldean Patriarch came to the Embassy to express their sorrow and grief. I present this with my deepest respects.⁹⁹

In another article, Tokay wrote in a report sent from the Turkish Embassy in Baghdad to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, that Atatürk's death in Iraq had caused deep sorrow among people from all walks of life. Many Iraqis sent letters and telegrams to the embassy, expressing their grief at Atatürk's death.¹⁰⁰ Atatürk's death deeply grieved not only Turks in Turkey but also Turks living in Iraq. Iraqi newspapers *Al-Alem* and *Al-Arabi* described Atatürk's death as a "hero who revitalized the Turkish nation and ensured its progress and development." It is stated that he made the Eastern world shine and that her death brought great sorrow to the whole East.¹⁰¹ Approximately a year after Atatürk's death, King Ghazi died in a traffic accident in 1939 and was succeeded by his son, Faisal II, who was only four years old. Due to Faisal II's young age, Abdullah, a descendant of the same

⁹⁸ Hamad Lak, op. cit., p.33.

⁹⁹ Beden, op. cit., p. 124-125.

¹⁰⁰ Bilal Şimşir, *Doğunun Kahramanı Atatürk*, Bilgi Yayınevi, Ankara 1999, p. 412,413,414.

¹⁰¹ Nurcan Toksoy, "Atatürk'ün Vefatının Balkanlar ve Orta Doğu Basınındaki Etkilerinin Türkiye'de ki Akisleri", *Atatürk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, Vol 8, Issue 2, (2010): p.205.

lineage, assumed the regency, and Nuri Said became prime minister. When World War II began in 1939, Nuri Said wanted to support Britain but clashed with the army on this issue.¹⁰² Nuri Said declared that he would form an alliance with the Arab states during World War II, maintain relations with Turkey and Iran under the Sadabad Pact, and cooperate with Britain. He made this decision without consulting the Council of Ministers.¹⁰³ Nuri Said Pasha's radio speech on the situation in Iraq during World War II is as follows:

To defend Poland's independence, which was the target of German aggression, the British government entered the war on September 3, 1939, followed by France. On September 5, 1939, the Iraqi government declared its commitment to the enforcement of the Treaty of Alliance between itself and Britain and severed its relations with Germany. On September 6, 1939, His Imperial Highness the King of England, heir to the Iraqi throne, sent a telegram to the King of England, expressing the Iraqi government's and nation's commitment to the Treaty of Alliance. His Imperial Highness the King received the British King's important response on September 8, 1939.

With these words, Nuri Said made it clear which side he was on. As he continued his speech, he also touched on the status of the Sadabad Pact:

As for the Sadabad Pact, it was signed by Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, and Iraq. This Pact is a non-aggression pact and stipulates that the signatory states resolve any disputes that may arise between them through negotiations. Since Turkey is the closest state to the zone where the war is taking place, I deemed it useful to review the current situation.¹⁰⁴

Nuri Said's statements and the policies pursued by the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs provoked debate in the House of Notables. After complaining that the speech had been short on some important issues, Naci Süveydi Pasha, a member of the House of Notables, discussed the political situation and the Arab world's situation in this context, asserting the necessity of protecting the existence and rights of all Easterners, especially Arabs. He stated that if this obligation was not met in a timely manner, *"when the victors of the war sit at the partition table, the Iraqis and Arabs will have nothing to do but bite their fingers."*¹⁰⁵ Davud Elçelebi, who then took the floor, reproached himself by asking why he welcomed the Sadabad Pact with joy, but why the issue of the border demarcation

¹⁰² Mustafa Bostancı, 1958 *Irak Askeri Darbesi*, Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, p. 654-655.

¹⁰³ Hamad Lak, op. cit., p.35.

¹⁰⁴ BCA, File No: 259-747-29, Date: 07.10.1939

¹⁰⁵ BCA, File No: 259-747-30, Date: 28.12.1939

between Iraq and the friendly state of Iran had not yet been resolved, the reason for Iraq's joy in the triple alliance signed by Turkey, and whether it was known whether there was a secret agreement. He claimed that these questions remained unanswered because the royal speech did not address all these issues.¹⁰⁶ It is clear that the statements made by Nuri Said Pasha and his desire to side with the Allied powers did not please some groups in Iraq. In this regard, Rashid Ali, who believed that an impartial policy should be followed, and some members of the army carried out a coup on April 3, 1941. Although Rashid Ali stated that an impartial policy should be followed, his pro-Axis stance is contradictory.¹⁰⁷ The British government, The government did not recognize the new Iraqi government, stating that the seizure of power by some members of the government, led by Rashid Ali, was irregular.¹⁰⁸ The main goals of the new administration were to liberate Iraq from the oppression of the British government, to promote Arab nationalism, and to nationalize oil resources. Greatly disturbed by this situation, Britain understood that its interests in the Middle East were in danger. In order to restore order in Iraq, General Sir Archibald Wavell, Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Middle East Forces, was ordered to occupy Baghdad. The justification given was that Iraq refused to allow a possible British landing in the Persian Gulf and rejected Britain's offer of military support in exchange for the use of Iraqi territory. On June 1, 1941, Britain invaded Iraq for the second time.¹⁰⁹ Iraq, which came under heavy bombardment, suffered the consequences of pursuing an anti-British policy. An agreement was subsequently signed between Britain and Iraq. Britain declared that it would provide every assistance to reestablish the legitimate government. The communiqué issued following the signing of the agreement stated: "*Calm has returned. The communiqué adds that the armistice protects national unity and the country's independence, and recommends that everyone immediately begin to engage in work.*"¹¹⁰ With Britain's success, the young King Faisal and Naib Abdullah returned to Baghdad on June 3 and were welcomed by the British Ambassador and a British military delegation. The Turkish Ambassador, Javad Üstün, and the Diplomatic Corps were present when Naib Abdullah, the Iraqi Naib, entered Baghdad.¹¹¹ With Nuri Said's reestablishment of the government, Iraq was once again governed under British influence. Political leaders who might have opposed the situation were exiled, and Prince Abdullah and

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 4

¹⁰⁷ Beden, op. cit., p. 133- 134.

¹⁰⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 5 April 1941, p. 1.

¹⁰⁹ Beden, op. cit., p.134.

¹¹⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 2 June 1941, p.1-5

¹¹¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 3 June 1941, p.1-5

Nuri Said governed the country throughout World War II.¹¹² During the war, the Iraqi government feared that Turkey would retake Mosul, but this did not happen as Iraq had feared. On the contrary, Iraq's representative in Ankara, Naci Şevket, declared that Turkey respected Iraq's territorial integrity.¹¹³ Although political relations between Turkey and Iraq stagnated during this period, friendly relations continued. Accordingly, on February 3, 1941, CHP Istanbul Deputy Ziya Karamürsel arrived in Baghdad.¹¹⁴ Karamürsel, along with five of his fellow MPs, arrived in Baghdad on February 6. When he went to Basra, Karamürsel met many British families and stated that they all had sincere feelings for the Turks. After writing down his impressions and satisfaction with his visit to Iraq in his notes, Karamürsel added his personal views on Iraq with the following words:

The political situation is unstable. Consequently, the cabinet undergoes frequent changes. As a result, there is constant discord and disagreement among Iraqi dignitaries. The majority of the intellectuals are pro-British. There are also those with opposing policies and views. Just as we were about to enter Baghdad, the cabinet changed. They claim that Rashid Ali Geylani, who led the fallen cabinet, was pro-German and pro-Italian, and that the resignation letter he sent to the executor upon his resignation from the cabinet alluded to this point.¹¹⁵

As Karamürsel notes, on the day the Rashid Ali cabinet withdrew from the government, some university students protested and caused unrest. This demonstrates the Iraqi people's dissatisfaction with the government. Karamürsel continued in his notes, writing that despite the Iraqi army organization, it was not capable of winning a war and that they would surrender if any state attacked. Ziya Karamürsel and his friends stopped in Mosul on their way back to Istanbul. Karamürsel met with the Governor, the Mayor, and some prominent figures and toured the city. The public was not informed during the two hours that Karamürsel and his friends spent in Mosul, so it is not possible to form an opinion about their impressions of the Turks.¹¹⁶ As can be seen from Ziya Karamürsel's notes, friendly relations between Turkey and Iraq continued during the war, just as they had before. Although both states pursued a policy of neutrality for a time, on January 16, 1943, Iraq abandoned its policy of neutrality and declared war on the Axis Powers.¹¹⁷ Turkey, on the other hand, did not want

¹¹² Kodal, opt. cit., p. 398.

¹¹³ Hamad Lak, op.cit., p. 35.

¹¹⁴ Beden, op. cit., p. 135.

¹¹⁵ BCA, File No: 53-209-1, Date: 05.03.1941

¹¹⁶ BCA, File No: 53-209-1, Date: 05.03.1941

¹¹⁷ Beden, opt.cit., p. 137

to enter World War II, but sided with the Allied Powers against the Italian and German threats, and declared war on the Axis Powers on February 23, 1945, without actually joining the war.¹¹⁸ Thus, Turkey gained the opportunity to join the UN.

¹¹⁸ Fatma Rezzan Ünalp, "İkinci Dünya Savaş'ında Türkiye'nin Savaş Dışı Kalma Politikaları ve Sonuçları", Karadeniz Uluslararası Bilimsel Dergi, Vol 1, Issue 45, (2020): p. 216

2. TURKEY-IRAQ RELATIONS (1945-1991)

This section examines Turkey-Iraq relations during the Cold War from economic, political, and cultural perspectives. The Kurds of Northern Iraq in Tukey-Iraq relations are discussed in the third section of the study.

2.1. Political Relations

During the Cold War, which began after World War II and was led by the US and the Soviet Union, Turkey's foreign policy was shaped by a Western focus, aiming to align itself with Western alliances. Iraq's pro-Western policies during this period also brought the two countries closer together. Other factors that brought the two countries closer were the perception of a "common enemy" against Russia and the separatist Kurdish rebellions in both countries.¹¹⁹ In the post-war period, Iraq, aspiring to become a leader in the Arab world, aimed to establish rapprochement with Turkey, one of the region's powerful powers. Turkey, in turn, took the first step toward developing relations with Iraq by inviting King Regent Abdullah¹²⁰ and Prime Minister Nuri Said to Turkey.¹²¹ Consequently, Nuri Said and Abdullah arrived in Turkey on September 15, 1945. Nuri Said, who was warmly welcomed in Turkey, stated the following during his visit:

I'm extremely happy to be back in Istanbul, a city I know so well. Relations between Turkey and Iraq are extremely friendly, and the Iraqi dignitaries are eager to further strengthen this friendship. His Excellency the Naib and I traveled extensively throughout America and Europe. We observed economic turmoil everywhere we visited. Our visit to Turkey was entirely unofficial. We came to see our old friends in Turkey.¹²²

With these words, Nuri Said stated that his visit to Turkey had no political ambitions, but rather that he wanted to see old friends in Turkey and further strengthen relations between the two countries. Approximately six months after the Iraqi dignitaries' visit to Turkey, the two countries signed a Treaty of Friendship and Good Neighborhood on March 29, 1946. The aim of the agreement was to develop friendship and good neighborly relations and to strengthen the brotherly bonds that have existed for centuries between the two nations. The treaty consisted of six additional protocols and two agreements to ensure cooperation in all areas. The first

¹¹⁹ Öztürk, op. cit., p. 73.

¹²⁰ In the literature on the subject, the king's name is also used as Abdulillah.

¹²¹ Öztürk, op. cit., p. 53.

¹²² *Cumhuriyet*, 16 September 1945, p. 3

article of the treaty reads as follows: "*The contracting parties undertake to respect each other's territorial integrity and the borders between them as specified and drawn in the Treaty of 1926.*"¹²³ The other articles generally stated that the parties undertake not to interfere in each other's internal affairs and will cooperate through consultation on international matters.¹²⁴ The protocols included in the treaty concern cultural, economic, security, and public order issues between the two countries.¹²⁵ The treaty was welcomed by both countries and was considered beneficial and would yield positive results for both countries.¹²⁶ One of the issues resolved by Turkey and Iraq with the treaty signed in 1946 was the water issue. Before 1918, since Turkey, Iraq, and Syria existed within a single state under the name "Ottoman," there was no such issue. However, with the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I, the use of the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers became a problem among all three countries.¹²⁷ This issue was addressed in Additional Protocol No. 1 to Article 6 of the 1946 Treaty, titled "Regulation of the Waters of the Tigris, Euphrates, and Their Tributaries." The relevant article reads as follows:

Iraq may send technicians to Turkey as soon as possible to conduct surveys, measure land, and collect hydraulic, geological, and other information to enable the selection of locations for dams, observation stations, and other structures deemed necessary to be constructed on the Tigris and Euphrates and their tributaries, and the preparation of the necessary plans in this regard. Maps resulting from the land surveys will be prepared by authorized Turkish institutions. Iraq will cover all expenses required for the work mentioned in this article.¹²⁸

With this article, it was decided that Turkey and Iraq would send a technical team to the region to conduct research and measurements, and that the expenses for these operations would be covered by Iraq.

¹²³ "Türkiye ile Irak Arasında İmza Edilen Dostluk Ve İyi Komşuluk Andlaşması ile Bu Andlaşmaya Ek Protokol ve Sözleşmelerin Onanması Hakkında Kanun", TBMM, No 5180, Date: 12.11.1947, p. 818 https://www5.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/KANUNLAR_KARARLAR/kanuntbm mc029/kanuntbmmc029/k anuntbmmc02905130.pdf

¹²⁴ İbid, p.818.

¹²⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 29 March 1946, p.1-3.

¹²⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 30 March 1946, p. 1.

¹²⁷ Hamad Lak, op. cit, p. 40.

¹²⁸ "Türkiye ile Irak Arasında İmza Edilen Dostluk Ve İyi Komşuluk Andlaşması ile Bu Andlaşmaya Ek Protokol ve Sözleşmelerin Onanması Hakkında Kanun". p. 820.

Having improved relations with the 1946 Treaty, Turkey and Iraq wanted to join Western alliances during this period. Between May 11 and 29, 1953, US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles traveled to Iraq, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel, India, Iran, and Pakistan to establish a defense pact in the Middle East to implement his "Northern Belt" project.¹²⁹ Turkey was not initially included on Dulles's travel itinerary. However, then-Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, seeing this trip as a step toward realizing Turkey's goals, invited Dulles to Turkey. Dulles accepted Prime Minister Menderes's offer, and a meeting was held between Menderes and Dulles on May 26 and 27. As a result of these meetings, Turkey argued that the Arab states did not fully grasp the Soviet threat and that regional cooperation could not be achieved solely through the collaboration of Arab countries, and that Turkey should play a leading role in the "Northern Belt" project.¹³⁰ The US hoped to attract Arab countries, particularly Egypt, to participate in this project. However, the Arab states viewed the US and other Western states, which supported the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, as a greater threat than the Soviets, and were unsympathetic to the Northern Belt Project. Similarly, Turkey, which recognized the State of Israel in 1949, was not well-received by the Arabs. Unlike Egypt, the Baghdad government, however, did not oppose the project, recognizing the Soviet threat and seeking to meet its need for foreign aid for its Armed Forces.¹³¹ After her trip, Dulles returned to the United States and, seeing that a Middle East strategy centered on Egypt would fail, considered forming a defense alliance involving Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan.¹³² The first step toward the project, intended to be implemented in the Middle East against the Soviet Union, was taken with the signing of an agreement between the US and Pakistan on December 28, 1953. Turkey took the second step by signing an agreement with Pakistan on April 2, 1954. After signing the agreement with Pakistan, Turkey also sought to sign an agreement with Egypt to foster regional cooperation, but the Soviet Union's influence on Egypt and Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser's desire to assume leadership in the Middle East prevented the parties from reaching an agreement. After realizing that Turkey would not reach an agreement with Egypt, it sought negotiations with the Iraqi government.¹³³ To this end, Adnan Menderes went to Iraq on January 6, 1955, to meet with Nuri Said.

¹²⁹ Öztürk, op. cit., p. 5

¹³⁰ Mehmet Korkud Aydın, "Türkiye ve Bağdat Paktı", *International Journal of Social Science Research*, Vol 9, Issue 2, (2020): p. 140

¹³¹ İsmail Sosyal, *1955 Bağdat Paktı*, *Türk Tarih Kurumu Belleten*, Vol 55 Issue 212, (1991): p. 179-182

¹³² Öztürk, op. cit., p. 57

¹³³ Aydın, op. cit, p. 140

Official circles in Iraq believed that the talks with Turkey would have a significant impact on relations between Turkey and the Arab states. Adnan Menderes made the following statement on Iraqi radio:

We Turks attach great importance to living in ever-more advanced, closer, and more sincere friendship with our brotherly Iraq, a natural consequence of the deep feelings of appreciation and esteem we hold for this brotherly country. We also believe that the close relationship we are establishing with Iraq will be equally crucial for ensuring the most beautiful development of our relations with the noble Arab nation.¹³⁴

Following approximately a week of talks between Iraq and Turkey, it was announced that an agreement would be signed between the two countries on January 13, 1955. The two states agreed to jointly resist attacks.¹³⁵ Following this, the Egyptian Foreign Minister took a stance against Iraq and Turkey, claiming that the agreement was incompatible with Arab politics and Arab League agreements. The Iraqi Ambassador to Cairo stated that the agreement signed between Iraq and Turkey had no intention of offending Arab states and was a continuation of the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signed between İsmet İnönü and King Faisal in 1946.¹³⁶ Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, Turkish Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, and Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Said considered the agreement unnecessary for Iraq and dangerous for other Arab states.¹³⁷ At the meeting, Egypt requested by Arab League condemnation of the Turkish-Iraqi Pact, but failed to secure the necessary majority. Yemen and Saudi Arabia fully supported Egypt on this matter, while Syria and Lebanon informed Egypt that they were not party to such a condemnation.¹³⁸ Despite Egypt's efforts, Iraq's desire to participate in a defense organization with Turkey led to the Arab League conference sending a four-person delegation to Baghdad. The four representatives briefed Nuri Said Pasha on the talks in Cairo. The delegation advised Nuri Said not to sign the Turkish-Iraqi Agreement.¹³⁹ Nasser announced that if the Turkish-Iraqi Pact was signed, he would sever relations with both states and establish a new neutral Arab Pact. A government spokesman in Ankara then made a statement to Anadolu Agency, saying:

We consider all attempts to undermine or delay the implementation of the Turkish-Iraqi Agreement to be detrimental to the

¹³⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 7 January 1955, p.7.

¹³⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 13 January 1955, p.1

¹³⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 14 January 1955, p. 1-7.

¹³⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 23 January 1955, p.7.

¹³⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 24 January 1955, p.1

¹³⁹ *Akşam*, 1 February 1955, p. 2

interests of all peace and democracy, especially the interests of the Arab countries. Turkey and Iraq are fully convinced that this decision is beneficial for both the entire peace front and all our Arab brothers. Turkey is determined to implement it without delay. Turkey is grateful to the esteemed Arab statesmen who have assisted it in this cause it shares with Iraq, and particularly to the astute statesmen of Syria. Regardless of the propaganda, Turkey will always stand by Iraq and the Arab states that understand this cause and work positively. It will do everything in its power to ensure their safety and well-being, first and foremost by ensuring the implementation of the Turkish-Iraqi Agreement without any delay.¹⁴⁰

These words emphasized that the pact planned for implementation posed no threat to the Arab states and that Turkey owed a debt of gratitude to the Arab statesmen who had assisted Iraq and Turkey in this cause. Despite the reluctance of some Arab states, particularly Egypt, Turkish and Iraqi leaders began negotiations on January 6th and concluded their contacts on January 12th, issuing a communiqué. The communiqué explained that the pact was open to other Arab states and that, in accordance with the agreement, they would assist each other against any state's attack. Turkey and Iraq waited approximately one month to explain the situation to the other Arab states opposed to the pact and to give them time. However, after the Communiqué was published, Egypt turned against the Pact and tried to drag other Arab states into its fold.¹⁴¹ Despite the lack of support from some Arab states, it was signed on February 24, 1955, by Prime Minister Adnan Menderes and Foreign Minister Fuad Köprülü on behalf of Turkey, and by Prime Minister Nuri Said and Deputy Foreign Minister Burhaneddin Başayan on behalf of Iraq.¹⁴² Thus, after lengthy efforts, a defense pact known as the "Baghdad Pact" was formed between Turkey and Iraq. The pact was received positively in both countries and contributed to the development of relations. The United Kingdom joined the pact in April 1955, Pakistan in September 1955, and Iran in November 1955, thus expanding its membership. Although the pact aimed to unite Middle Eastern states and keep the Soviet Union out of the region, it had the opposite effect. After the signing of the pact, Middle Eastern states were divided into three groups: Egypt, Syria, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia, which vehemently opposed the pact; Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan, which were both involved in the pact and supported it; and Jordan and Lebanon, which were not involved in either side.¹⁴³ Therefore, the Baghdad Pact failed and also caused a deterioration in Turkey and Iraq's relations

¹⁴⁰ *Akşam*, 3 February 1955, p. 2.

¹⁴¹ Ömer Sami Coşar, *Cumhuriyet*, 24 Şubat 1955, p. 3.

¹⁴² *Cumhuriyet*, 25 February 1955, p. 1.

¹⁴³ Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi*, Timaş Yayınları, İstanbul 2014, p. 327.

with the Arab states. Three years after the pact was signed, relations between Turkey and Iraq, which had been progressing favorably, deteriorated with the pro-Nasser and anti-Western Abdul Karim Qasim coup in Iraq in 1958. A group calling itself the "Independent Officers," disturbed by Nuri Said's pro-Western policies, seized the government on July 14, 1958. King Faisal, Prime Minister Nuri Said, and Prince Abdullah were killed, and a republic was declared. Turkey, which had sought the participation of other Arab states in the Baghdad Pact, was concerned about the possibility of Iraq, the sole Arab member, withdrawing.¹⁴⁴ On July 15, the previously agreed-upon Baghdad Pact Meeting of Heads of State and Government of Islamic Countries was held in Ankara. The Presidents of Pakistan and Iran met in Ankara. The meetings focused on the coup in Iraq and the future of the Baghdad Pact. In the meeting between Turkey, Pakistan and Iran, it was decided that in the event of the withdrawal of the newly established government in Iraq from the Baghdad Pact, the Pact would continue all its duties, even without Iraq.¹⁴⁵ The Turkish government sent a telegram to the revolutionaries who carried out the coup in Iraq on July 14, requesting the repair of the Turkish Martyrs' Memorial, which was damaged during the events, and summoning the Iraqi Border Commander to inquire about the coup. On July 19, Foreign Minister Fatin Rüştü Zorlu, in a statement to the Daily Mail, called the coup plotters "political thugs."¹⁴⁶ Following the coup, Turkey considered intervening in Iraq and sought US support for this. Following news of Turkey's planned intervention in Iraq, the Soviet Union sent a memorandum to Turkey, warning it not to intervene.¹⁴⁷ Turkey did not intervene in Iraq, but the coup was seen as a harsh intervention in Adnan Menderes's "Active Middle East" policy. The Turkish government characterized this coup as "a manifestation of externally inspired destructive activities." Although Turkey considered the July 14 coup a threat and considered intervening, a shift in its stance was observed in the following days. The primary reason for this was the West's softening of its stance against the new regime established in Iraq. A harsh stance by Turkey and Western powers against the new regime would only push Iraq towards the Soviet Union. Consequently, the Turkish government began to change its stance towards the new regime, recognizing the new Republic of Iraq on July 31, 1958.¹⁴⁸ Because Iraq did not declare its affiliation with the Baghdad Pact, the

¹⁴⁴ Öztürk, op. cit., p.64

¹⁴⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 16 July 1958, p. 1

¹⁴⁶ Mustafa Albayrak, "Türkiye'nin Ortadoğu Politikaları (1920-1960)", *Orta Doğu Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Vol 3, Issue 2, (2005): p. 49.

¹⁴⁷ Kodal, "Adnan Menderes Dönemi Türkiye- Irak İlişkileri (1950-1960)", p. 1520

¹⁴⁸ Bostancı, "1958 Irak Askeri Darbesi", p. 672,673.

Baghdad Pact organs' headquarters in Baghdad began operating temporarily in Ankara on October 17, 1958, and actual operations began on October 24. It was decided that the headquarters would be moved back to Baghdad if Iraq announced its continued presence within the organization.¹⁴⁹ Iraq announced its withdrawal from the Pact on March 24, 1959. Baghdad Radio announced Iraq's withdrawal from the Pact and reported that the people held festivities in the streets. After reporting the news, Baghdad Radio added: "*Thus, the Republic of Iraq, as an independent and free state with full sovereignty, has severed the last bond of imperialism.*"¹⁵⁰ On August 19, 1959, the Baghdad Pact was renamed the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). The organization's headquarters moved permanently to Ankara and continued its activities within the context of cultural, economic, and technical cooperation among its members.¹⁵¹ On May 27, 1960, a junta composed of military officers calling itself the National Unity Committee staged a coup against Menderes and his government. The coup overthrew the Democrat Party government, and brought power into the hands of the Turkish Armed Forces.¹⁵² Following the trial of members of the Democratic Party, Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, Foreign Minister Fatin Rüştü Zorlu, and Finance Minister Hasan Polatkan were executed. Because Turkey was preoccupied with significant domestic turmoil following the 1960 coup, no changes were made to its policies toward both the West and Iraq, and a foreign policy conflict was avoided.¹⁵³ Three years after the military coup in Turkey, on February 8, 1963, Abdülkerim Qasim was assassinated by pro-Nasserist officers in Iraq, and Abdülkerim Arif was appointed to replace him. Following the coup, Qasim was referred to as an "enemy of the people" in communiqués of the National Revolutionary Council read on Baghdad Radio.¹⁵⁴ When the Turkish government contacted Talip Müştak, the Iraqi Ambassador to Ankara, regarding the incident, the Ambassador stated that they had no direct contact with Baghdad and, therefore, were following the events via radio and had not received any instructions from the government. When the Ambassador was asked if there was a possibility of Iraq re-entering CENTO, he replied, "*I don't think so.*" Abdel Salam Arif, the leader of the Iraqi military revolution and a staunch Nasserist, and Gamal Abdel Nasser, the President of the United Arab Republic, exchanged messages. Nasser's message was as follows: "*All we ask of God is*

¹⁴⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 24 October 1958, s. 1

¹⁵⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 25 March 1959, p. 1.

¹⁵¹ Beden, op. cit., p. 167.

¹⁵² *Cumhuriyet*, 28 May 1960, p.1.

¹⁵³ Hamad Lak, op. cit., s.58-60

¹⁵⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 9 February 1963, p. 1-2.

that He supports the Iraqi people in their revolutionary movement and that He does not withhold His help both for the progress of the country and for the realization of its main cause."¹⁵⁵ On February 11, 1963, upon the orders of Turkish Prime Minister İsmet İnönü and Turkish Foreign Minister Feridun Cemal Erkin, the Ambassador in Baghdad made a statement regarding the new government established in Iraq, saying, "We attach importance to the friendship between Turkey and Iraq." The same day, the Turkish government also announced its recognition of the newly established Iraqi regime. In the following days, the Iraqi Ambassador stated that the events in Iraq had nothing to do with Turkey, that the Iraqi state was responsible, and that Turkish-Iraqi relations would continue as before.¹⁵⁶ Following Turkey's recognition of the new Iraqi government, Iraqi Foreign Minister Seyyed Talib Hussein al-Sabib stated that Iraq was pleased with Turkey's decision and that Turkish-Iraqi relations would always be maintained in a friendly and close manner.¹⁵⁷ Abdusselam Arif died three years after coming to power, and his brother Abdurrahman Arif was elected President. During Abdurrahman Arif's term, official visits, which had been absent for a long time, were made to improve relations. Iraqi Foreign Minister Adnan al-Pachacı visited Turkey on February 7, 1966. Cultural, political, and economic issues were discussed, and a decision was made to establish close cooperation.¹⁵⁸ Unable to maintain stability in the Iraqi government, another coup took place on July 17, 1968, and Baathist General Hasan al-Bakr was elected as the new President of Iraq. As a result of the coup, Iraq's connections with the rest of the world were cut off, its borders, ports, and airports were closed, and a 24-hour curfew was declared throughout the country.¹⁵⁹ Turkey remained silent during the 1968 coup, seeking to maintain relations with Iraq at the same level without jeopardizing them.¹⁶⁰

In 1973, the world experienced an oil crisis. Turkey, in turn, wanted to maintain good relations with Arab states to meet its oil needs. Accordingly, Turkish-Iraqi relations progressed on a positive course. In 1974, then-Iraqi Vice President Saddam Hussein visited Turkey and met with Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit. The topics discussed during the meetings generally revolved around the Oil Pipeline Project, signed between Turkey and Iraq on August 27, 1973, the development of political

¹⁵⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 10 February 1963, p. 1-7.

¹⁵⁶ Hamad Lak, op. cit., p. 61.

¹⁵⁷ Beden, op. cit., p. 277.

¹⁵⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 8 February 1966, p.1.

¹⁵⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 18 July 1968, p.1.

¹⁶⁰ Cesur, op. cit., p. 42.

relations, and the protection of borders.¹⁶¹ Between April 26 and 29, 1976, Turkish President Fahri Korutürk visited Iraq. Regional and global issues concerning the two countries, as well as bilateral relations, were discussed.¹⁶² Korutürk visited Mosul and Kirkuk on April 27. The President addressed the problems of the Turks of Kirkuk at the Kirkuk Cultural Turkish Center. It was alleged that the literacy rate among Turkmens was gradually decreasing due to the prohibition of Turkish language education in schools.¹⁶³ In the joint statement issued regarding the visit, it was hoped that relations would be developed in all areas within the framework of an understanding and sincerity that reflects the friendly relations between Turkey and Iraq.¹⁶⁴ At a meeting of the Revolutionary Command Council in Iraq on July 12, 1979, Hassan al-Bakr announced his resignation due to health problems and was replaced by Saddam Hussein. Upon assuming office, Saddam Hussein, in addition to his presidency, also assumed the roles of Prime Minister, Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council, Secretary General of the Ba'ath Party, and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, ushering in a new era in Iraq.¹⁶⁵ Saddam's rise to power with its extensive powers unsettled many Arab states. However, Saddam Hussein expressed one of the Ba'ath Party's most important ideals, the unification of Arab states under a single umbrella, with these words: *"I believe that Arab unity should not be achieved by eliminating the local and national characteristics of any Arab country, but should be achieved through a common fraternal vision."*¹⁶⁶ There was no reaction from Turkey after Saddam Hussein's announcement that he had become president. However, Saddam's brutal policies against Turkmen and Kurdish groups upon coming to power worried Turkey.¹⁶⁷ After the September 12, 1980 coup in Turkey, Turkey's Middle East policy was generally shaped by water issues, terrorism, and the Iran-Iraq War.¹⁶⁸

According to the 1975 Algiers Agreement, which resolved the border dispute between Iraq and Iran in the Shatt al-Arab region, Iraq

¹⁶¹ Hamad Lak, op. cit., p. 73.

¹⁶² *Cumhuriyet*, 27 April 1976, p. 1-9.

¹⁶³ *Cumhuriyet*, 29 April 1976, p. 9.

¹⁶⁴ Engin Karadeniz, *Cumhuriyet*, 30 April 1976, p.1.

¹⁶⁵ Beden, op. cit., p. 344

¹⁶⁶ Mehmed Mazlum Çelik, Independent Türkçe, <https://www.indyrturk.com/node/292701/d%C3%BCnya/karanl%C4%B1C4%9F%C4%B1n-elikanl%C4%B1-iktidar%C4%B1-saddam-h%C3%BCseyin>

¹⁶⁷ Hamad Lak, op. cit., p.75.

¹⁶⁸ Beril Dedeoğlu, Türkiye-Irak İlişkileri "Doğu"- "Batı" Ekseni ve Değişkenler, Civitas Gentium, Vol 1 Issue 1 (2011): p.19.

renounced its territorial claims in the Shatt al-Arab, and Iran ceased aid to the Iraqi Kurds. However, the Iraqi government unilaterally abrogated the Algiers Agreement on September 17, 1980, thus escalating the conflict between the two. Sectarian tensions also contributed to the tension.¹⁶⁹ Iraq's perception of the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran as a threat can also be cited as a reason for the outbreak of the war. Iranian Islamic Revolution leader Ayatollah Khomeini aimed to incite the Shiite population in Iraq against Saddam's government and remove him from power. Iraq, in turn, declared war on Iran with an airstrike on September 22, 1980.¹⁷⁰ Turkish Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Savlet Aktuğ stated that Turkey was saddened by the clashes between Iraq and Iran, commenting: "*Tension and conflicts that will disrupt peace and stability in our region are undoubtedly a cause for concern*".¹⁷¹ As Aktuğ's words suggest, Turkey was concerned about the war raging in its immediate south and hoped for a swift end. Turkey believed that the Iran-Iraq War was putting the world on the brink of a new oil crisis. Therefore, it seemed impossible for Turkey, whose energy policy depended on oil imports, to stay out of this crisis. Furthermore, the proximity of the warring states to Turkey led to concerns that Turkey would be drawn into the war.¹⁷² Iraqi Youth Minister Kerim Mahmut, who came to Turkey as Saddam's special representative, met with Turkish President Kenan Evren on October 9, 1980. During the talks, it was stated that the Iraqi government had offered Turkey mediation in the Iran-Iraq war.¹⁷³ While the war continued, the "Protocol on the Re-Demarcation of Borders" was signed between Turkey and Iraq on August 12, 1981. This protocol re-accepted the Ankara Agreement signed on June 5, 1926, and the borders determined by the Border Commission in 1927. The border between the two countries was redrawn using modern techniques, based on the 1926 Agreement and 1927 documents and maps.¹⁷⁴ In July 1987, the Iranian and Iraqi governments severed their ties and transferred their authority to the Turkish representatives in Tehran and Baghdad to protect

¹⁶⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 23 September 1980, p. 1-5.

¹⁷⁰ Ceren Yücealtay, "İran Irak Savaşı ve Türkiye Üzerindeki Etkileri", *BELLEK Uluslararası Tarih ve Kültür Araştırmaları Dergisi* Vol 4, Issue 1, (2022): p. 25,26.

¹⁷¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 23 September 1980, p. 1-5.

¹⁷² Uğur Mumcu, *Cumhuriyet*, 24 September 1980, p. 1.

¹⁷³ *Cumhuriyet*, 10 October 1980, p. 1.

¹⁷⁴ "Türkiye Cumhuriyeti ile Irak Cumhuriyeti Arasında Türkiye ile Irak Arasındaki Hudutların Yeniden İşaretlenmesine Dair Protokolün Onaylanmasının Uygun Bulunduğuna Dair Kanun", https://www5.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/KANUNLAR_KARARLAR/kanuntbm mc064/kanunmgkc064/kanunmgkc06402545.pdf

their rights.¹⁷⁵ Through UN mediation, Iran informed the UN Secretary-General on July 18, 1988, that it had accepted the ceasefire call. The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs evaluated Iran's decision as "a step towards peace."¹⁷⁶ Turkey remained neutral during the eight-year Iran-Iraq war, which saw no victor, to avoid creating tensions in relations with either country. Turkey's balanced and cautious policy towards both countries during the Iran-Iraq War was considered successful.¹⁷⁷

After the Iran-Iraq War, Saddam Hussein negotiated with Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states to seek compensation for the material damage caused by the war. Almost half of Iraq's debts during the war were owed to Kuwait. Consequently, Saddam Hussein demanded the cancellation of the debts he had incurred from Kuwait during the war and demanded territory.¹⁷⁸ After Kuwait rejected Iraq's demands, Iraq invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1990. The US subsequently sent an aircraft carrier to the Gulf and announced the seizure of all Iraqi assets in the US. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait created anxiety and fear in Turkey. Following the invasion, the National Security Council convened to discuss Iraq's attack on Kuwait. A statement released after the meeting expressed hope that the decision stipulating the "*immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait*" would be implemented swiftly. Political party leaders in Turkey condemned Iraq, and the Central Bank announced that it would not conduct transactions with Iraqi and Kuwaiti currencies.¹⁷⁹ On August 3, 1990, Iraqi First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yasin Ramadan visited Ankara and conveyed Saddam Hussein's message to Turkey. The message demanded Turkey's neutrality and warned that the closure of the oil pipeline and the use of US bases would create an atmosphere of distrust between the two countries.¹⁸⁰ On August 6, the UN Security Council passed sanctions against Iraq. At the same time, in response to rumors that the US would launch a military operation in the region, it was stated that Turkey would not participate in such an operation and that it would at most offer external support.¹⁸¹ Despite Iraq's message, Turkey implemented the UN's sanctions decision and closed the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık Pipeline. On the other hand, due to the embargo imposed on Iraq, Turkey has placed approximately \$700 million

¹⁷⁵ Yücealtay, op. cit., p. 30-32.

¹⁷⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 19 July 1988, p. 1.

¹⁷⁷ Yücealtay, op. cit., p.30-32.

¹⁷⁸ Beden, op. cit., p. 394.

¹⁷⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 3 August 1990, p. 1-14

¹⁸⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 5 August 1990, p. 1

¹⁸¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 7 August 1990, p. 1.

in receivables from that country in limbo.¹⁸² In addition to the possibility that Iraq might not repay its debt, the interruption of border trade with Iraq led to increased unemployment in Southeastern Anatolia, thus negatively impacting Turkey's economy and security.¹⁸³ According to a statement from the Iraqi Embassy, "Turkey informed Iraq that it would not allow its territory to be used for an attack against Iraq." However, Turkey denied the allegations and described the reports as "false information."¹⁸⁴ On September 5, 1990, the Prime Ministry's Decree concerning the dispatch of the Turkish Armed Forces to foreign countries and the presence of foreign armed forces in Turkey was approved by Parliament. As a result, on January 2, 1991, Belgium, Germany, and Italy sent 40 warplanes to Turkey.¹⁸⁵ On January 11, the National Security Council held an extraordinary meeting, and it was stated that the preparations of the Turkish Armed Forces on the Iraqi border were completed.¹⁸⁶ On January 17, 1991, the US launched Operation Desert Storm against Iraq, bombing two nuclear, two biological, one chemical facility, and two missile centers.¹⁸⁷ On February 28, 1991, US President Bush announced that *"Kuwait has been liberated, the Iraqi army has been defeated, and the allies have achieved their military objectives."*¹⁸⁸

Turkey's support for coalition forces and its compliance with the embargo decisions against Iraq negatively impacted both Turkey's economy and its relations with Iraq. President Turgut Özal, at the time, pursued an active pro-Western stance during the Gulf Crisis, thus creating a barrier between himself and Iraq under Saddam's rule.¹⁸⁹

2.2. Economic Relations

Following World War II, Turkey and Iraq entered a difficult economic period. Following the war, both countries signed a Treaty of Friendship and Good Neighborhood on March 29, 1946, to ease their predicament through mutual understanding and solidarity in the economic

¹⁸² *Cumhuriyet*, 8 August 1990, p. 1

¹⁸³ Beden, op. cit., p. 409.

¹⁸⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 11 August 1990, p. 1.

¹⁸⁵ Tekin Önal & Abdullah Özdağ, "Körfez Savaşı ve Türk Dış Politikasına Etkileri", *International Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*, Vol 11 Issue 16, (2016): p. 60.

¹⁸⁶ Beden, op.cit., p. 406

¹⁸⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 17 January 1991, p.1.

¹⁸⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 28 February 1991, p.10.

¹⁸⁹ Mevlüt Akçapa, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye'nin Irak ile İlişkilerinin Ekonomik Politik Analizi", *Uludağ Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü*, Master's Thesis, Bursa 2014, p. 29

sphere. Additional Protocol No. 5 of the treaty established a joint economic commission, which would meet periodically to determine how the protocol's provisions would be implemented and what would be necessary for their implementation. The articles of the treaty regarding customs affairs are as follows:

Each Contracting Party undertakes to waive customs duties on goods originating in and arriving from the other Party, or to grant such goods a substantial reduction. This reduction shall be calculated on the basis of the lowest customs tariff currently in effect or on the basis of the tariff to be applied in the future to other countries which have not seceded from the Ottoman Empire under the Treaty of Lausanne. If one of the Contracting Parties grants a reduction more favorable than the reduction referred to in the first paragraph to one of the countries which have seceded from the Ottoman Empire, such reduction shall automatically apply to the other Party.

The article regarding banking and finance affairs is as follows:

Turkey and Iraq will facilitate the increase of relations between Turkish and Iraqi commercial and banking institutions within the framework of the general provisions in force in both countries and the establishment and establishment of commercial and banking institutions with joint Turkish and Iraqi capital in their respective countries.¹⁹⁰

The agreement enhanced economic relations between the two countries, and relations between Turkish and Iraqi trade and banking institutions were furthered. Following the development of political and economic relations between the two countries under the 1946 agreement, the Baghdad Pact was signed between Turkey and Iraq on February 24, 1955. Following the signing of the pact, a meeting was held in the Turkish Grand National Assembly's Foreign Affairs Committee, and Prime Minister Adnan Menderes was asked about the 10% profit share Turkey should receive from Mosul's oil and the approximately 100 million lira Turkey would receive from the Iraqi government. Menderes responded: *"We place Iraq's friendship on one side of the scale and our debt on the other."*

¹⁹¹ With these words, Menderes intended to emphasize that the improved relations with Iraq outweighed the money and dividends Turkey would receive from Iraq. However, despite Menderes's words, the money to be received from Mosul oil continued to be recorded as a budget revenue item.

¹⁹⁰ "Türkiye ile Irak arasında imza edilen Dostluk ve İyi komşuluk Andlaşması ile bu Andlaşmaya ek Protokol ve Sözleşmelerin onanması hakkında Kanun", p. 818-827-828.

¹⁹¹ Kodal, "Adnan Menderes Dönemi Türkiye- Irak İlişkileri (1950-1960)", p. 1517.

Turkey decided to build the Keban Dam in 1964, ushering in a new era in the Tigris-Euphrates Basin. However, the Iraqi government insisted that Turkey commit to releasing 350 cubic meters of water per second during the filling of the Keban Dam. To reach a decision, negotiations were held between the riparian states of the Keban Dam on June 22-27, 1964. Iraq insisted on a fixed amount, while Turkey declared this impossible. Iraq blamed neighboring countries, especially Turkey, for the country's water shortage, creating tensions between the two. It also claimed that the Tigris and Euphrates rivers flowing into Iraq had decreased due to Turkey's Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP), which dates back to the 1930s and is facing a water shortage.¹⁹² While problems stemming from water issues persisted in economic relations, in 1968, Bechtel-France, a division of US Bechtel, signed an agreement with Iraq on March 22 to lay a gas pipeline in Turkey. Three days later, the agreement was signed with Iraq. The pipeline would carry gas from Northern Iraq to Istanbul. The Turkish government agreed to lend Iraq \$112 million for the construction of the pipeline, and Iraq agreed to repay this debt within 12 years with proceeds from gas sales.¹⁹³ On September 25, 1968, an agreement was signed between the Turkish and Iraqi governments to develop economic and commercial relations and to better organize transit operations for goods, passengers, and vehicles.¹⁹⁴ Thus, the agreement facilitated trade relations and transportation transactions between the two states. The agreement also included articles related to the Natural Gas Protocol. The agreement also included articles related to the Natural Gas Protocol. The protocol, which aimed to transport natural gas from Iraq to Turkey via a pipeline in Kirkuk, was signed by TRAO (Turkish Petroleum Joint Stock Company) and INOC (Iraqi National Oil Companies) on December 6, 1971.¹⁹⁵ It was decided that a report would be prepared by Turkish experts for the implementation of the project.¹⁹⁶ It was decided that a pipeline project between the Kirkuk region of Iraq and the Batman region of Turkey would be the best means of transporting gas from Iraq to Turkey. The additional operating costs would be covered by INOC.¹⁹⁷ Following the protocol, in October 1971, the Iraqi and Turkish Economy Ministers met and decided to establish a joint delegation to further develop economic

¹⁹² Seyfi Kılıç, "Türkiye- Irak İlişkilerinde Su Meselesi ve Geleceğe Dönük Öneriler", ORSAM, Issue 72, (2018): p. 6,7,8.

¹⁹³ *Cumhuriyet*, 30 April 1968, p.3.

¹⁹⁴ BCA, File No: 230-14-16, Date: 03.03.1969

¹⁹⁵ Hamad Lak, op. cit, p. 72.

¹⁹⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 7 December 1971, p. 3.

¹⁹⁷ BCA, File No: 261-5-2, Date: 23.01.1971

relations between the two countries.¹⁹⁸ On June 1, 1972, the Iraqi government announced the nationalization of the Iraqi Petroleum Company (IPC).¹⁹⁹ After the Iraqi government nationalized the IPC, the flow of Iraqi oil, normally pumped to Mediterranean oil terminals, was slowed starting on June 4. Observers attributed this slowdown to the fact that Iraq had not yet found a buyer for its oil arriving at Mediterranean ports.²⁰⁰ Between September 19 and 20, 1972, Iraqi President Hassan al-Bakr visited Turkey, and in a joint statement issued at the end of the visit, the Iraqi side explained to the Turkish President the nationalization of the Iraqi Petroleum Company's oil operations. The Turkish President supported this by stating that Iraq had the right to directly exploit its own resources.²⁰¹ During periods of good economic and commercial relations, the Crude Oil Pipeline Agreement was signed between Turkey and Iraq on August 27, 1973. The agreement was reached for the transit and shipment of all oil coming from Iraq through the pipeline within its territory.²⁰² Since the agreement is valid for 20 years, Turkey will purchase approximately 282 million tons of crude oil from Iraq during this period. Speaking at the ceremony following the signing of the agreement, Bayülken and Abdülbaki stated, "This agreement is a new example of the growing cooperation between the two countries."²⁰³ This pipeline, known as the 200 Kirkuk Pipeline, was officially opened in Kirkuk on January 3, 1977, when Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel turned the valve. Demirel made the following remarks at the opening:

This work connects the two countries with a belt made of black gold. In a world torn by deep disagreements over extremely important issues, everyone has seen that a great instrument of common interest can be realized in an atmosphere created by friendship and brotherhood.

Demirel also mentioned the decision five years ago to nationalize Iraq's oil, adding that he praised it.²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁸ Hamad Lak, op. cit., p. 72.

¹⁹⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 2 June 1972, p. 3

²⁰⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 5 June 1972, p. 3.

²⁰¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 21 September 1972, p. 7.

²⁰² "Law on the Approval of the Letters Exchanged Between Turkey and Iraq on 26 December 1973 and 20 April 1974, Respectively, in Annexes to the Agreement on the Turkey-Iraq Crude Oil Pipeline Signed in Ankara on 27 August 1973 and the Extension of the Approval Period", No: 1835.

https://www.s.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/KANUNLAR_KARARLAR/kanuntbmmc058/kanuntbmmc058/kanuntbmmc05801835.pdf

²⁰³ *Cumhuriyet*, 28 August 1973, p. 1-7.

²⁰⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 4 January 1977, p. 1-9

In the early 1980s, the January 24th decisions were taken to address the economic instability in Turkey, leading to the September 12, 1980, coup. Ten days after the coup, the Iran-Iraq War broke out, and Turkey generally pursued a policy of "active neutrality" in this war.²⁰⁵ Turkey meets its oil needs from Iraq, while Iraq meets its food needs from Turkey. Turkey also sold livestock to Iraq during the war. During the Iran-Iraq War, Turkey's exports to Iraq reached \$7.93 million, while Iraq's exports to Turkey rose to \$4.88 million.²⁰⁶ The war between the two countries revitalized Turkey's wheat market. Wheat prices soared as a result of the Turkish Grain Board's export-oriented purchasing policy and the warring states' excessive import demands.²⁰⁷ Prime Minister Bülent Ulusu, at the end of his visit to Iraq between March 15-17, 1982, stated: *"In our discussions, we reached a consensus that Turkey should export more to Iraq. We expect Turkey to export around \$800 million to Iraq this year."* Ulusu also stated that possibilities for increasing the capacity of the Turkish-Iraqi pipeline would be examined.²⁰⁸ Prime Minister Turgut Özal visited Iraq on May 27, 1984. During the visit, the 47% decrease in Turkey's exports to Iraq, from \$560 million in 1981 and \$610 million in 1982 to \$320 million, was emphasized.²⁰⁹ Özal noted the development of trade relations with Iraq and stated that new opportunities would be sought with businesspeople to further enhance these relations.²¹⁰ The economic aspect of Turgut Özal's official visit to Iraq was dominated by "credit sales and exports." Turkey made contacts for the sale of \$110 million worth of iron, \$40 million worth of sugar, \$20 million worth of wheat, and \$15 million worth of eggs. Furthermore, a joint project was prepared for a power plant, and Turkey would purchase 200 million kilowatt-hours of electricity annually. This power plant would increase the amount of electricity purchased from Iraq.²¹¹ First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yasin Ramazan told Prime Minister Özal, *"We are currently in extraordinary circumstances. We are ready to buy whatever you want to sell. However, for now, we can buy the goods you sell us on credit."*²¹² Turkey understood this, and it was decided that 70% of the goods Turkey sold to Iraq would be sold on credit. However, an agreement was reached that for Iraq to purchase 70% of the goods on credit, it would require \$1 billion worth of goods. According to

²⁰⁵ Cesur, op. cit., p. 57-58

²⁰⁶ Hamad Lak, op. cit., p. 76.

²⁰⁷ Mehmet Yapıcı, *Cumhuriyet*, 18 October 1980, p. 4.

²⁰⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 18 March 1982, s.1

²⁰⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 27 May 1984, p. 15

²¹⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 28 May 1984, p. 15.

²¹¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 29 May 1984, p. 11.

²¹² *Cumhuriyet*, 30 May 1984, p. 11.

the agreement with Iraq, Iraq would purchase wheat, sugar, and iron and steel from Turkey, which were ready for export.²¹³ During the Iran-Iraq War, the fact that Iraq met its basic needs from Turkey, and Turkey met its oil needs from Iraq, led to a general concentration of economic relations on these two areas. In 1985, Iraq proposed the construction of a new pipeline to Turkey. Construction of the pipeline, which began on November 21, 1985, was completed on June 5, 1987. With the opening of the pipeline, 1.5 million barrels of oil began to be exported daily, thus enabling Turkey to obtain oil more cheaply.²¹⁴ Two years after the Iran-Iraq War ended in 1988, the so-called "Gulf Crisis" erupted, with Iraq invading Kuwait. Iraq, Turkey's second-largest trading partner before the crisis, lost this position after the crisis. The closure of the Kirkuk Yumurtalık Oil Pipeline and the embargo imposed on Iraq during the war profoundly affected economic relations.²¹⁵

2.3. Cultural Relations

Following the end of World War II in August 1945, the Iraqi Regent, Prince Abdullah, and Nuri Said arrived in Turkey on September 15, 1945. Nuri Said Pasha, who accompanied the Prince, stated, "*The Iraqi dignitaries aim to further strengthen the extremely friendly Turkish-Iraqi relations.*"²¹⁶ At the dinner held in honor of the Prince on September 17, President İsmet İnönü said the following:

The Republic of Turkey follows with great interest and affection your valuable efforts for the welfare and advancement of our beautiful and beloved neighbor, Iraq, and sees with genuine joy the progress and results achieved by the Iraqi nation on this path. The Republic of Turkey, which devotes all its existence and strength to the happiness and advancement of its country and nation and has no other purpose than to serve the cause of humanity to the best of its ability, observes the same high motto in its noble neighbor, Iraq. For this reason, it sees itself even closer to your country, with which it has always held a close bond, in the field of international cooperation.²¹⁷

Following İnönü's speech, Prince Abdullah expressed his admiration for the efforts made to develop Turkey, and continued:

²¹³ İbid, p. 11.

²¹⁴ Cesur, op. cit., p. 85-87

²¹⁵ TASAM, "I. Körfez Savaşı", https://tasam.org/Files/Icerik/File/1_K%C3%B6rfez_Sava%C5%9F%C4%B1_pdf_1690c694-7b42-41e3-9699-2159ac18bb8f.pdf

²¹⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 16 September 1945, p. 1

²¹⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 18 September 1945, p. 3.

This happy and blessed friendship, which was reinforced and strengthened by the visits of my uncle, King Faisal, to the Eternal Leader Atatürk, has progressed worthy of satisfaction in the time of his state, has gained strength and steadfastness from day to day, and has continued to yield auspicious and beneficial results.²¹⁸

The King Regent, who returned to Iraq on September 20, stated that he left Turkey with positive impressions.²¹⁹ Following Prince Abdullah's visit, former Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Said came to Ankara with a delegation on February 28, 1946. Meetings were held to strengthen political relations between Turkey and Iraq through economic, commercial, and cultural ties.²²⁰ Nuri Said continued his words by saying that he would not answer some of the questions posed to him because he was a member of the Assembly of Notables and was neither President nor Minister of Foreign Affairs:

His Excellency the Naib came here in September. He met with His Excellency President İnönü. Upon returning from Baghdad, we began preparations and soon had everything ready. Here, too, we found the Turkish government prepared. Thus, I strongly hope that we will complete the work we prepared in 1931 within a week or ten days. It will be published as soon as it is finished, and everyone will understand it.²²¹

Following Nuri Said's words, which signaled that both countries were preparing for an agreement, the Treaty of Friendship and Good Neighborhood was signed between Turkey and Iraq on March 29, 1946.²²² Additional Protocol No. 3 of Article 6 of the Treaty concerns education, training, and cultural cooperation. Article 3 of Additional Protocol No. 2 outlines the following: to bring the educational programs of Iraq and Turkey closer together; to send experts to conduct research on the scientific life and education of both countries; to send experts, teachers, and artists to each other for vacations and study tours related to culture, arts, and sports; to organize visits for private and official art groups and organize cultural and technical exhibitions; and to exchange publications of both states related to all kinds of culture, science, and sports between the relevant institutions.²²³ As can be seen, the Treaty of March 29, 1946, established cooperation in many areas regarding cultural relations between

²¹⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 18 September 1945, p. 3.

²¹⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 21 September 1945, p. 1.

²²⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 1 March 1946, p. 1

²²¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 8 March 1946, p. 3

²²² *Cumhuriyet*, 30 March 1946, p. 1

²²³ "Türkiye ile Irak arasında imza edilen Dostluk ve İyi komşuluk Andlaşması ile bu Andlaşmaya ek Protokol ve Sözleşmelerin onanması hakkında Kanun", p. 825.

Turkey and Iraq. In the 1950s, Turkey pursued an active policy in the Middle East, seeking to become a dominant force in the region. To this end, it established the Baghdad Pact in 1955. With Iraq's participation in the Pact, bilateral relations improved, but following a coup in Iraq in 1958, Turkey lost Iraq, the sole Arab member of the Pact, in 1959. The new regime in Iraq oppressed Turkmen groups, overturning the 1931 Local Languages Law and imposing Arabic education on Turkmen. At the same time, Turkmen were subjected to cultural oppression, preventing them from publishing their own magazines and newspapers. Ottoman-era monuments were destroyed, and they were denied access to radio stations in Istanbul and Ankara.²²⁴ This situation has negatively affected Turkey-Iraq relations, which were already strained due to the coup.

Following the 1958 coup, the 1963 coup, which followed the new government's lack of sympathy for Kurds and its repression of Turkmen groups, eased tensions between Turkey and Iraq. Meanwhile, Iraqi Prime Minister Abdurrahman al-Bazzaz and his wife organized an eight-day trip to Turkey on July 3, 1966.²²⁵ Parallel to Bazzaz's meeting with Turkish Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel, technical committees were established. The established Tourism Committee drafted a tourism agreement covering tourist relations between Turkey and Iraq.²²⁶ The Turkish-Iraqi Tourism Agreement, which addressed issues such as easing border formalities and improving transportation and shipping vehicles, was signed to enhance tourist relations.²²⁷ Two years after Bazzaz's visit to Turkey, President Cevdet Sunay visited Baghdad between April 27 and May 1, 1968. Sunay's visit to Iraq brought positive developments, and an agreement was signed in June of the same year to establish cooperation in the field of tourism. Ten days after the agreement was signed, a joint delegation was formed, and a decision was made to open Turkish language courses in Iraq and Arabic language courses in Turkey.²²⁸ Developments in the fields of education, culture, and tourism led to a positive development in relations between the two countries, and following the decision taken at the eleventh meeting of the Turkish-Iraqi Educational Cooperation Commission held between 21-23 December 1971, the "Protocol on Educational, Teaching, and Cultural Cooperation between Turkey and Iraq" was signed. The agreement included the exchange of two or three professors between Turkish and Iraqi universities, the mutual effort to

²²⁴ Cesur, op. cit., p. 38.

²²⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 4 July 1966, p. 1.

²²⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 5 July 1966, p. 7

²²⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 7 July 1966, p. 1.

²²⁸ Hamad Lak, op.cit., p. 62,63.

facilitate government scholarships for university registration and acceptance, the encouragement of scientific institutions of the two countries to exchange publications on scientific research, the mutual exchange of educational materials in technical and vocational schools, 50% discount on state vehicles for teachers and students visiting alone or in groups for touristic purposes, for scientific, cultural, sports, and fine arts purposes, reciprocal visits by artist groups, and the exchange of publications in the Turkish and Iraqi national libraries.²²⁹ Following the Protocol signed in 1971, the "Cultural and Scientific Cooperation Agreement" was signed on April 25, 1974, to strengthen cultural and traditional ties between the two neighboring countries. With this agreement, the parties agreed to mutually share their experiences in various fields of education, science, culture, and sports. The parties strived to ensure that history and geography courses taught in their schools adhered to scientific criteria and to accurately narrate the past. Similar to the protocol signed in 1971, the parties agreed to exchange experts working in the fields of education, training, technical culture, and science, as well as university faculty members.²³⁰ In December 1978, Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit visited Iraq. Cultural and commercial relations between the two countries were evaluated, and during this visit, agreements were signed in the fields of culture and science for the years 1978-79 and 1979-80.²³¹

²²⁹ BCA, File No: 278-10-9, Date: 09.02.1972

²³⁰ Türkiye Cumhuriyeti ile Irak Cumhuriyeti Arasında Kültürel ve Bilimsel Yardımlaşma Anlaşmasının Onaylanmasının Uygun Bulunduğuna Dair Kanun, No:2086, https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/KANUNLAR_KARARLAR/kanuntbmc060/kanuntbmmc060/kanuntbmmc06002086.pdf

²³¹ Hamad Lak, op. cit., p.75.

3. NORTHERN IRAQ KURDS IN TURKEY-IRAQ RELATIONS

For centuries, Kurds lived under Turkish rule within the Ottoman Empire. However, after World War I defeated the former empire, it was fragmented into new nations, and the Kurds felt the moment had come for independence. The Treaty of Sèvres in 1920 promised the Kurds a homeland, albeit geographically limited, within what is now modern Turkey. However, with the establishment of the modern Turkish state, the Allies reneged on their promise, and the Treaty of Sèvres was replaced by the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, which contained no provisions regarding the Kurds and incorporated Kurdish minority areas into Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria.²³² Thus, some Kurds formerly part of the Ottoman Empire remained in Iraq and became known as the "Kurds of Northern Iraq." The Kurds of Northern Iraq have consistently rebelled and caused unrest for various reasons. Divided largely between Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria, the Kurds are the largest stateless ethnic group in the world. Some sources refer to the Kurdish region in Iraq as "Kurdistan." Iraqi Kurdistan also includes Turkmens, Arabs, and Armenians.²³³ This section examines how the Kurds of Northern Iraq influence relations between Turkey and Iraq.

3.1. Kurdish Rebellions in Iraq and Their Effects on Turkey-Iraq Relations

3.1.1. Sheikh Mahmud Barzanji Rebellion

Britain, seeking to increase its power in Iraq, attempted to achieve this by using tribes and religious figures.²³⁴ The Barzanji family, which began to dominate the Sulaymaniyah region after the 1850s, attracted the attention of Britain because it was one of the most powerful families among the Kurdish tribes. Sheikh Mahmud Barzanji, who enjoyed great support from the Kurds and was initially seen as manageable by the British, was appointed governor of Sulaymaniyah by the British in 1918.²³⁵ Sheikh Mahmud, who had promised to act in accordance with British policies,

²³² Michael J. Kelly, *Ghosts of Halabja: Saddam Hussein and the Kurdish Genocide*, Bloomsbury Publishing, USA, 2008, p. 2.

²³³ Carole A. O'Leary "The Kurds of Iraq: Recent History, Future Prospects", *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol 6, Issue 4, (2002): p. 17

²³⁴ Haval Mohialdeen, "Türkiye-Irak Kürt Bölgesel Yönetimi İlişkileri (2005'ten Günümüze)", Gazi Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Master's Thesis, Ankara, (2019): p. 23.

²³⁵ Doğuş Beyaztaş, "İrak'ın Sürekli Olağanüstü Hal Rejimi İçinde Kürtler", Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Master's Thesis, (2016): p. 51.

broke his promise and sought to dominate the Kurdish population in Northern Iraq. He appointed his relatives to administrative positions, provoking the reaction of other tribes. Consequently, Britain held a conference in Baghdad and decided to reduce Sheikh Mahmud's influence.²³⁶ Following this decision, Sheikh Mahmud rebelled in 1919, declared independence, plundered the treasury, arrested British soldiers, and declared himself ruler of the region. A clash between British forces and Sheikh Mahmud resulted in his defeat and the death penalty. However, the strength of his religious authority was taken into account, and instead of the death penalty, he was exiled to India.²³⁷ Arnold Wilson, the British Deputy Commissioner for Iraq, expressed his dissatisfaction with the court's decision with the following words:

Sheikh Mahmud's survival poses a grave threat to his enemies, but a great hope for his friends. Sheikh Mahmud's friends will maintain their old stances, hoping for his return. His enemies, too, will be unable to live comfortably for fear of his return. In short, as long as Sheikh Mahmud remains alive, there will be no stability in Kurdistan.²³⁸

After Sheikh Mahmud Barzanji's exile, peace was not restored as expected. Unrest continued in the Sulaymaniyah region, rebellions broke out in Kurdish regions, and the Turks, seeking to retake Mosul, cooperated with Kurdish tribes. In 1922, when Remzi Bey was appointed District Governor of Rawanduz by Mustafa Kemal, the Turks arrived in Rawanduz with a strong military force and announced that Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk, and Erbil would be cleared of the British. Upon this, the British realized that Sulaymaniyah could not be controlled without Sheikh Mahmud Barzanji and recalled him from exile. Barzanji returned to Baghdad, met with Iraqi statesmen and the British, and promised to remove the Turks from the regions they were attempting to seize. Barzanji kept his promise, establishing ministries and raising the Kurdish flag in all offices. However, after Barzanji returned to Sulaymaniyah, he did not receive the support he expected from Iraq and England against the Turks, and the government he founded was not recognized. The Turks made efforts to develop close relations with Barzanji against the British, and in this regard, Özdemiş Bey made the following remarks when Barzanji's deputies gathered in February 1922: *"If Britain sends a large army to Sulaymaniyah against Barzanji and Barzanji is unable to fight, we will take refuge in Rawanduz with all our soldiers*

²³⁶ Mohialdeen, op. cit., p. 23.

²³⁷ Beyaztaş, op.cit., p. 51.

²³⁸ Altan Tan, "Orta Doğu Notları: Şeyh Mahmud Berzenci", Independent Türkçe, <https://www.indyrturk.com/node/212516/t%C3%BCrkiyeden-sesler/ortado%C4%9Fu-notlar%C4%B1-26-%C5%9Feyh-mahmud-berzenci-1>

and fight against England with Turkish soldiers.²³⁹ The British distrusted Mahmud Barzanji because they believed he would cooperate with the Turks and, in 1923, distributed leaflets in Sulaymaniyah and prohibited Barzanji and his government from entering Baghdad. Britain and Iraq captured Sulaymaniyah on July 19, 1924, and Barzanji settled in a village on the Iran-Iraq border.²⁴⁰ On June 30, 1930, Britain lifted the mandate over Iraq with an agreement and granted independence.²⁴¹ Because the agreement did not include any clause regarding the Kurdish demands, Sheikh Mahmud Barzanji was called upon to lead the uprising in Sulaymaniyah. Barzanji complied with this call but was defeated in May 1931. Barzanji announced that he had given up the uprising by reaching an agreement with Baghdad in 1941.²⁴²

3.1.2. Sheikh Ahmed Barzani Rebellion

Sheikh Ahmed Barzani, one of the leaders of the Barzani tribe, supported Sheikh Mahmud Barzanji, who launched an uprising against Britain in 1919. He wrote to Kurdish tribal leaders, asking them to support Sheikh Mahmud. Sheikh Ahmed also sent a group of his warriors to the region, but many of them perished before reaching Sulaymaniyah due to an ambush set by British collaborators.²⁴³ After the suppression of Sheikh Mahmud Barzanji's rebellion in the early 1930s, the Barzan region became the center of Kurdish movements. Especially Sheikh Ahmed Barzani, one of the leaders of the Barzan region, was the leader of the Kurdish uprisings.²⁴⁴ At the same time, a group of approximately 500 people under the command of Ahmed Barzani entered Turkey via Iraq to support the Ararat Uprising, which began in 1926 and ended in 1930. This caused unrest in the Oramar Region of Hakkari.²⁴⁵ After supporting the Ararat Uprising in Turkey, Sheikh Ahmed began to organize rebellions against Britain and the Iraqi government from 1931 onwards.²⁴⁶ With the support of Britain, the Iraqi government began to attack Ahmed Barzani against the

²³⁹ Mohialdeen, op.cit., p. 23,24

²⁴⁰ İbid, p. 26.

²⁴¹ İhsan Sabri Balkaya, "Irak Kralı Faysal'ın Türkiye'ye Ziyaretinin Basındaki Yansımaları", Atatürk Kültür, Yüksek Kurumu, Vol 7, (2007): p. 570.

²⁴² Mohialdeen, op.cit., p. 25,26.

²⁴³ Hüseyin Siyabend Aytemur, "Şeyh Ahmed Barzani ve Mustafa Barzani", Independent Türkçe,

<https://www.indyrturk.com/node/116431/t%C3%BCrkiyeden-sesler/%C5%9Feyh-ahmed-barzani-ve-mustafa-barzani>

²⁴⁴ Mohialdeen, op. cit., p. 25,26

²⁴⁵ Öztürk, op. cit., p. 38

²⁴⁶ Mohialdeen, op. cit., p. 27.

uprisings. Ahmed Barzani, left in a difficult situation, was forced to seek refuge in Turkey. Turkey arrested Ahmed Barzani and extradited him to Iraq, after which the Iraqi government issued an amnesty for the rebels. However, the Barzani family, who led the uprisings, was forced to reside in Sulaymaniyah for a long time.²⁴⁷ Even after Sheikh Ahmed Barzani's arrest, the uprising could not be completely suppressed, so the Iraqi government requested assistance from Turkey. Turkey did not reject the Iraqi government's request and accepted its request for assistance.²⁴⁸ On July 18, 1932, Turkish Foreign Minister Tevfik Rüştü Aras sent a letter to the Prime Ministry, stating that the Iraqi government thanked Turkey for the assistance the Iraqi government had provided to the First Secretary of the Iraqi Embassy in the operation against the Sheikh of Barzan on June 27, 1932, for complying with the adopted measures, and for the Sheikh's extradition by the Turkish government when he sought refuge in Turkey.²⁴⁹ This cooperation between the two countries has led to a rapprochement. Following the capture of Sheikh Ahmed of Barzan and his men, the Iraqi Foreign Minister's letter of thanks to Turkey reads as follows:

I have the honor of requesting your appreciation and appreciation for the valuable assistance and great efforts of the Honorable Government of the Republic of Turkey in extinguishing the rebellion of Sheikh Ahmed of Barzan, who had been rebelling for a short time with some bandits, and for the support he provided to the Iraqi Government. The measures taken by the Republic of Turkey, with its brave soldiers, to close the border in the face of the rebel sheikh and to arrest him and his followers while they are fleeing beyond the border, deserve all kinds of praise and admiration. This action is based on the fact that it is one of the reasons that will lead to the restoration and continuation of the aforementioned security and order in a region that has been deprived of security and order for a long time. I request that you accept my most sincere appreciation and satisfaction.²⁵⁰

As can be seen from the Iraqi Foreign Minister's statement, the joint action of Turkey and Iraq against the rebellion initiated by Sheikh Ahmed Barzani was welcomed by the Iraqi government and improved bilateral relations. Following the complete suppression of the Sheikh Ahmed Barzani rebellion, he and his men were exiled to southern Iraq and imprisoned in Sulaymaniyah. Following Sheikh Ahmed's death, Kurdish movements in Iraq were led by his brother, Mullah Mustafa Barzani.²⁵¹

²⁴⁷ Öztürk, op. cit., p. 41.

²⁴⁸ Mohialdeen, op. cit., p. 28.

²⁴⁹ BCA, File No: 259-741-11, Date: 18.07.1932

²⁵⁰ BCA, File No: 259-741-14, Date: 03.08.1932

²⁵¹ Mohialdeen, op. cit., p. 28.

3.1.3. Mullah Mustafa Barzani Rebellion

Following his brother Sheikh Ahmed, Mullah Mustafa Barzani returned to Barzani from exile in 1943 and launched a new rebellion against the Iraqi government.²⁵² Mullah Mustafa submitted his demands to the Iraqi government, including the establishment of a Kurdish Autonomous Region, the establishment of Kurdish as the official language of the region, and the establishment of a ministry-like institution. However, when his demands were rejected, he launched an armed struggle.²⁵³ The British, fearing that the Russians would exploit the unrest and use the Kurds as pawns, sought a negotiated settlement with Mullah Mustafa. However, as Mullah Mustafa refused to back down from his demands, no agreement was reached. The British government supported Iraq in suppressing the Barzani movement, providing 31 military aircraft to Iraq unconditionally.²⁵⁴

According to a document received from the Turkish Embassy in Baghdad during the Mustafa Molla rebellion, it was stated that some Iraqi soldiers stationed in the Barzan region were attacked by a 16-20-person Kurdish gang that had infiltrated from Iran while heading to the location of the Zeyti Police Station. It was also stated that unless they could find refuge or assistance in Turkey, suppressing such movements would be difficult. It is hoped that the two states will unite and act accordingly to prevent these actions, which will undoubtedly be detrimental to both sides. The Ambassador's opinion is as follows:

Despite the fact that the number of Kurds who have infiltrated Iraq to date is between 50 and 60, the reason why the Council of Viziers held meetings lasting late into the night, with the participation of the Iraqi Chief of General Staff, is that the permission mentioned above should not be underestimated.²⁵⁵

The Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent another letter to the Turkish Embassy to prevent armed groups from infiltrating Turkey. Foreign Minister Hasan Saka informed the Prime Minister's Office of the Iraqi government's request with the following words:

In a note sent by our Embassy in Baghdad, the Iraqi government, in a note delivered to our Embassy, informed us that the Barzan tribe leader, Molla Mustafa, and his followers had once again rebelled. It was stated that

²⁵² Hasan Tefik Güzel, "Soğuk Savaş Sürecinde Irak'ta Kürt Hareketi ve Molla Mustafa Barzani", *International Journal of History*, Vol 10 Issue 4, (2018): p. 126.

²⁵³ Zülfü Dağdeviren, "Irak'ta Kürt Milliyetçiliği ve Kimliğinin Tarihsel Gelişimi", *Akademik Tarih ve Araştırmalar Dergisi*, Vol 4 Issue 5, (2021), p. 202.

²⁵⁴ Hamad Lak, op. cit., p. 37,38

²⁵⁵ BCA, File No: 259-747-48, Date: 03.04.1946

a rapid and rapid military operation would soon be launched against the rebels, and that certain measures were needed to ensure the preservation of security and public order in and around the Zibar district. Therefore, in view of the possibility of the rebels and other individuals responsible for the breaches of public order seeking asylum in Turkey, the Iraqi government requested Turkey to immediately take the necessary measures, including closing the Turkish-Iraqi border in the said region, to prevent those who would be subject to prosecution from seeking asylum in Turkey, based on Article 8 of the Turkish-Iraqi-British treaty and the specific article of the Sadabad Pact, and relying on the existing good neighborly and friendly relations between Turkey and Iraq. It is reported.²⁵⁶

Turkey did not reject the Iraqi government's request, closing its borders and stationing troops along the Iran-Iraq border. Thus, Mullah Mustafa and his men were trapped between Turkish and Iraqi forces working together against Barzani. Desperate, Mullah Mustafa fled to Iran. After his arrival, Mullah Mustafa played a role in the establishment of the Republic of Mahabad on January 22, 1946, with the Iranian Kurd Qadi Muhammad.²⁵⁷ While in Iran, he established the Iraqi Kurdish Democratic Party (IKP) as a branch of the Iranian Kurdistan Democratic Party, along with the Rîzgari, Hevi, and Soreş organizations present in Iraq. Thus, Mullah Mustafa laid the foundations for the political structure currently led by Masoud Barzani in Northern Iraq.²⁵⁸

As can be seen, the joint action of the Iraqi and Turkish governments in suppressing the rebellions of Sheikh Ahmed Barzani and Mullah Mustafa Barzani in Northern Iraq has been a factor that has brought the two states closer together. The main reason Turkey is siding with the Iraqi government against the Kurdish uprisings in Iraq is its concern that the uprisings will also affect Kurds living in Turkey. Due to this concern, the Turkish government has taken the following decision to prevent the Molla Mustafa Rebellion and similar movements from affecting the Kurds in Turkey:

The prohibition of importing into the country of the Kurdish declarations titled "Kurd and Freedom," "High Serdar Barzani," and "Kurdistan Freedom" and the confiscation of those obtained were decided upon at the meeting of the Council of Ministers on November 18, 1948, in accordance with Article 51 of Law No. 1881, as amended by Law No. 2657, based on the Ministry of Interior's letter dated September 27, 1948, and

²⁵⁶ BCA, File No: 259-747-45, Date: 16.08.1946

²⁵⁷ Mohialdeen, op. cit., p. 38

²⁵⁸ Tefvik, op. cit., p. 127

numbered 57376.²⁵⁹

3.2. The Impact of Northern Iraqi Kurds on Turkish-Iraqi Relations in the Context of Coups in the Iraqi Administration

3.2.1. The July 14, 1958 Coup

The Kingdom of Iraq, established in 1921 with the installation of King Faisal, was overthrown on July 14, 1958, by a coup by General Qasim and his supporters, and a republic was declared. Faisal II, Prime Minister Nuri Said, and Prince Abdullah were killed, and General Abdul Karim Qasim succeeded him. General Qasim's policy was generally to govern the country by relying on the Kurds and Communists. The Communist-Kurdish alliance thus formed, particularly in northern Iraq, was met with opposition from a large segment of the population, particularly the Nationalists.²⁶⁰ The Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), founded by Mullah Mustafa Barzani in 1946, congratulated Qasim for bringing freedom to the Kurds and Arabs in the newly democratic Iraq and for his struggle against imperialism.²⁶¹ The Iraqi Republic established under General Qasim's leadership, close to the Kurds and the Soviets and aloof from the Baghdad Pact, soured Turkey-Iraq relations, which had previously been good. Although Turkey was not happy with the new government, it recognized the Republic of Iraq on July 31, 1958.²⁶²

Mullah Mustafa Barzani requested a visa in Prague to return to Iraq. Barzani's return to Iraq marks a new phase in the new Iraqi government's policy toward the Kurds. The Iraqi government is conducting extensive propaganda about the equality granted to Kurds and their participation in government. Kurds imprisoned in Iraq are being released, and Kurds abroad are being allowed to return. Baghdad Radio continues its Kurdish broadcasts at full speed. These broadcasts call on Kurds to be vigilant and praise the rights granted to them by the new government. Furthermore, broadcasts are directed at Kurds outside Iraq, as well as Turks in Iran and Turkey, encouraging them to rebel against the government and advising them to fight for equality in education and culture. All these broadcasts carry a vehement anti-imperialist tone. They

²⁵⁹ BCA, File No: 117-75-16, Date: 18.11.1948

²⁶⁰ Aydın Yiğit, "1958 İhtilali Sonrası Irak'ın Kuzeyinde Yaşanan Gelişmeler ve Albay Şevvaf İşyanı'nın Türkiye'ye Yansımaları (1958-1959)", Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, Issue 54, (2021): p. 483.

²⁶¹ Denise Natali, *The Kurds and The State Evolving National Identity in Iraq, Turkey and Iran*, Syracuse University Press, Newyork, 2005, p. 51

²⁶² Cesur, op. cit., p.39

claim that imperialism is separating Kurds from their Arab brethren. With its Kurdish policy, the new Iraqi government is trying to compensate for the former Iraqi government's unfavorable position towards the Kurds and aims to utilize the Kurds for an anti-Western movement in neighboring countries.²⁶³

As can be seen from the statements of the Second Secretary of the Israeli Embassy regarding the Iraqi Republic's Kurdish policy, the new government published Kurdish publications, granted Kurds broad rights, pursued an anti-imperialist policy, and encouraged Kurds outside Iraq to revolt. This situation worried Turkey, as the Iraqi government also invited Kurds in Turkey to revolt against the state, creating an atmosphere of distrust between Turkey and Iraq. Meanwhile, the Kurds in Kirkuk, empowered by the government, began to march against the Iraqi Turkmen. The Turkmen sent telegrams to the heads of state, parliament, and government to explain this situation and the oppression they were experiencing. The telegram sent by the Iraqi Turks is as follows:

We have learned with sorrow that our compatriots in Kirkuk, considered the center of the Iraqi Turks, have been subjected to brutal communist aggression. We respectfully request that the necessary care and compassion be shown to the lives and property of these compatriots, who are subjects of the Iraqi state and have always opposed communism.²⁶⁴

The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is closely following the events in Kirkuk, has held contacts with the Iraqi government regarding these events.²⁶⁵ As tensions continued in Kirkuk, Kurds continued to attack Turkish coffeehouses and shops and tore down Atatürk posters. The clashes were very violent and there were casualties on both sides. Meanwhile, the Iraqi Foreign Minister welcomed Behçet Türkmen to his office and gave him a detailed explanation of the events in Kirkuk. On the same day, Baghdad Radio, in its evening broadcast, spoke of Turkish-Iraqi friendship and expressed satisfaction with the good relations between the two countries.²⁶⁶ Nizamettin Nerfçi, who lived in Kirkuk and was deported due to the clashes,

"The constitution adopted by the administration destroyed by the revolution clearly acknowledged that the Iraqi nation was composed of Arab, Kurdish, and Turkish elements, but deprived the Turks of even the most basic citizenship rights. In the new constitution, not only the rights of

²⁶³ BCA, File No: 2770-20334-1, Date: 09.10.1958

²⁶⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 6 November 1958, p. 5.

²⁶⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 7 November 1958, p. 5

²⁶⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 9 November 1958, p. 1

the Turks, but even their names were not mentioned."²⁶⁷

On November 19, 1958, as Kurds continued to oppress Turks, the Iraqi government requested that the US, UK, and Turkey close their consulates outside the Baghdad and Basra provinces. However, despite the large Turkmen population in northern Iraq, especially in Kirkuk, there were no consulates, cultural attachés, or press attachés, so news about that region was received through the Embassy in Baghdad.²⁶⁸ Recent events in Northern Iraq, especially in Kirkuk, have demonstrated that the Turks there are living under threat. If the Mosul Consulate were to close, obtaining information about the Turks of Kirkuk would be virtually impossible. Baghdad Radio did not provide a reason for this decision, but in an effort to enforce its acceptance, it issued the following statement:

Russia's involvement with Northern Iraq and some of the Kurdish tribes there has recently increased. It's likely that Moscow will soon request the opening of consulates in Mosul and Kirkuk. This demand would pose a significant threat. The Iraqi government has made this decision to prevent this in advance.²⁶⁹

After making this statement, Baghdad Radio tried to rationalize its decision by adding the "preponderance of Kurds around Kirkuk and Mosul." Although Turkey opposed this decision, it was unable to prevent it, and the Mosul Consulate was closed.²⁷⁰ The closure of the Mosul Consulate, claiming that the region has a large Kurdish population, has fueled tensions between Turkey and Iraq, which was already unhappy with the new government. While the revival of Kurdish political movements in Iraq in 1958 caused unease in Turkey, the tension between Turkmens and Kurds on July 14, 1959, added a new dimension to the situation.²⁷¹ Mustafa Barzani, who had been living in exile in Russia for approximately 11 years, returned to Iraq three months after the July 14 coup. Because he was considering establishing an autonomous Kurdistan state, he cultivated cordial relations with General Qasim and the Communists, aiming to destroy the Iraqi Turkmens. On October 22, en route from Kirkuk Airport to Sulaymaniyah and back two days later, a veritable show of force was staged. As Barzani's convoy passed, Turks were insulted and slogans were chanted urging them to leave. General Nazım Tabakçalı, then the Second Division Commander in Kirkuk, sent a report to the Baghdad government, warning that urgent action must be taken, or that major incidents would

²⁶⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 13 November 1958, p. 1.

²⁶⁸ Yiğit, op. cit., p. 498,499

²⁶⁹ Ömer Sami Coşar, *Cumhuriyet*, 20 November 1958, p.3

²⁷⁰ Yiğit, op. cit., p. 498,499.

²⁷¹ Öztürk, op. cit., p. 68.

erupt between Turkish and Kurdish groups.²⁷² Tabakçalı's report included the following: "Please submit this matter to Mr. Abdülkerim Kasım. The Kurds' aim is to Kurdify Kirkuk, a city comprised predominantly of Turks, and to gather Kurds from surrounding areas into this city. If this action is not prevented, even more dire consequences may arise." However, General Nazım's report was ignored and no action was taken. On July 14, 1959, during demonstrations in Kirkuk to celebrate the first anniversary of the Republic, Communists and Kurds provoked Turks by chanting derogatory slogans. Gunshots were heard as they passed by a coffeehouse occupied by Turks. The Communists, members of the People's Army, immediately declared a curfew, but this curfew was only applied to Turkmens. Three days of massacres began, and torture and inhumane acts were committed.²⁷³ Most of the houses, cars, shops, and coffeehouses belonging to Turks were burned and looted. Many Turks were killed in street fighting, and some were hanged.²⁷⁴ Turkey's Ambassador to Baghdad, Fuad Bayramoğlu, was summoned to Ankara and conveyed the message from Foreign Minister Fatin Rüştü Zorlu and Prime Minister Adnan Menderes to General Kasım. Turkey wrote in its message that it was sorry for the events that had occurred, and General Kasım also expressed his sorrow and stated that those responsible for the events would be punished.²⁷⁵ Although Kasım reacted negatively to the events that took place during the massacre, he was always a subject of suspicion among the Turkmens, with whom he was also a collaborator.²⁷⁶ The new constitution declared in Iraq in 1960 after the July 14 coup stated that Iraq was a nation composed of Arabs and Kurds, but did not mention Iraqi Turks.²⁷⁷ *Cumhuriyet* newspaper columnist Ömer Sami Coşar commented on the matter as follows:

Just as Turkey is meticulous about pursuing a friendly policy toward the Baghdad government, we cannot help but notice that they insist on a hostile course toward us and the Iraqi Turks. Those who inserted the following sentence into Article 3 of Iraq's provisional constitution: "This constitution recognizes the national rights of the Kurds within the Iraqi Union" have completely ignored the rights of the 600,000-strong Turkish

²⁷² "Kerkük Katliamı Bir İnsanlık Suçudur, Soykırımdır.", Türk Ocakları Genel Merkezi, <https://www.turkocaklari.org.tr/nuri-gurgur/kerkuk-katliami-bir-insanlik-sucudur-soykirimdir/1060>

²⁷³ Tunahan Hazır, "14 Temmuz 1959 Kerkük Katliamı", Niğde Ömer Halisdemir Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, Vol 1, Issue 2, (2019): p. 152,153.

²⁷⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 20 July 1959, p. 5.

²⁷⁵ Öztürk, op. cit., p. 69,70.

²⁷⁶ Hazır, op. cit., p. 153

²⁷⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 4 January 1960, p. 5.

community.²⁷⁸

3.2.2. February 8, 1963 Coup

General Qasim, who came to power through a coup in 1958, soon began to deteriorate his relationship with the Communists and the Kurds. To protect his nation-state-building project, Qasim strategically abandoned his left-leaning, pro-Kurdish policies. Under pressure from Arab nationalist and military groups, he implemented new assimilation and control strategies. After 1959, Qasim declared martial law in the country and Arabized the names of Kurdish settlements. He shut down Kurdish organizations, arrested communists, and angered the Kurds with his definition of Iraq as a "single nation" rather than a "community of peoples."²⁷⁹ On February 11, 1959, Qasim met with Mullah Mustafa and his brother Sheikh Ahmed of the Barzani family, agreeing to grant autonomy to the Kurds, but he did not keep his promise. Consequently, relations between the Kurds and the government began to strain, eventually escalating into armed conflict in September 1961. Abdusselam Arif, backed by the Baathists, became President on February 8, 1963, by a coup against General Kasim, who had no Kurdish or Communist support. Kasim was executed after a short trial.²⁸⁰ Baghdad Radio reported that the Kurdish Democratic Party, founded by Kurdish rebel leader Barzani, supported the Iraqi revolutionary operation. The radio also broadcast a message from former Education Minister General Fuat Arif, a Kurdish national who wielded considerable influence among the rebel Kurds in Northern Iraq, supporting the coup. Meanwhile, Baghdad Radio called for personnel to broadcast in Kurdish.²⁸¹ The Akis newspaper, published on March 2, 1963, commented on the relationship between the new government and the Kurds as follows:

For the Iraqi government, risking war with the Kurds is just as difficult as fulfilling Kurdish demands is a dangerous undertaking. It's unpredictable how Iraqi nationalists within the country and Arab nationalists abroad will react if the Kurds are granted autonomy. Indeed, it's impossible to say that the government is sympathetic to Kurdish demands. ...A Kurdish spokesman said on this issue, "We are ready to do everything we can to ensure the establishment of the new regime and

²⁷⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 5 January 1960, p. 3

²⁷⁹ Natali, op. cit., p. 52.

²⁸⁰ Altan Tan, "Ortadoğu Notları (23): Irak Baas Partisi", Independent Türkçe, <https://www.indyturk.com/node/202066/t%C3%BCrki%C3%87yeden-sesler/ortado%C4%9Funotlar%C4%B1-23-irak-baas-partisi>

²⁸¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 9 February 1963, p. 5

stability. But we will not give up our demand for autonomy at any cost."²⁸²

The Akis newspaper stated that the new government's Kurdish policy did not include granting autonomy to the Kurds, but that the Kurds were insistent on this issue. Just as they had during the Kasim period, the Kurds, hoping for autonomy during the Abdüsselam Arif era, wanted to reach an agreement with the Baghdad government. Consequently, the Kurds suspended armed struggle for a time after the coup. However, the new government, believing that the establishment of a Kurdish administration in northern Iraq would jeopardize Iraq's security, did not respond favorably to the Kurds' demands for autonomy. Realizing they could not achieve their aims through peaceful means, the Kurds began to rearm to continue their suspended struggle.²⁸³ According to a report published in the Cumhuriyet newspaper on June 20, 1963, a meeting chaired by President Cemal Gürsel decided to close the Turkey-Iraq border, following a proposal from the General Staff and the favorable opinion of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, regarding the security of Turkey's southern borders. Additionally, as a result of the Iraqi government's extensive operation against Barzani forces and the Kurds, and considering the possibility that some tribes and the Barzani family might seek refuge in Turkey to escape government forces in Northern Iraq, extensive security measures were taken along the Iraqi border.²⁸⁴ Following the announcement that the Turkey-Iraq border had been closed, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs denied the reports the following day, issuing a statement: *"It has been observed that some newspapers have published news that our current border with Iraq has been closed. Anadolu Agency has declared this news to be false."*²⁸⁵ That same day, the Iraqi army announced the deaths of 26 Kurdish guerrillas, including Mohammed Said Barzani, a close relative of Kurdish leader Mullah Mustafa. Baghdad Radio reported that Kurdish rebels had fled to the Turkish border in panic.²⁸⁶ Ankara Martial Law Commander Cemal Tural inspected Turkey's southeastern borders and returned to Ankara that evening. The purpose of Cemal Tural's inspection was to ensure Turkey's security during clashes between the Iraqi army and Kurdish elements on the Turkish border. The US and Russian reaction to the Iraqi government in the face of the offensive launched by Iraqi forces demonstrated that Barzani had become significantly stronger.

²⁸² Akis, 2 March 1963, p. 19,20.

²⁸³ Hasan Tevfik Güzel, "Darbeler Ülkesi Irak", Uluslararası 15 Temmuz ve Darbeler Sempozyumu", Vol 2, (2018): p. 461.

²⁸⁴ Cumhuriyet, 20 June 1963, p. 5

²⁸⁵ Cumhuriyet, 21 June 1963, p. 5.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 5.

Regardless of who supports the Iraqi Kurds, the conflict is an internal matter for Turkey, and it is the Turkish government's policy to deny Barzani's forces any aid or allow them into the country.²⁸⁷ Turkey has not wanted to be a party to the conflict between the Iraqi government and the Kurdish rebels, and has maintained normal relations with the Iraqi government by preventing Kurds from seeking refuge in Turkey.

3.2.3. The July 18, 1968 Coup

Following the death of Abdusselam Arif in a helicopter crash in 1966, his brother, Abdurrahman Arif, who was a soldier, succeeded him. Abdurrahman Arif's presidency did not last long, and he was replaced by Bassist Hasan al-Bakr following the July 18, 1968 coup.²⁸⁸ Between 1967 and 1968, journalist Hulusi Turgut traveled to Iraq and forwarded Mustafa Barzani's letters to Süleyman Demirel and Cevdet Sunay to the relevant authorities upon his return. Part of the letter, published in *Akşam* newspaper approximately two months after the July 18 coup, reads as follows:

We hope that the principles of Islam, which oppose the oppression and destruction of our Muslim and peace-loving Turkish brothers and sisters, our Kurdish brothers, can be used as pressure against Iraq, which is at war with us. Furthermore, I request our assistance, in whatever way possible, to the Kurdish people under Iraqi blockade. I want you to be assured that this assistance will not disrupt the security and peace established along the border we share with you.²⁸⁹

Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel, when asked by journalists about the letter, responded: *"Iraq is a friendly country. We will not interfere in its internal affairs. We will not offend Iraq. As a state, it is clear who we will address. The Republic of Turkey establishes relations with the countries it recognizes as states. We will not say we will not accept a letter when it arrives."*²⁹⁰ As can be seen from Demirel's response, the Turkish government, considering the Kurdish issue an internal matter for Iraq, did not provide any support to the Kurds and did not want to damage its relations with the newly established government in Iraq following the coup. Saddam Hussein, the second-in-command of the Baath Party, accepted the Kurds' long-held demands for streamlining domestic politics with an agreement signed with

²⁸⁷ *Akis*, 22 June 1963, p. 11.

²⁸⁸ Güzel, "Darbeler Ülkesi Irak", p. 462,463

²⁸⁹ Öztürk, op. cit., p. 105.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 105.

Mullah Mustafa Barzani on March 11, 1970.²⁹¹ The agreement with Barzani, the Kurdish leader, envisioned changes to the Iraqi constitution and the establishment of Iraq as a bi-national state. Al-Bakr stated that the main points of the agreement reached with the Kurds were as follows: *“Kurdish will be taught in all schools, even military academies. A university will be established in Sulaymaniyah, Kurdish books, newspapers, and magazines will be published, a Kurdish-language television station will be established, and the Newroz holiday will be celebrated.”*²⁹² At the same time, al-Bakr added that aid would be provided to the poor Kurds and that Iraq's official language would be Arabic and its second language would be Kurdish.²⁹³ After the agreement, Mullah Mustafa sent a message to Hasan al-Bakr, who had ended the long-standing conflict between the Iraqi government and the Kurds, saying: *“On behalf of the Kurdish masses and the Kurdish Democratic Party, I congratulate you and the Iraqi people on your historic declaration that resolved the Kurdish issue through democratic and peaceful means.”*²⁹⁴ The agreement between the Iraqi Kurds and the government, which granted the Kurds very broad rights, caused concern that this situation would affect other states and provoked various reactions in the Arab world.²⁹⁵ The Kurds, wanting to include Kirkuk within the borders of the Autonomous Region, caused disagreements with the Baghdad administration. Consequently, the Kurds suspended negotiations and the Kurdish ministers in Baghdad resigned. Thus, the peaceful atmosphere established by the 1970 agreement between the Kurds and the Baath regime was again disrupted.²⁹⁶

3.3. The Impact of the Iran-Iraq War on Turkey-Iraq Relations in the Context of Iraqi Kurds

The Kurds were deprived of Soviet support after the fifteen-year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation was signed between the Soviet Union and Iraq in 1972. However, due to the Shatt al-Arab crisis between Iraq and Iran during this period, Tehran aligned itself with the Kurds against the Baghdad government. Iraq sought to resolve the issue, and with the knowledge of the US, the Foreign Ministers of Iraq, Iran, and Turkey convened in Istanbul. At this meeting, the Iran-Iraq border was redefined,

²⁹¹ Arkan H. Muhammad, “Iraklı Kürtlerin Özerklikten De Facto Federalizme Geçiş Aşamaları (1918–2005)”, *Cumhuriyet Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Issue 18 (2013): p. 90

²⁹² *Cumhuriyet*, 12 March 1970, p. 3.

²⁹³ *İbid.*, p. 3.

²⁹⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 13 March 1970, p. 3

²⁹⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 15 March 1970, p. 3

²⁹⁶ Muhammad, op. cit., p. 91.

and it was decided that the Kurdish people living within a 25-30 km depth of the border would be resettled in cities. Iraq also stated that it would recognize Iran's sovereignty over the Ervend Rud if it withdrew its support for the Kurds.²⁹⁷ Thus, on March 6, 1975, Saddam Hussein and the Shah of Iran signed the Algiers Agreement. Under the agreement, Iran pledged not to assist Mullah Mustafa's efforts to establish a Kurdish state in Iraq.²⁹⁸ After Hassan al-Bakr resigned on July 12, 1979, his deputy, Saddam Hussein, took his place. An Egyptian Foreign Ministry official stated that the new president, Saddam Hussein, had actually been ruling Iraq for years, and therefore his appointment was a very normal and appropriate decision.²⁹⁹ At the same time, following the stagnation of the Kurdish movement following the Algiers Agreement, Mullah Mustafa Barzani, who settled in the United States, died in 1979. His sons, Massoud and Idris Barzani, took over the leadership of the KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party), founded by Mullah Mustafa. Meanwhile, disagreements within the party, which began in the 1960s, culminated in Jalal Talabani's establishment of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) in 1975.³⁰⁰ The PUK, founded under Jalal Talabani's leadership, emerged as a younger, more urban, and left-leaning movement compared to the KDP. While the KDP is generally strong in the traditionally Kurdish northern regions bordering Turkey, the PUK is strong in the southern Kurdish regions bordering Iran.³⁰¹

Despite the signing of the Algiers Agreement between Iran and Iraq in 1975, relations did not improve. Saddam Hussein, due to the large Shiite population in Iraq, perceived the Islamic revolution in Iran as a threat and executed the Shiite cleric Ayatollah Mohammad Bakr al-Sadr. Tensions between the two countries subsequently escalated, and war broke out with Iraq's invasion of Iranian territory on September 22, 1980. Saddam Hussein terminated the Algiers Agreement on October 17 and declared the Shatt al-Arab waterway to belong to the Iraqi state.³⁰² After the Iran-Iraq War began, Iran improved relations with the Iraqi Kurds and they acted together against the Iraqi government. During the Iran-Iraq war, KDP leader Masoud Barzani requested Iranian aid and cooperation against the Iraqi government. PUK leader Jalal Talabani, although initially siding with

²⁹⁷ Muhammad, op. cit., p. 92

²⁹⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 7 March 1975, p. 3.

²⁹⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 18 July 1979, p. 3.

³⁰⁰ Öztürk, op. cit., p. 84,85.

³⁰¹ Kenneth Katzman, *The Kurds in Post-Saddam Iraq*, Congressional Research Service, 2009, p. 1.

³⁰² Yücealtay, op. cit., p. 26.

the Iraqi government, later sided with Iran, cooperating with the KDP. With the agreement signed between the Iranian government and the PUK in 1986, Iran provided arms assistance to the PUK. The Iranian government also allowed PUK Peshmerga and Kurdish refugees to shelter on its territory during the war. Iran facilitated their joining into Iraqi territory through joint operations and cooperation with the PUK and the KDP.³⁰³ While Iraq was at war with Iran in the south, the Kurds were quick to fill the power vacuum that emerged in Northern Iraq. Founded in 1978 under the leadership of Abdullah Öcalan, the PKK terrorist organization held its second congress in 1982 and decided to settle in Northern Iraq, where there was a power vacuum. After this, the Kurds organized themselves in the "Lolan Camp" in the Iran-Iraq-Turkey triangle, in cooperation with Barzani and the PKK. Turkey, which was experiencing a major war and had terrorist organizations on its border, was quite uneasy about this situation and signed a Border Security Agreement with Saddam Hussein in 1983.³⁰⁴ This agreement gave the Turkish Armed Forces the ability to penetrate 10 km into Iraqi territory and pursue criminals.³⁰⁵ The first operation in accordance with the agreement was launched on May 27, 1983, and Turkey entered 5 km into Iraqi territory to apprehend armed groups that were reported to have "infiltrated Turkey and escaped by committing terrorist acts."³⁰⁶ The Iraqi government did not react negatively to the operation carried out by Turkey, but rather the Iraqi ambassador praised the Turkish army and declared that "both states had agreed" to intervene against the terrorist groups, demonstrating Iraqi support for the operation.³⁰⁷ Furthermore, Saddam Hussein, disturbed by the actions of armed Kurdish groups, also participated in operations with the Iraqi army. KDP leader Masoud Barzani reacted to Turkey by saying that their camps

³⁰³ Haval Azad Mohialdeen, "Geçmişten Günümüze İran'ın Irak Kürtleriyle İlişkileri ve Bağımsızlık Referandumuna Yaklaşımı", *Bölgesel Araştırmalar Dergisi*, Vol 3 Issue 2, (2019): p. 171.

³⁰⁴ Yüksel Kaştan, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı Sonrası Türkiye Irak Siyasi İlişkileri", *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, Issue 19, (2008): p. 316.

³⁰⁵ Ahmet Şahin, "Irak'ın Kuzeyinde Gerçekleştirilen Büyük Hareketler," TRT, <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/gundem/irakin-kuzeyine-gerceklestirilen-buyuk-harekatlar-417275.html>

³⁰⁶ "Irak'a Harekat 1983 Yılında Yapılmıştı", *Hürriyet*, <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/iraka-ilkharekat-1983te-yapilmisti-19039866>

³⁰⁷ Özhan Hancılar, "1983-1987 Kuzey Irak'taki Türk Sınır Ötesi Operasyonlarının Hukukiliği", *"Pamukkale Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, Issue 46, (2021): p. 349.

were damaged during the operations.³⁰⁸ Following the operation carried out by Turkey in May 1983, the PKK and KDP organizations became closer to each other and signed the "Solidarity Principles Agreement" in 1983. The PKK and KDP used terms such as "fascist" and "enemy of the Kurds" because of their reaction against Turkey.³⁰⁹ On October 10, 1984, eight Turkish soldiers were martyred in the Çukurca district of Hakkari when terrorists opened fire. Five days after the incident, Foreign Minister Vahit Halefoğlu traveled to Baghdad to discuss border security issues.³¹⁰ Following Foreign Minister Turgut Özal, he announced that an agreement had been reached with the Iraqi government to take joint action against separatist militants.³¹¹ During Vahit Halefoğlu's visit to Baghdad, Turkey and Iraq signed the "Turkey-Iraq Security Protocol." With this agreement, signed on October 15, 1984, the clause requiring permission for hot pursuit, which had been included in the 1983 agreement between the two countries, was removed, and the Turkish army gained the right to enter 5 km of Iraqi border territory without obtaining permission from the Iraqi government.³¹²

In 1984, as Kurdish groups continued their resistance against Iraq, the events that became known as the "tanker wars" between Iran and Iraq took place. Iraq, aiming to weaken Iran economically by inflicting losses on it and to force Iran to agree to peace by internationalizing the issue by involving third countries, launched attacks on tankers receiving oil from Iran, regardless of their nationality. Iraq struck 45 foreign vessels, including a Turkish cargo ship called the "Purple Transporter," provoking a Turkish reaction against Iraq.³¹³ By 1986, Iran had seized the Fay Islands near Kuwait, turning the war in its favor. Aided by the Kurds in northern Iraq, Iran launched a more powerful attack against Iraq from the north, shifting the balance of power. Faced with Iran's growing strength and advance, Western powers took action, isolating Iran in the international arena. Consequently, the US sent a navy to the Gulf, and the Soviet Union stepped up its arms aid to Iraq to reverse the situation.³¹⁴ The UN Security Council

³⁰⁸ Hürriyet, <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/iraka-ilk-harekat-1983te-yapilmisti-1903986>

³⁰⁹ Öztürk, op. cit., p. 118.

³¹⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 15 October 1984, p. 1

³¹¹ Hancılar, op. cit., p. 350.

³¹² Öztürk, op. cit., p. 119.

³¹³ Zafer Yıldırım, "Türk Basınında İran Irak Savaşı", İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Doctoral Thesis, İstanbul, 2005, p. 231.

³¹⁴ Ekrem Yaşar Akçay, "İran Irak Savaşı'nın Bölgeye Etkileri", Ufuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Cilt 2, Sayı 3, (2013): p. 113.

resolution of July 20, 1987, demanded the immediate termination of the ceasefire in the Gulf, the withdrawal of the parties to their international borders, and the release of prisoners of war. However, Iranian President Ali Khamenei declared for Security Council's decision "worthless" and declared that he would not comply with it.³¹⁵ The town of Halabja, located in the Sulaymaniyah region of Northern Iraq, is a heavily Kurdish-populated area. During the war, PUK-affiliated Peshmerga forces stationed in Halabja aided the Iranian army in fighting against Iraq, and the region was captured by Iran and the PUK on March 15, 1988. Saddam Hussein ordered the Iraqi Army's Northern Front Commander to use chemical weapons to stop the Iranian army and Peshmerga fighting against him in the region. On March 16, 1988, chemical weapons were dropped on the town from aircraft on Saddam Hussein's orders, killing 12,000 people, the majority of them Kurds. The chemical weapons first emitted an apple odor, then caused a burning sensation on the skin, followed by respiratory failure and poisoning.³¹⁶ Due to the Halabja massacre, Kurds living in the region began a massive migration movement towards Iran and Turkey. Turkey initially did not want to accept the Kurds within its borders. The main reason for this was the possibility that the Kurds would cooperate with Kurds in Turkey to create "Kurdish awareness" and negatively impact relations with Iraq.³¹⁷ Meanwhile, approximately five months after the Halabja massacre, the eight-year Iran-Iraq War, which had been devoid of victories, ended with a ceasefire signed on August 20, 1988. Following the Iraqi government's operation against the Kurds, thousands of Kurds, including many women and children, have forced their way across the Turkish border. KDP leader Massoud Barzani called on Turkey, saying, *"We are calling on the Turkish government. For humanitarian reasons, at least accept the children and women poisoned by chemical weapons."*³¹⁸ Barzani, who also claimed that Turkey had closed its borders, was told that the borders were not closed, but that security measures were being taken.³¹⁹ Meanwhile, The voice of the KDP radio, broadcasting from Northern Iraq, claimed that Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani had sought asylum in Turkey. Prime Minister Özal stated that granting asylum to refugees who crossed the Turkish border was out of the question, adding: *"These are people related to people living on our borders. But we have limited resources, and we must*

³¹⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 21 July 1987, p. 3.

³¹⁶ Mustafa Yıldız, Elma Kokusu ile Gelen Ölüm: Halepçe, İNSAMER, (2021): p. 1,2.

³¹⁷ Öztürk, op. cit., p. 123.

³¹⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 30 August 1988, p. 1.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

accept that."³²⁰ With these words, Özal wanted to emphasize that Turkey is aware of the need to help Iraqi Kurds fleeing Saddam's oppression, but that Turkey's limited resources to do so must not be forgotten. Turkey initially did not want to accept Iraqi Kurds into its country for various reasons, but later changed its stance. The main reason for this is that Turkey applied for full membership in the European Economic Community in 1987. During this period, Turkey hoped to be accepted as a full member of the Community by projecting a positive image in the eyes of the West by accepting refugees into its country.³²¹ Three thousand refugees sheltering in the village of Çiğli, a border village in Hakkari, demonstrated, demanding that Turkey not hand them over to Iraq, chanting slogans such as "*We do not want war*," "*We do not want the use of chemical substances*," "*May Saddam die, may life live*," "*We want to live in Turkey*," "*Down with Iraq, down with Baath fascism*," "*Iraq, don't come here*," and "*We are waiting for the Red Cross*."³²² In the face of Iraq's oppressive policy against Kurds, Kurds who had sought refuge in Turkey were settled in tented temporary settlements, and Yüksekova was the first region opened to settlement. The Baghdad government was disturbed by Turkey's protectionist approach towards Kurds.³²³ SHP Istanbul provincial and district officials who wanted to lay a black wreath in front of the Iraqi Consulate General in Istanbul to protest Iraq's use of chemical weapons against Kurdish citizens within its borders were prevented by the police.³²⁴ Minister of Finance and Customs Ahmet Kurtcebe Alptemoçin traveled to Baghdad on September 7 to attend the monitoring meetings of the Turkey-Iraq Joint Economic Commission. While the private plane carrying Minister Alptemoçin and his accompanying delegation, which would be the first high-level contact in Iraq, was in the air, Iraq's concern about recent developments on the Turkish border was conveyed to the Turkish side. This reaction, previously voiced verbally and at various levels, was conveyed in writing to the military wing of the Baghdad Embassy. The message, reportedly penned by Iraqi military officials, stated that "*Turkey's acceptance of women and children crossing the border may be attributed to humanitarian reasons, but its acceptance of armed separatist elements into its territory is incomprehensible*."³²⁵ As can be understood from the message, the Iraqi government think incomprehensible and disturbed that Kurds living in the region sought refuge in the Turkish government after the Halabja massacre and that the

³²⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 1 September 1988, p. 1-11.

³²¹ Öztürk, op. cit., p. 124.

³²² *Cumhuriyet*, 2 September 1988, p. 8.

³²³ *Cumhuriyet*, 3 September 1988, p. 1

³²⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 4 September 1988, p. 1

³²⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 7 September 1988, p. 8

Turkish government accepted Kurds, other than women and children, into its country. A year after the massacre, Turkey held a meeting to condemn the Halabja Massacre, prepared speeches and condemned the incident.³²⁶ At the same time, a group of university students at Dicle University in Diyarbakır chanted slogans such as "*Long live the Kurdish nation's struggle for independence*" and "*No to genocide*," while SHP Diyarbakır Deputy Fuat Atalay lit a wreath with "Saddam" written on it.³²⁷ Operation Anfal, which began between 1986 and 1989 and intensified from February to September 1988, was a military operation carried out by Saddam Hussein against the Kurds. The massacre in Halabja during Operation Anfal was a component of the operation. Various sources estimate that the number of Kurdish deaths in Iraq as a result of the operation is at least 100,000, while Kurdish sources estimate it at 180,000.³²⁸ The general objective of Operation Anfal was to eliminate Kurdish resistance by any means necessary. Its specific objective was to clear the region of "saboteurs," encompassing all males between the ages of 15 and 70. Mass executions were carried out in targeted villages and surrounding areas. Villages controlled by Kurdish rebels were identified, and economic blockades were imposed to deprive these villages of any support.³²⁹ Iraq requested permission to pursue Kurds who fled to Turkey after Operation Anfal, but Turkey refused. In response, the Iraqi government terminated the Turkey-Iraq Security Protocol signed in 1984. The cancellation of the agreement, which had caused tension between the two, was attributed to Iraq's rapprochement with the PKK. By aligning with the PKK, the Iraqi government sought to weaken the KDP and PUK, which it viewed as a threat.³³⁰

The Iran-Iraq War's regional impact on Turkey was the strengthening of the PKK terrorist organization, a group Turkey would struggle with for years. The PKK's opportunity to flourish in Turkey forced the Turkish government to grapple with the problem of terrorism. Simultaneously, Kurds who had settled in Syria following the 1980 coup in Turkey prior to the Iran-Iraq War settled in northern Iraq during the war, infiltrating Turkey from there and engaging in anti-government activities.³³¹ Although Turkey had previously experienced issues with Iraq regarding Mosul, water issues, ethnic conflicts, etc., the two states acted

³²⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 16 March 1989, p. 2.

³²⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 17 March 1989, p. 16.

³²⁸ "26 Şubat 1988: Kanlı Enfal Operasyonu", İHH, <https://ihh.org.tr/haber/26-subat-1988-kanli-enfaloperasyonu-123>

³²⁹ Carole A. O'Leary, op. cit., p. 18.

³³⁰ Öztürk, op. cit., p. 125,126.

³³¹ Akçay, op. cit., p. 117.

together to protect their territorial integrity in the face of Iran's use of the Kurds to create a "Kurdish problem."³³² Although Turkey and Iraq shared similar Kurdish policies, Saddam Hussein's use of chemical weapons to poison the Kurds in Halabja was not tolerated by the Turkish government and allowed Kurdish refugees into its territory. In response, Saddam began supporting the PKK, which had gained strength in Northern Iraq, against Turkey. Saddam's government signed a secret agreement allowing the PKK to settle in Northern Iraq in exchange for the PKK's refusal to cooperate with the PUK and KDP. Although Turkey believed the PKK's influence in Northern Iraq would diminish after the Iran-Iraq War, the PKK, supported by Iraq, increased its militant numbers and continued its activities, such as village raids and ambushes against the police and gendarmerie, causing unrest in Turkey.³³³ Prime Minister Yıldırım Akbulut met with Iraq between May 5-7, 1990, to discuss a cross-border operation due to the PKK's rise to power in Northern Iraq. However, Iraq did not include the "hot pursuit" issue and instead requested an agreement on "joint border security."³³⁴

3.4. The Impact of the Gulf War on Turkey- Iraq Relations

In 1961, Iraqi leader General Qasim did not recognize Kuwaiti independence, stating that Kuwaiti territory belonged to the Basra Province, which was once part of the Ottoman Empire, and therefore the region should be included within Iraq's borders. Abdus Salam Arif, who came to power in 1963, recognized Kuwaiti independence, but the border disputes between the two countries did not end. Another development affecting relations between Iraq and Kuwait occurred during the Iran-Iraq War. With the Algiers Agreement signed between Iran and Iraq in 1975, the Shatt al-Arab territory was divided between the two countries, thus restricting Iraq's access to the Persian Gulf. When the Iran-Iraq War began, Iraq terminated the Algiers Agreement and claimed the region as its sole possession. When the Iran-Iraq War began, Iraq terminated the Algiers Agreement and claimed the region as its sole territory. However, Iran's seizure of the Fay Islands in 1986 restricted Iraq's access to Basra once again. Iraq pressured Kuwait to lease the islands of Varbah and Bubiyan, which belong to Kuwait west of the fault, but Kuwait refused. Iraq incurred significant debts from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia during the war. According to Saddam Hussein, since Iraq was fighting on behalf of the entire Arab world, the money received from these two states was considered "aid," but Kuwait and Saudi Arabia later referred to the money as "debt." Iraq

³³² Yücealtay, op. cit., p. 33.

³³³ Cesur, op. cit., p. 99, 100.

³³⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 8 May 1990, p. 17.

conveyed these views and more to the Arab League in a memorandum dated July 16, 1990. On July 25, 1990, Saddam Hussein made the following remarks during a meeting with the American Ambassador in Baghdad:

We will achieve each and every one of the rights mentioned in the Iraqi memorandum. This may not happen immediately; it may take a month or a year. But we will achieve these rights because we are not among those who forget their rights. Kuwait and the Emirates have neither historical rights nor legitimate grounds, nor do they need to usurp our rights. If they have needs, so do we.³³⁵

With these words, Saddam Hussein made it clear that he would do everything in his power to seek his rights. Saddam, who had previously signaled an invasion of Kuwait, entered the oil-rich Kuwait at 2:00 a.m. on August 2, 1990, and quickly took control.³³⁶ Following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the UN Security Council took action and passed resolutions 660 and 661, demanding Iraq's immediate withdrawal from Kuwait. However, the Iraqi government did not comply with these resolutions, and the UN's mediation efforts were unsuccessful.³³⁷ Consequently, on January 12, 1991, the US Congress authorized President George Bush to "use force" against Iraq. Bush stated at a press conference, *"With this decision, Congress sent the clearest message to Saddam Hussein that he must withdraw from Kuwait."*³³⁸ On January 17, 1991, the US launched Operation Desert Storm, bombing Baghdad and strategic targets. Bush, who stated, *"We warned Saddam repeatedly, but he defiantly resisted,"* stated that the aim of the attack was to destroy Iraq's military power, including its chemical and nuclear potential. Before US aircraft bombed Baghdad, Turkey requested military and economic assurances from the US for any potential role it might play in the war, as well as ensuring that the operation against Iraq would not undermine the country's territorial integrity and that the resulting chaos would not be interpreted as a pretext for the establishment of a Kurdish state. In response, US Secretary of State James Baker stated to Turkey that the operation aimed to force Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait and remove Saddam Hussein, but not to divide Iraq.³³⁹ One day before the Gulf Crisis, which began on January 17 and ended on February 28, 1991, during the "Hearing on Human Rights of the Kurds" held in the Human Rights Committee, which operates under the US Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, Senator Edward Kennedy claimed that Turkey had acted as if

³³⁵ Armaoğlu, op. cit, p. 778,779.

³³⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, 3 August 1990, s.1

³³⁷ Muhammad, op. cit., p. 94

³³⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, 13 January 1991, p. 1.

³³⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 17 January 1991, p. 1-3.

the Kurds did not exist for sixty years. Danielle Mitterrand, wife of French President François Mitterrand and President of the France Libertés Foundation, took the floor and said, "*The Kurds must speak with one voice while defending their legitimate rights and preserving their cultural identity; that is the only way the message will be heard.*" Turkish President Turgut Özal proposed a confederation for Iraq after the war. Following this, Iraqi Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani also

...The number of Kurds in Turkey is 15 million. This is 30 times the number of Turkmens in Iraq. In this case, wouldn't we also have the right to advocate for a confederation of Turks and Kurds in Turkey? Undoubtedly, the Turkish President should model his own confederation model on Turkey.³⁴⁰

With these words, Talabani stated that Özal's confederation request for Iraq should also be implemented in Turkey. While the ceasefire in the Gulf War brought new regulations to the forefront in the Middle East, the role of the Kurds in these arrangements became a matter of debate. The exchange of messages between Turgut Özal and Jalal Talabani revealed that Turkey was shaping its Kurdish policy within the framework of a four-stage plan. Özal's lifting of the ban on speaking Kurdish was considered a step taken within this plan. It was argued that this plan aimed to prevent the establishment of an independent Kurdish state.³⁴¹ After the Gulf War, while Shiites in Southern Iraq revolted against the government, the Kurds began clashing with the Iraqi government and claimed control over five cities in the north of the country.³⁴² Saddam Hussein, seeking to control the uprisings in northern and southern Iraq, proposed sharing management with the Shiites and Kurds. Saddam offered half of the ministerial seats and the prime minister's office to Shiite and Kurdish groups.³⁴³ On March 8, 1991, Turkey met with Muhsin Dizai, Masoud Barzani's special representative, and during the meeting, Turkey conveyed support and sympathy to the Kurds in exchange for Iraq's continued existence as a single state and Turkey's territorial integrity remaining intact. In other words, Turkey stated that it opposed the partitioning of Iraq and an independent Kurdish state, but favored the unification of Turkmen and Kurdish groups under Iraqi rule.³⁴⁴ While the conflict between Saddam's administration and Kurdish groups continued, President Özal, in response to a question from journalist Hasan Cemal during his flight to Moscow, revealed that he

³⁴⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 28 February 1991, p. 11.

³⁴¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 2 March 1991, p.11.

³⁴² *Cumhuriyet*, 7 March 1991, p. 1.

³⁴³ *Cumhuriyet*, 9 March 1991, p. 1

³⁴⁴ Beden, op. cit., p. 18.

had met with Jalal Talabani and a Barzani associate. Özal said, *"Everything happening in Northern Iraq concerns us deeply. There is nothing to be ashamed of talking about. After all, these are not people who were once our enemies! We need to be friends. If we become enemies with them, others will use them against us."* The President, who maintained his strictness towards Saddam Hussein, said: *"Is it right for a man who has done so much harm and damage to his country and people to remain in power?"*³⁴⁵ Özal's announcement that he had met with the Kurds in Ankara was met with surprise by the circles responsible for foreign policy, who were unaware of the meeting, and led to criticism.³⁴⁶ Following Özal's meeting with the Kurds, Turkey promised support to organizations fighting to overthrow the Saddam regime in Iraq and establish a democratic federal system. Jalal Talabani stated, *"We only asked Turkey for political support, and they promised."* The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reportedly has a positive outlook on a Kurdish-Arab-Turkmen federation in Iraq.³⁴⁷ Realizing that the US would not intervene after US President Bush stated that *"He did not want a single American soldier or airman to be involved in a civil war that had been going on for years in Iraq"* and that *"the Iraqi people had to decide their own political future,"* Saddam first suppressed the Shiite rebels in Southern Iraq and then turned his attention to the north, focusing on the conflict with the Kurds.³⁴⁸ In Iraq, Saddam's forces launched a major operation against Kurdish groups and captured Kirkuk and Duhok on March 28.³⁴⁹

A PUK spokesperson stated, *"Our forces evacuated Kirkuk. They are now located about two kilometers outside of Kirkuk."* The spokesperson stated that the Iraqi army had expelled approximately 100,000 Kurds from Kirkuk, indiscriminately including men, women, the elderly, and children.³⁵⁰ When Muhsin Dizai came to Ankara and met with Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Turgut Özçeri, he requested assistance to Kurds engaged in armed struggle in Iraq and the opening of an office to represent Kurdish groups in Northern Iraq. The representative was denied, stating that the Turkish side did not want to allow any developments that would damage existing relations with Iraq at this stage. Diplomatic sources stated that the Turkish side could only provide humanitarian aid to the Kurds, but that there were serious technical difficulties involved. Sources noted that the

³⁴⁵ Hasan Cemal, *Cumhuriyet*, 12 March 1991, p. 1.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.* p. 17.

³⁴⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 13 March 1991, p. 1, 14.

³⁴⁸ Kemal Kirişçi, *Türkiye ve Kuzey Irak'taki Kürt Güvenlik Bölgesi*, Avrasya Dosyası, Vol 3, Issue 1, (1996), p. 8.

³⁴⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 29 March 1991, p. 11

³⁵⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 30 March 1991, p. 1.

aid, to be distributed under the supervision of the Red Crescent within the framework of UN regulations, would also reach Kurdish regions, stating, "*Direct aid to groups engaged in an armed struggle against the legally recognized Iraqi regime would cause Turkey to enter into diplomatic conflict.*"³⁵¹ Thus, Turkey clearly stated that it would not provide political support to Kurdish units waging an armed struggle against Iraq. Upon hearing the news that Saddam was committing massacres in Kurdish-majority regions, especially Kirkuk, refugee leaders in Turkey stated the following:

The entire world has once again rallied around the Kurds to perpetrate the Kurdish genocide. They are trying to make the Kurdish people bear the brunt of the Gulf War. Our people are fighting to remove Saddam, who has plagued the world. Countries that initially supported this struggle later withdrew their support.

Hatip Dicle, the President of the Diyarbakır Branch of the Human Rights Association, said:

Turkish officials, particularly the US and allied powers, who have claimed to be the protectors of the Kurds, have maintained their silence, approving the massacres committed against the Kurdish people and openly siding with Saddam. We have the right to declare the allied powers and Turkish officials, who withhold all assistance from the Kurdish people and constantly preach democracy, hypocrites and enemies of the Kurdish people.³⁵²

With these words, Dicle stated that Turkey displayed a hypocritical attitude by claiming to be on Saddam's side and protecting the Kurds during the conflict between the Iraqi government and the Kurds, while remaining silent about the events.

Between March 31 and April 2, the number of people entering Turkey from Şemdinli, Uludere, and Silopi reached 3,000. Officials at the State of Emergency Regional Governorate reported that the number of refugees, including those who crossed from Iraq to Turkey during the Gulf War, exceeded 7,000.³⁵³ Among those fleeing Saddam's government and arriving in Turkey were PKK groups. The UN Security Council adopted Resolution 687 on April 3, 1991, which placed Iraq under very strict surveillance but did not provide a solution to the refugee problem for Turkey.³⁵⁴ Subsequently, after Turkey persistently urged President Bush of

³⁵¹ *Cumhuriyet*, 31 March 1991, p. 1-19

³⁵² *Cumhuriyet*, 1 April 1991, p. 4.

³⁵³ *Cumhuriyet*, 2 April 1991, p. 5.

³⁵⁴ Baskın Oran, *Çekiş Güç ve Kürt Devleti*, Avrasya Dosyası, Vol 3 Issue 1, (1996): p. 160

the USA to take international action, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 688 on April 5, 1991.³⁵⁵ The UN Security Council prohibited Baath regime forces from crossing north of the 36th parallel, established a no-fly zone in this region, and warned the Iraqi government against launching air strikes. The purpose of this resolution was to ensure the return of Iraqi Kurds massed on the Turkish-Iranian border to their homes, to persuade Iraq to allow international humanitarian organizations into the country, to protect the Kurds from the Iraqi army, and to ensure the distribution of aid to the refugees.³⁵⁶ Turgut Özal warned the Iraqi Ambassador about the buildup on the Turkish border, warning that if Iraqi troops pushed the Kurds towards the Turkish border, an intervention on Iraqi soil was possible. After the Iraqi Ambassador to Ankara sent a message to Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs Turgut Özçeri expressing his displeasure with the Baghdad administration's interference in its internal affairs and stating that there was no ill will towards Turkey, Ankara accelerated diplomatic efforts to take measures against migration movements across the Turkish border. Minister of State and Government Spokesperson Kemal Akkaya,

When asked, "What will happen to our relations with Iraq if Iraq maintains its stance and those gathered at our border want to cross into Turkey?", he replied: "This means that our relations with Iraq will be reconsidered. Because we have already submitted our note through the embassy. It is to prevent these people from being pressured. They have accepted our proposal. If anything else arises in the future, we will evaluate it."

Meanwhile, Saddam Hussein declared a partial amnesty for Kurds who had fled him and sought refuge on the Turkish-Iranian border, covering "*rebel Kurds who were not involved in murders, rapes, and looting.*" The Kurdish rebels rejected Saddam's proposal, and the KDP spokesperson described the amnesty as a "*disgusting joke.*"³⁵⁷ At the European Community (EC) Summit held in Luxembourg on April 8, 1991, the United States supported the deployment of a force to ensure the safety of Kurds in Northern Iraq after the war and to establish a safe zone. This proposal, later dubbed the "*hammer force,*" paved the way for Kurdish autonomy in Iraq.³⁵⁸ US cargo planes, taking off from Incirlik Air Base with

³⁵⁵ Muhammad, op. cit., p. 94.

³⁵⁶ Naim Demirel, "Birleşmiş Milletler Güvenlik Bölge Uygulaması", FSM İlmî Araştırmalar İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Dergisi, Issue 8 (2016): p. 116.

³⁵⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 6 April 1991, p. 19

³⁵⁸ Onur Bigaç, "Körfez Savaşı ve Irak'ın 2003 yılındaki İşgaline Yönelik Avrupa Birliği'nin Yaklaşımı", UPA Strateji Affairs, Vol 1 Issue 1, (2020): p. 9.

the participation of the US and the European Union, parachuted nearly 20 tons of food to Iraqi Kurds waiting along the border to protect them from Iraqi army units.³⁵⁹ Meanwhile, Turkish Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Murat Sungar announced that Iraqi First Deputy Prime Minister Tarik Aziz had requested a visit to Turkey. Aziz warned neighboring countries, saying, *"Iran and Turkey should not interfere in our internal problems with the Kurds."* Sungar reported that Aziz's request for a visit was being reviewed by the Turkish Foreign Ministry. Meanwhile, there was an international debate about how the zone to be established in Iraq for Kurdish refugees in Northern Iraq would be named. The US proposed a "safe area," the UK a "safe haven," and Turkey a "buffer zone."³⁶⁰ Journalist Ali Sirmen had this to say about the planned "buffer zone," as Turkey calls it: *"The buffer zone will form the core of a state to be established there tomorrow, further increasing imperialist intervention in the region and inevitably leading to grave developments that will spill over into Turkey's borders. The solution is for the refugees to return to Iraq and live humanely."*³⁶¹ With these words, Sirmen intended to emphasize that the creation of a buffer zone could lead to the establishment of a Kurdish state in the future and that the problem of Iraqi Kurds could be resolved not by the creation of the zone, but by the Kurds' return to their homeland. As part of efforts to establish camps in Northern Iraq, initiated by the US, UK, and France to establish security zones for Kurds seeking refuge in Iran and Turkey, the transfer of military vehicles and construction equipment to Iraq began on April 21.³⁶² Talks began between Jalal Talabani and Saddam Hussein on April 22 and concluded on April 25 with the two declaring at a press conference that they had "reached an agreement in principle." At the press conference, Talabani stated, *"We want democracy in Iraq. We are not a separatist movement. We do not want independence. As Iraqis, we are all for the sovereignty and independence of the Iraqi government."*³⁶³ The agreement in principle reached between the Iraqi administration and Kurdish leaders generated "cautious" satisfaction in Ankara. Diplomatic and military sources, stating that steps that do not go beyond the regulations introduced by the 1970 Agreement will be welcomed, while initiatives that go beyond this will create unease in Turkey, are unanimous in their view that the agreement will accelerate the return of refugees to their homes. They stated that granting autonomy to the Kurds in Iraq could resurface the PKK issue, and that Turkey could request permission from both the Baghdad administration and Kurdish

³⁵⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, 8 April 1991, p. 1.

³⁶⁰ *Cumhuriyet*, 12 April 1991, p. 1.

³⁶¹ Ali Sirmen, *Cumhuriyet*, 13 April 1991, p. 3.

³⁶² *Cumhuriyet*, 22 April 1991, p. 14.

³⁶³ *Cumhuriyet*, 25 April 1991, p. 1

leaders for cross-border terrorist activities. At the same time, Turkey refrained from official comment, emphasizing that the Baghdad administration's talks with Kurdish leaders were outside Turkey's sphere of influence as they pertained to Iraq's domestic politics.³⁶⁴ If the Gulf War is evaluated from Turkey's perspective in general, Saddam Hussein's Iraq, which faced an embargo, had its armed forces destroyed, was subjected to political pressure, and was left isolated in the international arena, did not present a favorable situation for Turkey's national interests. Because Saddam was a leader who aimed to preserve the territorial integrity of Iraq by keeping the Kurds under control and preventing the establishment of a Kurdish state. On the other hand, Saddam's continued, albeit weakened, post-war rule was seen as a threat to Turkey because he harbored no friendly feelings toward it. The most significant consequences of the Gulf Crisis affecting Turkey were the PKK's opportunity to develop itself by exploiting the power vacuum in Northern Iraq, and the Hammer Force, deployed in Turkey to protect the Kurds in Northern Iraq from Saddam's attacks after the war, paved the way for the establishment of a Kurdish state in Northern Iraq.³⁶⁵

³⁶⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, 26 April 1991, p. 1-16.

³⁶⁵ Cihangir Dumanlı, "Körfez Savaşlarının Türkiye'ye Etkileri", Gazi Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Doctoral Thesis, Ankara, 2012, p. 100-101.

CONCLUSION

The first relations between Turkey and Iraq began with the Mosul issue. Although Mosul was a region included within the borders of the Ottoman Empire's National Pact, it was ceded to Iraq under British mandate in 1926. Following the resolution of the Mosul issue, relations between Turkey and Iraq developed through mutual visits. The Sadabad Pact, established as World War II approached, the post-war 1946 Treaty of Friendship and Good Neighborhood, and the 1955 Baghdad Pact strengthened relations between Turkey and Iraq. However, the 1958 coup by General Qasim, who pursued pro-Kurdish policies, and his withdrawal from the Baghdad Pact in 1959 led to a deterioration in relations. Qasim's short-term rule was followed by the coups of 1963 and 1968, which resulted in a détente between Turkey and Iraq due to the lack of sympathy shown by the leaders who came to power towards the Kurds. Consequently, in Iraq, a country with an unstable political structure, the attitudes of the governments that came to power during the coups that took place between 1958 and 1968 towards the Kurds varied. Consequently, the Kurdish policies of the new governments played a role in Turkey-Iraq relations.

Kurds, the majority population in northern Iraq, have at times sought to maintain their autonomy and at other times to gain independence and establish a state, and have intermittently rebelled. In the rebellions launched by Sheikh Ahmed Barzani and his brother, Mullah Mustafa Barzani, against the Iraqi government, Iraq requested assistance from Turkey. The Turkish government, however, did not reject Iraq's demands, assisted the Iraqi government in its operations, complied with the agreed measures, and deployed troops along the Turkish-Iraqi border. Consequently, the joint action of Turkey and Iraq in these rebellions in northern Iraq brought the two countries closer together. During the Iran-Iraq War, which began in 1980, Turkey pursued a policy of active neutrality. While political relations with Iraq stagnated, trade relations continued. During the war, agreements were signed between Turkey and Iraq in 1983 and 1984, granting Turkey the right to enter up to 10 km of the Iraqi border to conduct hot pursuit against terrorist activities, and the two countries grew closer. However, as Saddam Hussein requested permission to pursue Iraqi Kurds who had fled to Turkey within the framework of the Anfal Operation against the Kurds, and Turkey rejected this request, Iraq terminated the agreement signed in 1984. At the same time, Turkey's acceptance of Kurdish groups seeking refuge in its country after the Halabja Massacre in 1988 negatively impacted bilateral relations. Although the Iraqi government repeatedly expressed its displeasure with Turkey's acceptance of Kurds who supported Iran in the war, both verbally and in writing, Turkey remained unchanged. In response to Turkey's stance, the

Iraqi government cooperated with the PKK, allowing it to grow stronger in Northern Iraq. The PKK, strengthened by Iraqi support, has become a problem Turkey will grapple with for years, engaging in activities such as village raids and ambushes, creating fear and anxiety in Turkey. Iraq, which suffered heavy losses in the long, dead-end Iran-Iraq war, announced that it would not repay the debts it incurred during the war, labeling them "aid." The Iraqi government, largely indebted to Kuwait, launched an invasion of Kuwait in 1990 on the grounds that Kuwait was formerly part of the Iraqi state. Consequently, the US-led coalition forces mobilized to expel Iraq from Kuwait. During this crisis, known as the Gulf Crisis, Turkey sought to demonstrate its strategic importance, complying with the sanctions imposed by the coalition forces against Iraq and pursuing a pro-Western policy against Iraq. Following the crisis, a safe zone was established for Kurdish groups who had fled Iraqi army units and sought refuge in Turkey and Iran. In response, Iraq warned Turkey and Iran against interfering in Iraq's internal affairs. Therefore, this policy pursued by Turkey against the Iraqi government has created tension in bilateral relations.

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