

Review

Turkey in Kenya and Kenya in Turkey: Alternatives to the East/West paradigm in diplomacy, trade and security

Brendon J. Cannon

Kisii University, Kenya.

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Kenya and Turkey are natural partners but also an odd couple. Although both are fledgling democracies with rapidly growing economies and populations, and facing similar security concerns emanating from transnational terrorism, Turkey is a medium-size country while Kenya is a relatively small state. Turkish-Kenyan relations have grown rapidly over the last two decades raising three questions, which this study attempts to answer: What is the scope of this relationship and how does it offer a viable alternative to East/West partners? ; What explains the burgeoning relationship between Kenya and Turkey? ; What can both countries do to strengthen this budding relationship, or, in the alternative, what can undermine it? This study argues that a combination of domestic factors and leadership in both countries undergird increasing Turkish-Kenyan relations. These factors help explain Turkey's spearheading of a diplomatic, economic and strategic charm offensive that dovetailed with Kenya's search for alternative geo-strategic and trade partners. Kenya's and Turkey's search and their accompanying "discovery" of one another has led to a robust relationship based on shared interests in diplomacy, trade and security. However, both countries will need to gain a greater understanding of one another and compromise in areas such as tariffs and export quotas for this relationship to prosper and to be sustainable.

Key words: Kenya, Turkey, international political economy, diplomacy, trade, international relations, terrorism, security, east and west alternatives, emerging powers.

INTRODUCTION

The history of Kenya's and Turkey's substantive diplomatic and economic engagement is relatively short, dating only back to the late 1990s, but is one that has produced benefits for both countries. These include trade and access to markets that were previously beyond the

reach of both countries, increased visibility for both on the international stage and prospects of partnering in international fora, notably at the United Nations. This research study seeks to answer three questions, whose answers would help shed light on the geo-politics of the

E-mail: brendon.cannon@gmail.com.

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Turkey-Kenya relationship:

1. What is the scope of this relationship and how does it offer a viable alternative to East/West partners?
2. What explains the burgeoning relationship between Kenya and Turkey? And,
3. What can both countries do to strengthen or, alternatively, what can undermine this budding relationship?

Turkey and Kenya's relationship is best explained through an analysis of both countries' foreign policies and, in particular, a combination of international factors and domestic constraints rather than systemic variables as dominant realist orthodoxy claims (Waltz, 2010). It is submitted that domestic factors including economic, demographic, leadership and geo-politics provide a better rationale for Turkey's budding relationship with Kenya, and vice-versa, than the pure struggle for power in an international system characterized by anarchy and autarky (Snyder, 2002). International relations cannot be de-linked from domestic politics (Buono de Mesquita and Smith, 2012), and the two always work in tandem in shaping foreign policy (Adnan, 2014). The most compelling explanations for Kenya's relationship with Turkey therefore lie somewhere at the intersection of international relations and comparative politics—and this study draws upon that literature in elucidating that partnership.

The study uses qualitative and quantitative data culled from variety of English and Turkish sources to demonstrate that Kenya's and Turkey's search for alternative trade and geopolitical partners outside the East/West paradigm is borne of both parties conscious and deliberate efforts. These actions and reactions provide the rationale and calculations of both parties in this engagement including, perceptions of each other and the shaping of their goals and long-term prospects. As such, this study does not fall into the trap whereby African states are deemed as lacking agency and merely being "acted upon" by powers or regional blocs outside the continent. To be sure, both countries are considered developing democracies that have exhibited strong, authoritarian tendencies in past (Karpas, 2015; Maxon, 2014). And both seem to be in need of new partners outside their respective regions probably as potential counterweights to traditional "choice" of the East or the West (Mwangi, 2016; Fidan, 2013).

As important and instructive as this nascent relationship is, few scholars, if at all, have analyzed growing international cooperation and collaboration between Kenya and Turkey. Much more scholarly effort has been spent attempting to explore Kenya's pivot towards the East; that is, China versus its more traditional economic and political partners in the West, such as the United States, the United Kingdom and the European Union (Onjala, 2010; Renard, 2011; Barton and Men, 2013).

In Turkey's case, the few articles available in English or

Turkish focus generally on Turkey's diplomatic, economic and political actions in Africa as a whole (Özkan, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014; Sıradağ, 2013; Bacik and Afacan, 2013; Genç and Tekin, 2014), or more exclusively on Somalia, which has been the major target of Turkey's foreign policy in Africa since 2011 (Mesfin, 2012; Akpınar, 2013; Bingöl, 2013; Özkan and Orakçı, 2015).

Özkan (2010) has highlighted that, unlike other countries, Turkey foreign policy has focused on promoting trade with African countries rather than extraction of resources such as oil because Turkey is a mid-sized country with a developing economy. While not focused on Africa specifically, the work of Bown (2014) is instructive as to how Turkey exercised trade policy flexibilities during the global economic crisis of 2008 to 2011. Akel (2014), however, has contested the rosy assumptions about Turkey's economic and trade forays into the continent. Karagül and Arslan (2013) provide an excellent primer on Turkey's developing relationship in Africa for the fifteen years stretching from 1998 to 2013. The recent work of Aras and Akpınar (2015) on Turkish humanitarian non-governmental organizations (HNGOs) has showcased the successes of international HNGOs in Turkey's peace building.

Part I: The Scope of the Turkish-Kenyan cooperation

Turkey's involvement in Kenya and indeed Kenya's involvement in Turkey is part of a broader strategy initiated by Turkey's policy of opening up to Africa that dates back to the Action Plan adopted in 1998 (Özkan and Akgün, 2010; 530). One decade later, Turkey hosted the First Africa-Turkey Summit in Istanbul in April 2008. Forty-nine Africa countries were in attendance and participated. Prior to the Summit, the relationship gathered momentum with the election of the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*; known by its Turkish acronym AKP) in 2002, which catapulted Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to power, first as prime minister and then as president. Turkey began participating in African Union (AU) summits as a guest country in 2002, and obtained "observer status" in the AU in 2005.

This status provides Turkey with permanent, institutional contacts in Africa, and vice versa. Because of this status, both Turkey and AU member states, including Kenya, potentially possess the ability to gain an understanding of each other, realize their mutual potential and establish a foundation for relations. The permanent contact assured through this observer status may also assist in changing perceptions in both Turkey and Africa. Turkey also became a non-regional member of African Development Bank (AfDB) in January 2013. As a result, Turkish companies are eligible to undertake projects funded by the AfDB and this has given Turkish contractors the opportunity to become more involved in African infrastructure development, one of the region's greatest needs ("Kenya, Turkey to sign", 2013).

In addition, Karagül and Arslan (2013) highlight the importance - symbolically and politically - of the Africa-Turkey Summits as well as the formation of the Africa Strategic Coordination Committee. The Committee was formed in 2010 and the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs was assigned as the coordinator institution, arguably lending weight and credence to its mission.

Demonstrating the importance of Africa in Turkey's foreign policy and trade agenda, the Second Africa-Turkey Summit held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea in November 2014 was led personally by President Erdoğan. It resulted in the adoption of the Joint Implementation Plan of Africa-Turkey Partnership for the period 2015-2018. The Joint Implementation Plan focuses on the execution of key projects and priority areas of cooperation between African countries and Turkey, including trade and investment, agriculture, health, peace and security, infrastructure development and tourism ("II. Türkiye-Afrika Ortaklık Zirvesi", 2014).

In 2002, Turkey had only nineteen representative offices in Africa. It now has thirty-nine embassies and ten consulates. In 2014 alone, Turkey and various African countries organized over twenty high-level visits with one other. Turkish Airlines began operating direct flights between Istanbul and Nairobi in 2010 and between Istanbul and Mombasa in 2012. Signifying the importance of Kenya in Turkey's Africa strategy, in 2009, Turkey's former president, Abdullah Gül, visited Kenya in the first official visit by a Turkish president. Kenya reciprocated with its first official presidential visit in 2014 when Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta visited Turkey. During his visit, President Kenyatta opened Kenya's embassy in Ankara. He also praised the schools run in his country by the *Hizmet* (Service) network, backed by U.S.-based Islamic preacher Fethullah Gülen ("Kenyan president hails Gülen", 2014).¹ A total of ten agreements and memoranda of understanding were signed during Kenyatta's trip to Turkey. Both countries agreed to prioritize trade, industrialization, transport, agriculture, tourism, education, health, immigration, science and technology as well as the development of arid lands such as those around the Tana River in Kenya.

Just as Kenyatta's visit to Turkey was reciprocal, so Kenya's entrée to Turkey has been largely been a positive reaction to Turkey's efforts in Kenya and Africa. The presence of Kenya's ambassador in Ankara and an honorary consul in Istanbul indicates that successive Kenyan governments view Turkey as a serious partner. Kenya has attempted to coordinate its trade and investment opportunities with Turkey via the establishment of contacts between Turkish and Kenyan business communities and the respective Chambers of Commerce.

¹ It should be noted President Kenyatta's comments occurred just after to the cataclysmic falling-out between Erdoğan's AKP and the Gülenist movement, which AK accused of infiltrating the police and the judiciary of plotting against the government. It is possible President Kenyatta was unaware of this when he made his comments.

As of early 2014, there were approximately 40 Turkish companies operating in Kenya and Turkish investment in Kenya was reportedly worth \$17 billion (Kagai, 2014).

Turkish companies and investments are concentrated mainly in the fields of construction materials, carpets, electronic devices, cosmetics, hotel equipment and tourism. This is the legacy of agreements on trade and economic cooperation signed by Kenya and Turkey in 2004, two years after the AKP swept to power. Six years later, the first session of the Turkey-Kenya Joint Economic Commission occurred in October 2010. The second session of the Turkey-Kenya Joint Economic Commission was held in Ankara in February 2014 ("Türkiye - Kenya Karma", 2014). The Turkey-Kenya Business Council had its first meeting in 2011 and the Turkish-Kenya Businessmen Association has operated since 2012.

Kenya's relationship with Turkey grew significantly during the presidency of Mwai Kibaki (2002 to 2013). In 2009, President Kibaki and Turkish President Abdullah Gül removed visa and health restrictions on diplomatic passports holders. During a return visit to Kenya in 2010 by President Gül, Kenya and Turkey signed a Joint Trade Commission, which allowed the establishment of a Turkish export promotion and processing center in Nairobi. At the 2nd Joint Economic Commission (JCC) held in 2014 in Ankara, the two countries identified trade, industrialization, transport, agriculture, tourism, education, health, immigration, science and technology, and development of arid lands as priority areas for cooperation. They also agreed to establish the Export Promotion Council of Kenya. This Kenyan collaboration with their Turkish counterparts provides Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) assistance ("Technical Meeting", 2014).

Kenya's efforts under Kibaki's leadership have continued under President Kenyatta. In early 2015, a Kenyan business delegation traveled to Turkey to market existing and new opportunities in Kenya for Turkey's leather industry, which employs nearly 1.5 million ("Kenya team woos leather", 2015). The leather industry is also a major sector in Kenya that could expand employment opportunities should Turkey open its market to Kenyan products.

Explaining Turkey and Kenya's relationship

A mixture of international and domestic factors best explains Kenya-Turkey cooperation, which is rooted in shared interests and can be characterized as reciprocal, reactive and straightforward. This relationship is driven, on the one hand, by desire of leadership in both countries to develop their economies through a search for international markets, development partners and to enhance domestic security and, on the other, to gain international clout and secure international partners outside the traditional East/West paradigm. As economic

powerhouses in their respective regions, Kenya and Turkey potentially have much to offer one another - if they manage their nascent relationship well. As discussed and analyzed below, opportunities exist for both to combine their respective, comparative economic and strategic advantages in order to improve their economies and security, and expand their diplomatic reach.

Domestic factors

As noted, Turkey's interest in Africa began by most estimates in the late 1990s and has increased under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. During the first decade of Erdoğan's rule, Turkey experienced political stability and rapid economic growth. The accepted view in Kenya is that Turkey has accomplished a great deal in bringing a semblance of peace and stability to its problematic neighbor, Somalia (Harte, 2012). According to Kenya's Ambassador to Turkey, Julius Kiema Kilonzo, "President Erdoğan and his administration have done a lot for Somalia, and this is also welcomed by Kenya. Stability in Somalia both politically and economically will also be good for Kenya" (Çelik, 2015).

Turkey's foray into Kenya and East Africa is indicative of the Erdoğan government's approach to foreign relations, in general. That is, foreign relations and outreach are highly personal, often including state visits by Erdoğan himself, as well as the closely coordinated involvement of a whole suite of Turkish institutions, to include government, NGOs and businesses (Görener and Ucal, 2011). Indeed, Erdoğan is scheduled to make an official state visit to Kenya in the first half of 2016 ("Turkish President to visit", 2016).

As part of Kenya's interest in locating new alliances and alternative partners, Kenya has responded positively to Turkey's overtures under the leadership of both President Kibaki and President Kenyatta, attempting to establish or rejuvenate business ties with non-traditional partners and to attract investment to Kenya from countries like Turkey (Ochami, 2008). Both Kenyatta and Kibaki have also demonstrated a keen interest in finding non-traditional outlets for Kenya's exports (Dahir, 2014). Turkey correspondingly searching for new markets for its products and has developed a strategy of engaging key countries in Africa in order to do so (Doğan, 2014). The main stakeholders in this effort are Turkish business people, largely composed of the Anatolian bourgeoisie, the so-called Anatolian tigers. They were the main beneficiaries of the liberalization of Turkish market space under successive AK Party governments and are, in part, responsible for the continued electoral victories of Erdoğan (Aneja, 2012). In return for their support, Erdoğan and his government have been instrumental in locating new markets for their goods in countries like Somalia and Kenya (Lough, 2012; Korkut and Civelekoğlu, 2012).

Turkey has displayed a consistent and largely coherent policy of engaging African countries to this end. In Kenya's case, Turkey sees it as an entry point to the wider East Africa region and trade with Kenya complements Turkey's current investments and nation-building efforts in Somalia ("Turkish President to visit", 2016). By most estimates, Kenya is East Africa's trade, finance and logistics center, as well as a regional operations center for foreign multinationals. Because the port of Mombasa supplies the rest of East Africa with goods that are then shipped via Kenya's road and rail network, Kenya is a natural entry point and holds a key to unlocking Turkish trade in East Africa.

For Kenya, export trade plays the most important role in driving the relationship, with Kenya viewing Turkey as a potential large scale buyer of its tea, coffee and flowers, much as Europe already does. Kenya also views Turkey as a natural hub between three continents, and thus an ideal center for business at the intersection of Asia, Europe and Africa. Kenya hopes to sell more diversified goods in line with a revised export plan launched in 2012 (Mbogo, 2012).

Turkey also offers an alternative for Kenyans seeking higher education in a place that is closer geographically and less expensive than institutions in the West and East Asia. This is part of the Turkish government's interest, in accordance with its current foreign policy, in promoting and increasing the number of foreign students studying at Turkish higher education institutes (Erguvan, 2015). For example, the Islamic Development Bank (IBD), partnership with the Turkish government, is a major source of scholarships for students from only nine countries, among them Kenya ("Financial Aid and Scholarships", n.d.). At the end of 2014, over 350 Kenyans were pursuing higher education in Turkey ("Türkiye - Kenya Siyasi İlişkileri", 2015).

International factors

In recent years, Turkey has emerged as an alternative strategic and development partner for Kenya, offering a fresh approach with arguably fewer strings attached than countries such as China and the U.S. Turkey's interest in Africa is informed by its interest in flexing its political and diplomatic muscles on the world stage commensurate with its new-found confidence and wealth (Harte, 2012). To this end, Turkey views Kenya as a unique and strategic launching pad for the expansion of its strategic interests in the Horn of Africa, East Africa and beyond. As Erdoğan noted in 2012, "We have chosen Kenya to be the natural hub and launch pad for our [Turkish] operations due to the country's physical and trade connectivity" (Ngigi, 2012).

In the arena of development, Turkey's focus in Africa on smaller-scale, lower profile development projects such as agriculture offers an alternative to mammoth

infrastructure projects grabbed up by more traditional partners from the East or West. This approach is generally welcome and potentially will have a greater effect on the lives of ordinary Africans, to include Kenyans (Daly, 2008). Turkey also tends to take a highly coordinated approach in development as well as trade and diplomacy. These efforts are largely coordinated by the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) (Özkan, 2014). TIKA has developed various projects in Kenya, particularly in the fields of health, food, and livestock, often with Kenyan participation. Turkey's capacity-development programs in Kenya also often involve Kenyan experts and employees and cover the areas of security, agriculture and education. This is a breath of fresh air from expatriate-driven top-down development in which locals traditionally were spectators. Although, Western donors have toyed with participatory approaches to development, much of the aid since the end of the Cold War has been channeled through Western NGOs or Western-affiliated local NGOs. Turkey also has used NGOs in health and emergency aid, but the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicates Kenya is an active partner ("Relations between Turkey and Kenya", 2014).

Turkey appeals to Kenya as it has increasingly been forced to choose between development and strategic partners such as China and Kenya's more traditional Western partners, to include the U.S. While Chinese investment and expertise have been welcome and positive in some instances, China's foray into Africa has also had negative consequences. Cheap Chinese manufactured goods have squeezed out African producers and overrun African markets (Patroba, 2012). The African textile industry, particularly in Kenya, was devastated by Chinese imports on account of higher labor costs in Africa and cheaper Chinese goods (Chege et al., 2014). Chinese multi-national corporations in construction and telecommunications operate in African countries, but refuse to employ locals, preferring to import workers directly from China (Gu, et al., 2016).

In this respect, Turkey serves as an alternative source of trade, tourists, education, industry and expertise without the baggage associated with Chinese investments that seems to pit the interests of the African political elite against those of the majority of Africans (Mahoney, 2010). More significantly, Turkey provides opportunities for Kenya to diversify not only access to markets, but also its strategic cooperation and development. Western aid has come to Africa with strings and has fluctuated over time. Kenya—at one point a darling of the West during the Cold War—has seen its access to development aid severely conditioned on undertaking Structural Adjustment Programs since the early 1990s (Nzomo, 1992). These required the liberalization of the economy and efforts at democratization. Formerly directly-provided aid was funneled through intermediaries, mainly NGOs, with seriously detrimental

effects (Rono, 2002).

At the beginning of Kenyatta's presidency in 2013, the West was slow to accept his leadership on account of pending indictments for crimes against humanity against him and his deputy president, William Ruto, at the International Criminal Court (ICC). Although the indictments against both Kenyatta and Ruto have since been withdrawn and relations with the West have warmed, the initial cold shoulder from the West does highlight the risks of depending on solely on Western partners for development and strategic cooperation (Blanchard, 2013). Turkey, for its part, even being a member of NATO, has been unequivocal on its relationship with Kenya and indeed Kenya probably can depend on Ankara for support (Okoth, 2015).

Towards a mutually-beneficial and sustainable relationship

Kenya's and Turkey's search for and their accompanying "discovery" of one another has led to a robust relationship based on mutual or shared interests in diplomacy, trade and security. However, both countries will need to gain a greater understanding of one another and address certain constraints and risks in order to capitalize on a mutually-beneficial and long-term relationship, to include compromising in areas such as tariffs and export quotas.

Current risks, constraints to Kenya-Turkey cooperation

Trade

It is difficult to quantify the volume of trade between Turkey and Kenya as data are often conflicting. According to the Turkish Ministry of Economy, in 2012 bilateral trade stood at \$156 million, an upward move of 1442 percent when compared to 2002 figures ("Countries and Regions – Africa", 2013). Yet, according to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, bilateral trade volume was only \$145 million the following year, in 2013 ("Relations between Turkey and Kenya", 2014). If these estimated figures are taken at face value, it would mean Turkey's and Kenya's bilateral trade volumes have been dropping rather than improving. Yet a Turkish economy minister publicly stated Turkey aimed to increase its own trade with Kenya to over \$500 million in 2015 ("Turkey to boost trade", 2014). Turkey's trade with Kenya raises two issues. First, Turkey and Kenya need to do more to foment bilateral trade flows. Second, they must manage the current trade deficits between the two countries.

The current balance of trade favors Turkey, and Kenyan businesses face barriers entering the Turkish market. Turkish companies face few barriers to investing in Kenya and Africa, in general, when compared to their U.S. or European counterparts who tend to undergo

scrutiny at home in deals potentially involving bribes or other forms of corruption (Czinkota and Skuba, 2014). Furthermore, Turkish products are often in high demand in Kenya, particularly manufactured goods. The same cannot be said for Kenyans investing in Turkey. This is because many of the items Kenya plans to export are readily available in Turkey, to include fruit, produce, flowers and tea. In this respect, Kenya hopes to meet an increasing demand both inside Turkey and in Turkey's near abroad for produce and items that Turkey cannot meet given its current capacity (Mbogo, 2012). Kenya may also be able to sell its exports at relatively cheaper prices, adding to their demand. Kenya is also pushing Turkey to lower its import taxes to facilitate the direct export of Kenyan goods to Turkey. Kenya currently exports goods to Turkey via European hubs, leading to double taxation. To avoid this double taxation, Kenya hopes to utilize the direct Turkish Airlines flights between Kenya and Istanbul for its exports and as an alternative trade hub (Çelik, 2015).

Tariffs and trade barriers

Turkey generally eschews something many Africans resent: free market capitalist baggage aimed at securing the best agreement, regardless of cost (Özkan, 2010). However, it has not been innocent of participating in corrupt tenders or further contributing to the entrenchment of corrupt practices on the African continent, as the case of Turkey's involvement in Somalia has so vividly illustrated ("İçi para dolu bir kutu", 2014). Furthermore, Turkish exports face stiff competition with other international competitors in Africa. "Although Turkey's Africa Strategy has been successful in creating awareness among Turkish SMEs to direct their attention to Africa, Turkish exporters cannot survive in the African market" (Akel, 2014). This is, in part, because increasing interest and the activities of Turkey's competitors in African markets, such as those from the East like China and India, make it more difficult for Turkish exporters to thrive. Turkey has attempted to address some of these deficiencies. First, Turkey made changes to both its applied Most Favored Nation and preferential tariffs that cumulatively affect nearly nine percent of manufacturing imports and ten percent of import product lines. Second, Turkey's cumulative application of temporary trade barrier (TTB) policies – antidumping, safeguards and countervailing duties – are estimated to have impacted an additional four percent of imports and six percent of product lines (Bown, 2014). These changes were made at the same time Erdoğan's government was aggressively pursuing new markets for Turkish exports in places like Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Ethiopia.

There are other barriers facing Turkish investors in Kenya, and by extension East Africa, including rampant corruption, stifling bureaucracy and changing political

actors, which leads to confusion and cancelled contracts. Turkish investors also must deal with relatively high energy costs and tax rates. Kenyans wanting to do business in Turkey face multiple hurdles, to include double taxation, high tariffs, a market saturated with goods resembling Kenyan exports (tea, produce, leather), and language barriers. Furthermore, Kenya's and Africa's relative unit labour costs (RULC), in general, have been very high when compared to export powerhouses like China and India, negatively affecting bilateral trade and cost competitiveness. However, these have declined over the 2000s as wages in China and elsewhere have risen faster than productivity. The reverse has been true for the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) countries in question, to include Kenya. In a cautionary note and one that should inform Kenya's policies towards other trading partners - to include China and Turkey - generally high RULC along with weaknesses in the business climate suggest that most SSA countries are unlikely to be competitive in labor-intensive manufacturing in the near future (Ceglowski, et al., 2015; 18).

Prospects for further cooperation

Oil and mining

Kenya and Turkey could assist one another in mining and mutually benefit from the discovery of oil in Kenya in commercial quantities in 2012. Turkish companies, from construction to pipeline manufacturing to oil exploration and refining, could assist Kenya in capacity-building as well as acting as alternative partners to larger European, North American, Australian or Chinese extractives industry stakeholders. The Turkish Petroleum Company (*Türkiye Petrolleri Anonim Ortaklığı* -TPAO) is arguably well-placed in this regard. It operates primarily in the upstream sector, particularly in oil exploration, drilling, well completion and production, and has operations in Azerbaijan, Russia and Iraq. An expansion of operations to Kenya would give TPAO and Turkey, by proxy, a wider international reach and enhanced reputation in the petroleum sector.

Kenya stands to gain much from its oil reserves - should they prove existent in the estimated commercial quantities. This is because Kenya is in a stronger position to benefit from its oil than many African states. "With a solid bureaucracy and taxation base, the [Kenyan] state has a strong connection with its citizens. It has a relatively effective set of institutions that are well placed to handle the stresses oil will bring" (Stott, 2015). However, the general level of excess characteristic of rentier states, corruption and weak institutions – especially the weak Kenyan judiciary – are all factors that leave Kenya potentially exposed to the economic risks of Dutch disease, oil price volatility and a potential increase in the risk of civil conflict. These factors, along with low

oil prices, may inhibit outside investment by countries such as Turkey.

Kenya and Turkey have also agreed to cooperate in the field of mining, given Kenya's largely untapped mining resources and Turkey's more experienced and developed mining industry. However, the nascent mining agreement between Kenya and Turkey may have suffered given that it occurred just one month prior to the Soma mining disaster in Turkey that killed 311 people in May 2014.

Manufacturing

Kenya could benefit from Turkey's strong manufacturing sector, particularly its steel industry. In 2012, a delegation of 25 Turkish steel companies visited Kenya with the aim of exporting Turkish steel to Kenya (Nkirote, 2012). Given the construction boom in Kenya, particularly in Nairobi, there is a huge potential market for Turkish steel. Turkish steel could also be exported to Kenya's East African neighbors through the port of Mombasa. Numerous companies from Turkey - especially those involved in construction - have operations in Kenya (Mbogo, 2012).

Renewable energy

Kenya is particularly strong in the area of developing and tapping renewable energy, particularly geothermal power, and could greatly assist Turkey in developing its own renewable energy sources. Kenya has quickly and impressively developed its geothermal power potential within the last decade. With the opening of the world's largest geothermal power plant at Olkaria in Kenya's Great Rift Valley in 2015, Kenya became the world's eighth largest producer of geothermal energy (Bayar, 2015). Turkey has ample geothermal power though it remains largely untapped. However, Turkey's new renewable energy action plan has received a significant boost via a favorable feed-in tariff (FiT) program and a \$125 million early stage geothermal support framework developed in collaboration with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (Gözen, 2014).

Agriculture

Agriculture remains the backbone of the Kenyan economy, contributing 25% of gross domestic product (GDP). About 80% of Kenya's population of roughly 42 million work at least part-time in the agricultural sector, including livestock and pastoral activities. Over 75% of agricultural output is from small-scale, rain-fed farming or livestock production (FAO, 2013). Kenya is therefore, keen to find other export markets for its agricultural products such as Turkey. However, Kenya has argued that some of the current imbalance in trade between the

two countries is a result of high export tariffs imposed by Turkey. For example, in 2014 Kenya's Foreign Affairs and International Trade Cabinet Secretary Amina Mohamed argued that the 145% tariff imposed on Kenyan tea by Turkey was restrictive (Limo, 2014). While Turkey had been supportive in Kenya in many areas including agriculture, health, education and security, Turkey should also consider investing in Kenya in irrigation, agro-processing, manufacturing, ICT, mining, energy and infrastructure development. Turkey is also an agriculturally-rich country and an export powerhouse, with agriculture contributing 8.03% to its GDP in 2014. During the period 2003 to 2013, Turkey's agricultural exports, to both to the Middle East and other markets, tripled and were valued at more than \$16 billion in 2013 ("Turkish Agricultural Exports", 2014). As such, Turkey will be a difficult market for Kenya to break into even if Turkey's high export tariffs are cut.

Security and counter-terrorism

Kenya and Turkey both face threats from transnational terrorism and violent extremism. They are also both longstanding allies of the U.S., with Turkey being a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Since 2011, Turkey and the US have co-chaired the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF), an informal, multilateral counterterrorism (CT) platform (Kimunguyi, 2010). Turkey also co-chairs the Horn of Africa Working Group of the GCTF with the European Union (EU). There are 30 founding members, though Kenya is not included in the list. However, the GCTF's Horn of Africa Working Group launched a capacity-building assistance co-ordination platform in Nairobi in May 2013, and Turkey hosted a workshop on countering violent extremism in the Horn of Africa in Ankara in February 2014, which was attended by Kenyan representatives (Kimunguyi, 2010). Prior to U.S. President Obama's visit to Kenya in mid-2015, a three-day workshop was held for judicial officials to advance the implementation of the GCTF's Hague Memorandum on Good Practices on the Role of the Judiciary in Adjudicating Terrorism Offences within a Rule of Law Framework ("East Africa Regional Workshop", 2015).

Kenya's proximity to Somalia positions it as a potential launching pad for the expansion of Turkey's reconstruction efforts in Somalia. It also offers the opportunity for the two countries to share intelligence and, potentially, cooperate militarily given Kenya's presence in Somalia since late 2011. Although Kenya probably will not be able to assist Turkey with its internal terrorism problems, its engagement with Turkey provides opportunities to share lessons learned and best practices in countering violent extremism, for example. Turkey, as an Islamic country, probably has more credibility and insights into extremist mindsets and could share strategies and tactics with

Kenya. Besides, Kenya could also benefit from Turkey's evolving strategy in fighting terrorism inside and outside its borders. Over the past decade, rather than using "hard" military power, Turkey emphasized its counter-terrorism units to combat terrorist organizations. These units are supported by counter-terrorism institutions, such as TEMAK (Counter-Terrorism Academy) and the Intelligence Academy (ISAK) which provides training to the intelligence department. However, the ruling party has never heeded calls to make the necessary legal changes to empower law enforcement agencies or establish a fully-functioning counter-terrorism center (Yavuz and Özcan, 2006; 104). With the recent flare-up in violence between Turkey and the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) as well as the Islamic State (IS), Turkey has increasingly reverted to the heavy-handed, "hard" military tactics it used in the 1980s and '90s (Romano, 2015).

In respect to Turkey and Kenya's security cooperation, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding in 2014 on cooperation between the Kenya Police Service (KPS) and the Turkish National Police (TNP) whereby the TNP will support programs to improve the capabilities of the KPS, especially in the fight against terrorism (Adan, 2014). This agreement is part of a wider field of cooperation between the two countries on security and defense and reportedly includes closer cooperation Somalia-related matters.

CONCLUSION

Kenya and Turkey are arguably natural partners given their status as emerging powers and regional power-houses in their respective neighborhoods. Yet just twenty years ago, Kenya and Turkey were largely unknown to one another. The burgeoning relationship between Kenya and Turkey is one of coincidence and logic. Domestic factors including economic, demographic, leadership and geo-politics provide the best rationale for Turkey's budding relationship with Kenya, and vice-versa. In the past 15 years, Turkey, under the leadership of Erdoğan and the AKP, has pursued an economic and diplomatic charm offensive in Africa. This has lately coincided with the search by both Kenya and Turkey for alternative geo-strategic and trade partners outside their respective regions. This search also entailed looking for alternative partners to China and the U.S. as well as others exemplifying the East and West. Kenya's and Turkey's search and their accompanying "discovery" of one another has developed into a rather robust relationship given their similarities and needs.

The scope of Kenya's and Turkey's relationship does offer a viable alternative to more "traditional" partners from the East and West, namely China and the United States. Currently, the two countries have the solid potential to combine their comparative advantages to expand and deepen their relations, improve their economic potential and their diplomatic clout. By doing so they will

strengthen their own hands regionally and assist each other in the quest to locate alternatives to those offered under the reigning East/West paradigm. Kenya stands to gain a lot from Turkey in regards to security and engineering expertise. On the other hand, Turkey could learn a great deal from Kenya's successes in tapping sustainable energy reserves, particularly geothermal resources.

Yet all is not rosy. Certain external and internal factors will either strengthen or undermine this budding relationship. In order to successfully capitalize on their burgeoning relationship, both countries need to gain a deeper understanding and mutual-respect for one another via the establishment of viable bilateral and multilateral institutions. They will also need to compromise in areas such as tariffs and export quotas.

Conflict of interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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