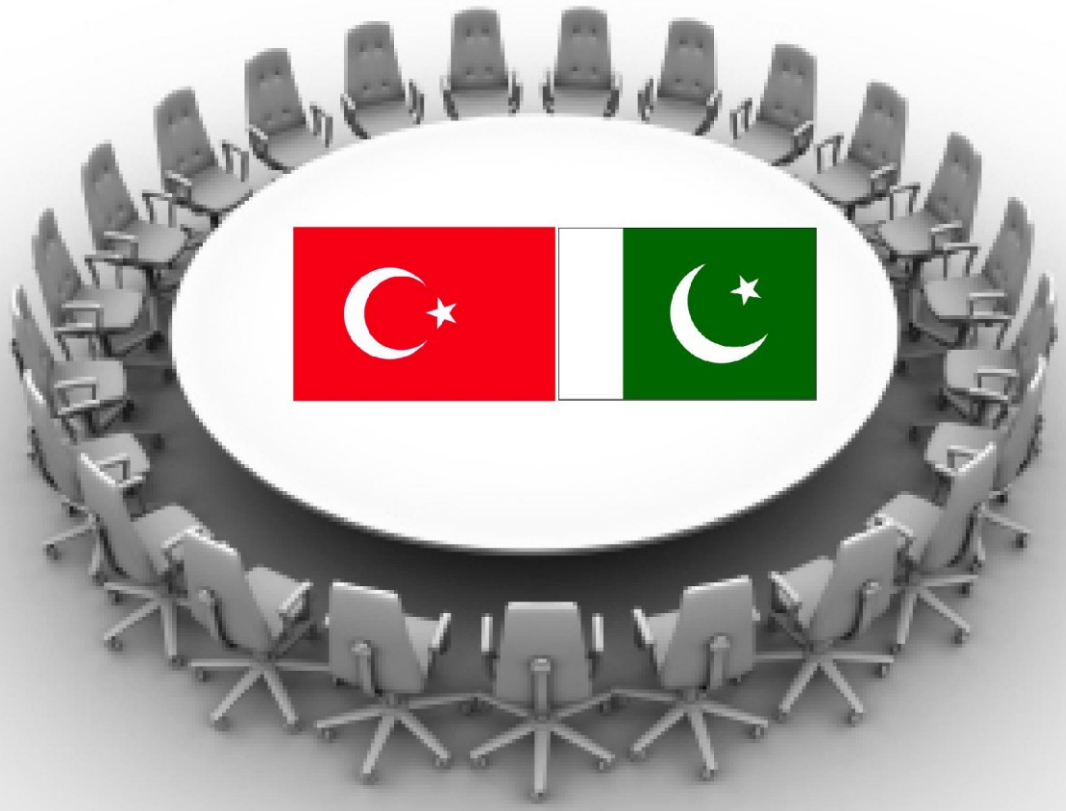
11 November 2013, Istanbul

TURKEY - PAKISTAN
ROUND TABLE MEETINGS



New Term
Turkey - Pakistan Relations:
Opportunities and Risks

(SUMMARY REPORT)

TASAM
TÜRK ASYA STRATEJİK ARAŞTIRMALAR MERKEZİ
TURKISH ASIAN CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES
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TURKEY - PAKISTAN ROUND TABLE MEETINGS - 1

"New Term Turkey - Pakistan Relations: Opportunities and Risks"

(11 November 2013, Istanbul)

SUMMARY REPORT

The first of "**Turkey-Pakistan Round Table Meetings**" was carried out with the cooperation of **TASAM** (Turkish Asian Centre for Strategic Studies) and **PILDAT** (Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency) on **11th of November 2013** in **Istanbul**.

The meeting took place in Bayrampaşa Titanic Business Hotel Europe and Turkish attendees are: Chairman of TASAM **Süleyman Şensoy**, Vice Chairman of TASAM Ambassador(R) **Murat Bilhan**, Prof. **Esra Hatipoğlu**, Journalist Dr. **Bora Bayraktar**, Editor of C4 Defense Magazine **Bahadır Tokgöz**, Istanbul University Faculty Member Assist. Prof. **Muharrem Hilmi Özev**, Director of TASAM WORLD **Arif Ali Söğüt**, TASAM Experts **Ahmet İşcan** and **Hazar Vural**.

Pakistani attendees of the meeting are: Chairman of Senate Defence&Defence Production Committee **Mushahid Hussain Sayed**, Former Defense Minister of Pakistan **Syed Naveed Qamar**, Former Press Secretary of Prime Minister of Pakistan Senator **Farhatullah Babar**, Senior Vice President Senator **Mir Hasil Bizenjo**, Former Federal Minister of Information and Technology **Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari**, Senior Adviser to Chief Minister of Punjab **Shaista Pervaiz Malik**, Former Member of Parliament **Faisal Karim Kundi**, Senior Journalist **Cyril Almeida**, Former Governor of Sindh and Former Interior Minister of Pakistan **Moinuddin Haider**, Former High Commissioner of Pakistan to India **Shahid Malik**, Former Interior Secretary of Pakistan **Tasneem Noorani**, Senior Journalist-Analyst **Ghazi Salahuddin**, Secretary General of PILDAT **Ahmed Bilal Mehboob** and Joint Director of PILDAT **Aasiya Riaz.**

During the meeting **TASAM Delegation** mentioned; within the context of Middle East and South Asia, there are many areas that Pakistan and Turkey can complete each other in terms of their relations. Multi-polar system which has emerged in 21st century has three basic parameters. The reflection of these parameters like "**integration**", "**micro-nationalism**" and "**unpredictability**" has began to be seen and it is predicted that within 10 years the number members in United Nations may double itself.

TASAM Delegation also mentioned that it is difficult for current and potential small states to represent their interests within international rivalry. There are many **integration efforts** that take European Union as an example in **Asia, Africa and Latin America** but most important of all is the process of **Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)** which has become prominent in the recent years.

It is widely accepted that Europe can not be a military power anymore. The TTIP process is being carried out between **EU countries and United States of America** and when this process is completed; a new power bloc will emerge which will control **2/3 of world economy**. As opposed to this bloc; rising powers like **Russia, India and Brazil –led by China-** will come together and these two opposing blocs will compete in **North Africa, Middle East and South Asia** just like in the days of First World War. It is important to evaluate "**Arab Spring**" form this perspective.

TASAM Delegation emphasized that Turkey regards **Pakistan as its closest ally** in international arena which share common linguistic, historical, religious and geographical characteristics. However in order to improve Turkey-Pakistan relations; both countries need **to have qualified human resource** and use this qualified human resource to produce wealth and technology in order to get a share from international power structure and deepen the relations between **civil and public institutions**.

TASAM Delegation argued that the factors like NATO's withdrawal from Afghanistan, peace process between Iran and Western countries, the possibility of change in US foreign policy with regards to India and Pakistan and the strength of Pakistani military; have increased the strategic importance of Pakistan. Turkey on the other hand**, is able to meet 55% of its own needs in defense industry** and has cooperated with China and Pakistan in combat aircraft projects. It is clear that **Turkey and Pakistan can complete each other in many areas with regards to their relations**. But in order to do this, institutionalization of cooperation should be deepened and widened.

Pakistani Delegation mentioned that Turkey and Pakistan share common characteristics like efforts of democratization, cultural affinity and geopolitical position. Both countries have been **facing similar challenges at regional and global levels**. Turkey and Pakistan have same problems and interests in the issues of **democratization, geopolitical position and regional integration**.

Pakistani Delegation also mentioned although Pakistan, being the most effected country from wars in Afghanistan since 1979 and three separate Gulf Wars, being **the host nation of world's biggest refugee inflow** and having cope with earthquakes and floods; it took major steps towards democratization and has **considerable basis for civil society** and has independent media and judiciary. Today economic balance of the world is shifting from West towards East and both Turkey and Pakistan are situated in key points of main railways, pipelines and roads. It is inevitable that Turkey and Pakistan which have good mutual relations; have to cooperate at **regional, continental and global levels**.

Pakistani Delegation expressed that both countries have been affected from terrorism and fundamentalist movements, share diverse communities from different ethnic/religious/sectarian backgrounds, have problems with regards to regional/global issues like conflicts in **Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq**. The delegation emphasized that both countries should share their experiences with each other in war against terrorism (for example; Turkey's role in Afghanistan). Although there is no border between Turkey and Pakistan; both countries should improve and deepen their relations in the fields of **education, culture, trade, energy** and **the notional and emotional bound between two countries should be materialized**.

Pakistani Delegation mentioned improving **Iran-Turkey railroad** and initiating **Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul train services** will contribute to the relations between **Europe and Central and South Asia**. Pakistan should benefit from Turkey's democratization experiences with regards to **civil-military and economic powers-security institutions relations**. The delegation offered TASAM to **develop a project** with regards to economic development. Especially in terms of Pakistan-Turkey relations; cooperation in energy, fighting against unemployment, increasing interaction between Pakistani and Turkish youth, **share of military technology**, improvement of private sector are essential.

Pakistani Delegation also expressed that Pakistan can benefit from Turkey's experiences in coping with its demand for **water**, transporting textile products to European countries which have good relations with Turkey and Turkey can contribute to Pakistan-India relations to be normalized with regards to its good relations with India.

In terms of cultural relations; Pakistani Delegation mentioned **Turkish Tv series** are quite popular in Pakistan at the moment. There are also Pakistani Tv series which are quite popular in India and promoting these Tv series in Turkey will contribute to the development of relations between two peoples.

Pakistani Delegation also mentioned due to its secular regime and **struggle against terrorism and fundamentalism**; Turkey is the **pride of Islamic World** and Turkey's actions with regard to this issue will have potential to affect Islamic World.

TASAM Delegation mentioned that the sociological maturity in civil-military relations depends on relative stability in domestic and external security. Turkey's success in this issue relies on its army being the most trusted institution in the country. Pakistan's strategic immunity depends on its **army and nuclear technology**. It should be kept in mind that these two elements are in the target of external powers. Thus **many Islamic countries' armies were liquidated** and Turkey's and Pakistan's armies are vitally important for **the region and Islamic World**. Therefore this should be taken into consideration in civil-military relations.

TASAM Delegation pointed out that external powers have been trying to divide Islamic World into **Shia-Sunni** lines in Middle East and in Pacific they have been trying to **exclude China from its neighbors** and these create serious threats to rising powers which are competing with major powers.

TASAM Delegation suggested that in order for both Turkey and Pakistan to declare "country year" for increasing interaction between two countries; Ministries of Culture of both countries are should be consulted. With **Marmaray**, Beijing-London route has become prominent and there are many big opportunities of cooperation at this point. Events can be organized for developing a future projection via terms like "**Transformation of State's Nature**" and "**Expectation Management**".

TASAM Delegation expressed that many memorandums of understanding have been signed between Pakistan and Turkey. But political will and experience are needed to materialize activities in the fields of **education, economy, security, municipalism and constabulary**.

TASAM delegation mentioned that Turkey has potential to contribute in normalization of India-Pakistan relations and Pakistan has strategic advantage for Turkey especially before **China and Saudi Arabia** to solve regional and global issues. This situation also indicates that mutual relations should be materialized at once.

Lastly; TASAM delegation emphasized that Iran is one of the important key actors in Turkey-Pakistan relations and developing relations between two countries while excluding **Iran** will be doomed to fail.