

Syria – The Future

Representing the Republic of Turkey
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Introduction

The Republic of Turkey aims to resolve the issues that are escalating the six-year-old Syrian conflict. With that being said we have to consider the protection of our country and citizens. We wish to see the United Nations intervene and help enforce a ceasefire to create safe passage for Syrian refugees. We hope that our efforts in diminishing the spread of terrorism will bolster our relations with bordering countries. Once the conflict is over we will advocate for the rebuilding of a dismantled Syrian economy, the decentralization of the Syrian government, and the revision of citizens' rights within the Syrian constitution.

Key Points

- Advocate for United Nations intervention in Syria
- Rebuild the impaired economic infrastructure of Syria
- Enforce a ceasefire to ensure safe travel of refugees
- Decentralize the Syrian government
- Discuss a revision of citizen's rights in the Syrian Constitution
- Diminish the spread of terrorism to protect our country and civilians
- Bolster diplomatic relations with border countries

Background

The emergence of Turkey dates back to the thirteenth century when the Ottoman Empire was simply a principality. Throughout the next century, it rapidly expanded. During the reign of Sultan Mehmet II, the Ottoman Army captured the capital of Byzantine, leading to the Byzantine Empire's demise and the renaming of the capital as "Constantinople." At this time, the Empire ruled over three continents; it conquered the area of what is currently modern Greece, several Balkan states such as Yugoslavia and Romania, the Middle Eastern region, and southwestern Spain.

By the sixteenth century, and in comparison to its Western counterparts, the Empire lost its economic and military superiority. In Europe, the success of the Renaissance, the discovery of new territories, and the Industrial Revolution were apparent but the Ottoman Turks were unable to keep up. Beginning in the nineteenth century, many European powers supported Balkan-nationalist movements and brought the Ottoman Empire to a stalemate. However, this unexpectedly opened an opportunity for a new legacy to commence

In 1914, at the start of World War I, the Ottoman Empire allied itself with the Central Powers which included Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Bulgaria. The Ottoman war effort was focused on protecting its European territories and the western Anatolia coast from Allied Power attacks. The official end of the Ottoman Empire occurred after the end of World War I with the signing of the Mondros Armistice in October, 1918. The terms of the agreement allowed several countries to occupy the various territories of the former empire. A resistance group under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal emerged as a reaction to the occupation terms. Through his success of unifying sporadic resistance groups in Anatolia and organizing them into an army, Mustafa

was given the last name Ataturk or “Father of Turks” from those who followed his nationalist cause.

After the development of the movement, the Turkish War of Independence began; the creation of a reformed and liberated state was the objective of Ataturk and his followers. The effort lasted from 1919 to 1922 after Ataturk’s army defeated the occupying powers. This victory immediately led to diplomatic success with Great Britain, France, Italy and other nations, culminating in the signing of the Lausanne Peace Treaty a year later. Since then, the treaty recognized and currently recognizes the autonomy of Turkey and the creation of its borders.

Turkey’s independence was officially declared in The Treaty of Lausanne on July 24, 1923. Shortly after, the Sultanate was abolished, Ankara became the nation’s capital, and the Turkish people enjoyed self-rule as Mustafa Ataturk became the first president of the Republic. Throughout the fifteen years of his presidency, Ataturk introduced an array of reforms in Turkey’s political, social, legal, and economic sectors. These changes were possible through the establishment of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA). Under the leadership of the president, the assembly created an innovative political and legal system influenced by principles of parliamentary democracy, division of powers, and human rights. In April of 1924, the new Turkish Constitution was ratified and the tyrannical Crop Tax was lifted. A secular education was established, implementing the widely accepted adoption of the Latin alphabet and replacing the Arabic alphabet. In terms of equality, Turkish women were provided with rights such as suffrage and the right to run for a public office, putting Turkey ahead of its Western counterparts.

These unprecedented reforms were widely accepted by the community and created a secular state that the nation anticipated for centuries. Events such as the War of Independence, the establishment of the TGNA, abolishment of the Sultanate, adoption of a multi-party

parliamentary system, and the ratification of the Turkish Constitution epitomized Turkey's newfound sovereignty. In regards to the constitution, the article declaring Islam as the state religion was deleted in 1928 and was replaced by the principle of secularism. This bolstered multilateral relations. The Balkan Agreement, the Sa'dabad Pact, and meetings between Greek and Turkish Prime Ministers are examples of how vital creating a diplomatic and peaceful region was and still is to the Republic.

Today, the Turkish Republic remains proud of the evolution of its state. The historic reforms have significantly impacted the Turkish identity and what it means to be an integral part of this country. Whether a situation is domestic or foreign, the Republic of Turkey exerts every effort to resolve conflict through viable solutions. By implementing democratic values, upholding respect for the human rights of its citizens, and recognizing the benefits of rapprochement, the Republic has advocated and currently advocates for peace among countries. According to an article about the Republic of Turkey, "Turkey looks ahead to a healthy future with hope, enthusiasm, and determination" and we encourage other states to follow the example.

Committee on Governance

Before the conflict, Bashar al-Assad and a small group of advisors determined crucial decisions in Syria. The Syrian people were denied freedoms of speech and press, freedom of assembly, and freedom of religion and movement. Assad was once quoted saying: “Run your own lives privately and enrich yourselves as you wish, but do not challenge my government.” This is an authoritarian government, threatening or prosecuting nearly any citizen who challenged the regime.

Before the war, Turkey viewed Syria as a strategic partner. Once Bashar al-Assad came into power, both the Syrian and Turkish governments alike decided that they wanted to fortify their political and economic relationship. The two nations first strengthened their relationship once Assad decided to turn against the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), a terrorist group Turkey has been fighting for years. The Damascus meeting in 2009 between the two countries proved successful as fifty memorandum of understandings were signed. These MoU's outlined terms and cooperation agreements in areas such as diplomacy, security, commerce, culture, health, agriculture, environment, transportation, education and water. The Levant Quartet, which hoped to strengthen the economic and cultural merging between the members, was on the brink of success after the Damascus meeting. The members: Turkey, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon were to meet in 2010, but the countries never reconvened. After protests began to sweep the Middle East, Turkey offered to guide Syria through potential reforms, but Assad declined. Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is quoted declaring “We (Turkey and Syria) had a friendship that began nine years ago, but Syria failed.”

The main actors in the crisis are generally categorized as rebels and opposition forces, pro-Assad forces, and terrorist organizations.

Rebel groups include: Ahrar ash-Sham, the Free Syrian Army (FSA), Jaish al-Fatah, the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, Syrian National Council, The High Negotiations Committee, and the National Coordination Committee. Rebels seek to defend and secure the people's rights. Some rebel factions seek to overthrow Assad by using force and violence, while others resort to more legal manners (such as the Syrian National Council). Opposition forces include: The United States, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Jordan. The opposition forces resist the Syrian regime and may also provide aid to moderate rebel factions. Whether economic aid, medical aid, or military aid, the opposition forces are willing to cooperate so long as they see Assad's removal from the throne. Pro-Assad forces include: Russia, Iran, Hezbollah, and, of course, the Syrian regime. The pro- Assad forces protect and uphold the Syrian regime. They support the regime's attacks, and sometimes conduct their own attacks on terrorist and rebel factions. Additionally, Russia and Iran have attempted to broker successful ceasefires in Syria. Terrorist forces include: ISIS/ ISIL/IS, al-Nusra Front, and the People's Protection Unit (YPG). Most of these terrorist organizations have shared present and/or previous conflict with the rest of the players in the Syrian crisis. They violently strike against groups and individuals whose ideas do not agree with their own. Turkey is currently focused on expelling these terrorist factions from the Middle East. The borders of many Middle Eastern countries, including our own, are threatened by the constant expansion of terrorist groups.

U.S. President Donald Trump has declared Turkey a strategic partner and NATO ally. The 1947 Economic and Technical Cooperation agreement was the first to strengthen their relationship. The two countries agree on combating extremism and terrorism in the Middle East, as well as preserving its safety, stability and security. In 2015, Turkey and the U.S. co-founded

an organization designed to train moderate Syrian rebels (such as the FSA) and expel ISIS and other terrorist factions from Syria.

Turkey, Iran, and Russia are also beginning to work together despite not seeing eye-to-eye on all issues. Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, the Turkish Foreign Minister, said that Iran and Turkey must work together to fight extremism in Syria and will "strengthen cooperation for a lasting peace in Syria." Additionally, Turkey is seeking closer relations with Russia – a benefactor in the Turkish stream pipeline deal ratified by Vladimir Putin in February 2017.

Turkey and Saudi Arabia produced a Strategic Cooperation Council meant to fortify ties in areas including: economic, political, defense, security, education and health. After Saudi Arabia's minister of defense revealed the opportunity to join an anti-terrorism Islamic coalition, Turkey voiced its willingness to join. Regarding the Gulf States, Turkey and Qatar are also strongly connected through their militaries. Inspired by an agreement in 2014 to strengthen military ties, a consensus made in 2015 allowed Turkey to establish permanent military bases in Qatar. The association between Turkey and Jordan dates back to 1947's "Treaty of Friendship." During the Syrian crisis over forty agreements and MoU's have been signed between the two countries. The 2009 Free Trade Agreement and Agreement on Visa Exemption strengthened their bilateral ties. Turkey has invested over one hundred million U.S. dollars in Jordan. They are additionally connected through geographical positions.

Turkey's security and stability is dependent on the Syria's security and stability status due to the fact that Syria is a bordering country. Turkey has worked to grant humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people, and gives aid to millions of Syrian refugees. Concerning security, Turkey is not connected to or an affiliate of terrorist organizations. Turkey's main goal

is to eradicate these groups to create a more secure and stable future for not only Syria, but also neighboring countries.

External third parties are important to ending the conflict and resetting the government in Syria. Third parties have provided weaponry, economic and military assistance to all factions in the crisis. It is important that these external parties do not encourage further action in the ongoing war, but rather develop a compromise to solve it. Third parties contributed to the conflict's progression, so it is crucial that they assist in its de-escalation. They are also essential to resetting the government in Syria because the conflict cannot come to a close unless most parties have contributed to the government's reconstruction. Some third parties may be displeased with the decisions of main actors, and may possibly act for their own reforms.

Turkey is advocating for a decentralized Syrian government. This form of government would guarantee that not a single person obtains ultimate control over an unstable Syrian country. Syria's diverse citizens and culture would benefit from a division of power because a decentralized government considers opinions and voices from a number of entities.

Syria will need a new constitution post-war. It is apparent that both extremist and moderate rebel groups are not surrendering to government and pro-government forces. To prevent further disputes over similar issues that initiated the crisis, a new constitution will be imperative. This constitution must compliment the new form of government and should promote more of the Syrian people's civil liberties. Syria's constitution regulates most laws, but to what extent? The new constitution must contain more specific regulation policies.

Before the Syrian crisis, a civilian government did not exist. The Syrian people did not have much freedom under the authoritarian Assad government. If the Syrian people were under

strict, authoritarian rule, then a civilian government would not have been implemented nor would have ever existed.

The path to a Syrian civilian government is yet to be discovered. Syrian land has been seized by many different crisis actors. Citizens are finding it difficult to survive, so how can they be expected to focus on creating their own government? If citizens wish to participate in a different form of government, their only options are to join a rebel group or an ISIS branch.

Turkey is focused on disbanding and removing terrorist groups from the Middle East. These groups pose an enormous threat to the security and stability of various countries. Both the Syrian government and Syrian constitution must provide a set of more specific regulatory laws and more civil liberties for the Syrian people. Assad must eventually be removed from the Syrian throne and humanitarian aid must immediately be provided to the Syrian people through humanitarian aid organizations.

Committee on Strategic Security

Since the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011, Syria has not been able to protect its citizens, territory, or enforce its laws. Therefore, Syria does not have an effective national security policy and lacks any genuine national security environment. Some of the explanations for Syria having an ineffective national security environment are that Syria is in the middle of civil war in which many factions, both foreign and domestic, are fighting for control of Syria. Syria also suffers from economic instability as a result of the civil war and the spread of ISIS.

Domestic actors in Syria are primarily divided into two parties those who support the Assad regime and those against it. Pro-Assad forces and groups such as the Syrian Armed Forces and the Alawi ethnic group are nationalistic and devoted to the regime. The groups who domestically oppose the regime are the Syrian National Council (SNC), the Syrian National Coalition (also SNC), the High Negotiations Council (HNC), the Democratic Union Party (PYD), and the Kurdish National Council as well as many other groups. The nations that support Assad are Russia, Iran, and China. The nations that oppose the Assad regime are the United States, Britain, France, Turkey, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar. Several non-state actors are involved in Syria; these groups are not affiliated or backed by any nation and are not native to Syria. The non-state group that backs the regime with military force is Hezbollah. ISIS is a non-state terror group that has launched a successful movement into Syria from neighboring Iraq. They were able to seize control of almost half of Syria. It is estimated that there are about thirty thousand foreign fighters involved in Syria. There are also several NGOs that do not oppose nor support either side in the conflict but are primarily involved in humanitarian work. We would like to see that Assad is eventually removed from power in Syria.

We are highly invested in the future stability and security of the Syrian state because Turkey shares an extensive border with Syria and our nation has been negatively impacted by the ensuing refugee crisis. We only support a ceasefire in Syria between moderate rebel groups and the regime on the condition that Assad is eventually removed from power and Hezbollah leaves Syria.

Syria had adequately secure borders before the conflict, they could control immigration and their army could protect them from external threats. However, Syria was not able to protect itself from some of its more advanced neighbors such as Israel which carried out an airstrike on a Syrian nuclear facility under construction in 2007; Syria did not retaliate.

Syria's relations with its neighbors before the conflict could be described as rocky at best. Syria was a key strategic ally of Iran and supported the Iranians during the Iran-Iraq War. Syria has often been referred to as Iran's closest ally. At this time, Iran is supporting the Assad regime with military and economic aid. Relations between Iraq and Syria have been tense in the past, but in 2006, they re-established relations. Currently Iraq and Syria are engaged against a common enemy – ISIS – which poses a detrimental threat to both nations. Relations with Israel have been tense at best and nonexistent at worst. Since the formation of Israel, there have been numerous wars between Syria and Israel. Jordan and Syria had rapidly improving relations after Jordan established relations with Israel and became a conduit for Syrian businessmen doing business in Israel because these businessmen could not enter Syria via Israel. However, Jordan is currently involved as part of the US airstrike coalition and has carried out several airstrikes against ISIS and other terror groups. Additionally, as of February, 2016, Jordan is refuge to a total of 635,324 registered refugees, although King Abdullah II said at the time that the figure was closer to a million. Syria and Lebanon formally established relations in 2008 following years

of intervention in Lebanon by Syria and others. During the Syrian Civil War Lebanon has tried to stay neutral to avoid conflict in their own nation. However, the Lebanese group Hezbollah has been actively involved in the fight supporting Assad. Syria and Turkey have had contentious relations for decades because of the Turkish annexation of the Hatay province in 1939 as well as various ongoing water disputes. Although relations were improving, the Syrian conflict ended rapprochements. During the civil war Turkey has been committed in supporting rebel groups in Syria.

Before the civil war, the Syrian army was used to protect Syria from external and internal threats. Additionally, the military was very influential in the politics of Syria ever since the nation gained its independence. ISIS poses a serious threat to the future of the Syrian state because ISIS wants to conquer the entire Middle East as part of its ultimate goal of uniting the Islamic world as a Caliphate.

Turkey would like to see a ceasefire that will be honored by both sides and enforced by United Nations security forces to allow Turkey to focus on defeating ISIS. All parties involved need to allow the UN to bring aid into Syria and all groups need to be involved in peace negotiations to determine the future of the Syrian state.

Committee on Local Security

As a bordering country of Syria, Turkey's biggest concern is the violence and terrorism flooding into our country. We wish to help Syria resolve its issues, but we are equally concerned about the safety of our civilians. Turkey's goals regarding local security are two large but we believe reasonable tasks. First and foremost, Turkey would want, to keep what's going on in Syria, in Syria and secondly, we hope to either relocate some refugees or receive financial assistance, so we can provide them with educational resources.

Before the war Syria was a very peaceful country to be in. On the other hand there was a extensive police force present in Syria, waiting to hear an anti-regime whisper. If someone was to publically speak out against the regime they would be arrested immediately. This created a hostile environment which ultimately lead to the ongoing civil war.

The local security for civilians in Syria today is non-existent. There are security forces, but their focus is not on the safety of civilians, rather it is a focus on fighting the opposition. Hospitals are being destroyed, villages bombed, and innocent civilians are dying every day. We believe that intervention for local security is necessary because without this intervention there will be unspeakable consequences for Syrian citizens. Turkey is concerned that this chaos will spread across the borders and will affect our country. Countries such as the United States, Russia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar are providing local security for Syria, but these actions are still not enough to protect its civilians. The lack of local security is unacceptable and changes are necessary, humanitarian rights are being denied and moral ethics are being ignored.

Civilians are unsafe especially around cities such as Aleppo and Damascus. War is being waged right outside their doors. Every day civilians face life and death situations and many do not survive. This has become the reality for citizens of Syria. Resources, especially water, are

extremely scarce because of the recent drought. And what water is available is under government control, making it difficult if not impossible for civilians to get clean drinking water. Actions by the Syrian government are unethical and are morally wrong and need to come to an end.

There are many different sides in this conflict, but one fact remains true, all Syrians are fighting. This means that whether they are a part of a militant group, Assad's regime, or just a civilian, everyone is engaged in war. Every single Syrian is fighting; militant groups are fighting the government, the government is fighting the militant groups, and civilians are fighting to stay alive.

We believe that the Syrian government is responsible for securing critical resources such as oil and water, but we also believe that these resources should be made available to civilians. While the Syrian government has secured these resources, it has not made resources available to Syrian civilians. As we do believe the Syrian government is responsible for securing these resources we also believe that it is their responsibility to make it available to their citizens.

Before the war there were an estimated 700,000 small arms in civilian hands. After the war started small arms flooded into the hands of both civilian and rebel forces. The Syrian government is being armed by Russia and the Syrian rebels are being armed by Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Europe, United States, Turkey Jordan, and Lebanon. Though the number of small arms in Syria may be concerning, a situation that may be even more troubling is the flow of military grade weapons into the country. There have been reports of anti-aircraft, anti-tank, and shoulder-fired rockets in Syria. With these weapons in the hands of the wrong people damage and casualties to an already fragile infrastructure is inevitable.

As important as the issues in Syria may be, Turkey must focus on keeping the terror and civil unrest outside its borders. One way to ensure the safety of our nation may be by having

forces in Syria and making sure that the unrest is brought under control. The safety of our civilians and our resources are our first priorities. Our second priority is to either find a safe country to relocate some of the Syrian refugees in Turkey, or to find funding to supply our refugees with educational resources. We find it extremely important to lower the number of refugees without access to educational resources because it is vital to their integration into society. The Republic of Turkey finds these objectives to be imperative in order to guarantee the safety of our population.

Committee on Social Reconstruction

Before 2011, the social order in Syria was akin to its western counterparts. The nation of Syria was generally peaceful, religious groups harmoniously coexisted, and the unemployment rate between 2008 and 2010 averaged below ten percent. However, a four-year drought starting in 2006 caused at least 800,000 farmers to abandon their properties to travel to cities in search of hope and opportunity. Frustration immediately developed within these migrants once they discovered that the urban areas were scarce of food, water, and jobs. In addition, Syria, at the time, was a refuge to numerous Palestinians and Iraqis who fled from conflicts in their own countries. Eventually, the animosity of individuals who wanted to survive grew toward the government.

Syrian civil society consisted of organizations controlled by the state. Between the early 1960s and 1990s, civil activity was at a minimum because it consisted of community-based and informal associations. Prior to the conflict, many entities began emerging and focusing their outreach toward welfare services, health care, women, and children. The most prominent civil society organization that did so was the Syria Trust for Development under the leadership of President Bashar al-Assad's wife, First Lady Asma. Although the Trust ceased operations in 2011, it continues to offer small-scale humanitarian aid within government-held areas.

Although the Syrian constitution states that "Freedom of faith is guaranteed," the past actions of the government have challenged the legitimacy of this right. Citizens belonging to certain religious groups have been and are being strictly monitored. There is and was societal pressure on Muslims who converted to Christianity, causing the majority of the converts to leave their residencies. The government strongly discouraged proselytizing and prosecuted missionaries that posed contention in relations among other religious groups. Additionally,

Syrian law continued to prosecute those who were alleged or official members of the Muslim Brotherhood, Salafi Muslims, and Jehovah's Witnesses. Instances such as these are why this committee would like to review the inconsistencies within the Constitution of Syria.

In theory, the rights of Syrian citizens are similar to the rights stated to the Constitution of the United States. Rights such as "innocent until proven guilty," freedom of speech, and the right to assembly are included. What concerns the Turkish Committee on Social Reconstruction is that the majority of these rights end with "The law regulates the exercise of this right." Six years have passed since the beginning of the conflict and the world has seen the firm grip that Assad's regime has on the regulation of these rights. The immense impact on its people is sufficient reason to demand a revision of citizen rights within Syria's constitution.

Even before the conflict, there were widespread violations of human rights in Syria. Before President Bashar al-Assad lifted the state of emergency in April 2011, the designation provided a basis for emergency laws and was used by Syria's security branches to justify violations of freedom of expression, association, and several other civil and political rights. These violations included prisoner abuse, travel bans, arbitrary arrest, and unfair trials. What makes these violations even more disappointing is that Syria was and currently is party to several international treaties such as the "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" and the "Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment." Upon ratification, the Syrian government agreed to the statement that "Syrian authorities are therefore bound to respect, protect, promote and fulfill the rights contained in those treaties."

Prior to the civil war, housing was provided through tenure systems. There were several that varied in protocol, such as the informal system, used by low-income areas and primarily focused on property distribution and development. Rural areas used customary systems that

flourished through land administration and dispute resolution. Currently, the housing situation has exacerbated with over eleven million recorded as internally displaced.

Before the Syrian Arab Spring, people had property rights, but they were minimal and ineffectively enforced. The court system lacked transparency and caused landowners to resolve disputes outside of the judiciary process. At this time, rural areas used for agriculture were being designated as military zones by elite, private businesses. The renewed use of the land was not subject to property laws and resulted in numerous evictions without compensation.

The Syrian education system was successful. Before the war, over ninety percent of children were enrolled in primary and secondary school and youth literacy rates were estimated at ninety-five percent. The government played a key role in the supervision of education through the Syrian Ministry of Education which established the curricula for all public schools and universities. As of 2014, the enrollment rate has descended with 2.8 million children out of school.

Syria's health system consisted between a mix of government-based hospitals and primary care facilities. However, there was inequality in advanced health care; rural areas did not benefit from it due to the lack of transparency in the health sector and an uneven distribution of supplies and human resources to populous locations such as Aleppo and Damascus. With that being said, health infrastructure outside of metropolitan areas were suboptimal. Inequality increased when private-sector providers attempted to gain autonomy and stay in major cities, leaving rural areas under-resourced. Mental health assistance was also a scarcity with under a hundred psychiatrists in Syria and only two psychiatric hospitals in the whole country. This explains why several people with mental health disorders have endured life without medication

or care. Mental illness was also stigmatized and resulted in reluctance among the general population to seek professional treatment.

These are all detrimental issues. The basic necessities and natural resources in Syria are no longer abundant. The Turkish Republic insists that collaborative discussions and the initiatives from all parties involved are necessary. Ideas and potential solutions will be presented, but the delegation of Turkey requests all to assert themselves. Regarding the legitimacy of others, apprehensiveness is natural. However, this conflict has unjustly extended its reach and violence and cooperation is key to the fruition and validation of these solutions.

Committee on Economic Reconstruction

Prior to the bloodshed, Syria had a diverse economy that consisted of Agriculture (22%), Industry and Excavation (25%), Retail (23%), and Tourism (12%). The country's top exports were raw cotton, calcium phosphates, apples, pears, crude petroleum, and spice seeds; its top imports were cars, raw sugar, seed oils, wheat, and soybean meal. Syria had a total export value of 824 million United States Dollars (USD) and an import cost of 6.11 billion USD resulting in a negative trade balance of 5.28 billion. Prior to the conflict services employed 40%, industry employed 25-28%, and agriculture employed 30% of the population. However, in 2006 a prolonged drought and constant dust storms forced many farmers off their land. This influx of urbanization changed the dynamics of the economy. Employment in agriculture dropped to 19.6% while employment in services rose to 50%. The government's total revenue consisted of 600 billion Syrian pounds. Tax revenue made up 80%, while the other 20% came from oil. Syria's total Gross Domestic Product (GDP), as of 2015, totaled to 55.8 billion USD. Of this amount, 3.94% was dedicated to military, 22% to healthcare, and 5.1% to education.

Prior to the conflict the unemployment rate was at 20% and the population breakdown consisted of: 45.94% under age 14, 12.3% ages 14-20, 11.66% ages 21-30, 16.09% ages 31-40, 8.74% ages 41-50, 4.07% ages 51-64, and 1.2% over age 64. Of the population, 50% of citizens lived under the poverty line along with citizen's financial freedom being labeled as N/A, Syria is categorized as an economically unequal society.

The beginning of economic reforms came in the 1990's allowing for greater local and private sector participation. Once Bashar al-Assad came into power, private banking was legalized. These private sector participants were often free to bank abroad. As for foreign investors, foreigners were only allowed to hold up to 49% share in Syrian companies. As for

state entities, six specialized state banks existed: Central Bank of Syria, Commercial Bank of Syria, Agricultural Cooperative Bank, Industrial Bank, Popular Credit Bank, and the Real Estate Bank. These served as the major financial operators for their respective sectors. The Industrial Bank focused on the public sector.

The Syrian economy was extremely centralized before the conflict. The government controlled the power grid, the transportation sector, the energy sector, the telecommunications sector, and fuel and food distribution. The government controlled the extraction and sale of all natural resources. Most enterprises were nationalized and although there were a few non-government controlled enterprises, those were nonetheless controlled by those with political ties and in the hands of select families.

Private industry mainly consisted of agriculture. Most land was privately owned, making this sector very successful because the government did not control land prices. This made real estate one of the few domestic avenues with realistic and safe returns. However, this sector suffered when the Syrian government liberalized the prices of fertilizer, increasing the price by 400%.

Frailty of the government's revenue increased as the regime's intransience towards the people's demands led to a decrease of state resources and the destruction of a large part of infrastructure. The Syrian Center for Policy Research has reported that, as of the beginning of the conflict, eighteen billion USD would be required for the reconstruction of Syria and this amount would increase by an estimated 60-200 million each year beginning in 2013. It will take approximately twenty-five years to reconstruct the 81.9% in financial and infrastructural losses since 2011.

Once the conflict began, all parts of Syrian economy were affected. This downfall occurred in a series of phases. The first phase took place in 2011. Two months after protests in May, hotel occupancy and the number of investments licensed by the Syrian Investment Agency dropped. During this phase the government attempted damage control by reducing the price of subsidized heating oil and introducing pay raises in the public sector. However, the regime took a counterproductive measure in September of 2011 when they banned all imports carrying a custom duty of more than six billion USD. This was quickly reversed twelve days later after it was criticized by businessmen. The second phase occurred in the autumn of 2011. Syria was becoming isolated from the international community. Sanctions were placed on crude oil exports, individual persons, with a focus on business leaders, by the United States of America and Europe. This complicated international banking within Syria, this ultimately resulted in the financial exit of foreign capital investors. The government issued a state of emergency, imposing restrictions on taking money outside of the country; thus leading to a drop in Syrian bank deposits. In retaliation, the government punished the Syrian people by halting main services such as water and electricity. Power outages would last from 4 hours to weeks on end, affecting even the most luxurious neighborhoods in Damascus. During the third phase of the decline, that took place in 2012, Syria saw a divide of power between Damascus and Aleppo. Manufacturing ceased as violence, looting, and kidnapping erupted in industry centric Aleppo and in some parts of Damascus. The official breakdown of law and order had begun. This led to the mass emigration of the business and middle class who did not want to risk being caught in the crossfire. Those who stayed either had government ties or were too poor to leave. The fourth phase of decline that led Syria to its current state took place in the spring of 2013. The pound collapsed and the Aleppo region, which contained most of Syria's grain and oil, was seized by

rebels. This split the country into two parts, the rebels in the East controlling Aleppo and the government in the West controlling Damascus.

Two separate economies emerged. The regime controlled areas relied heavily on imports, mainly petroleum, from their Iranian and Russian allies and therefore remained resilient despite the ongoing conflict. The opposition controlled areas have been fueled by intra-rebel fighting. An informal economy of looting government owned property and civilian residents; kidnapping for ransom; and human trafficking emerged as a result. Entirely new business networks, often illicit, have been created and new illegal groups and malevolent individuals are being empowered at the expense of the traditional business class.

Ultimately the growing number of groups on both sides of the divide now seek to reap significant material benefit from the conflict, giving them powerful incentive to prolong the fight. The relative autonomy that has been gained has created new power centers that will likely clash with any future powers that come once the conflict is resolved. The root economic problems in Syria lie within its centralized and unequal economy. To resolve this issue, Syria will need the help of foreign actors to help create a decentralized economy with an equitable distribution of wealth.

Committee on Justice, Peace and Reconciliation

Turkey has a vested interest in the Syrian crisis since a shared border with Syria may allow the conflict in Syria to become a significant threat to the safety of our nation and Turkish citizens. We believe that in order to insure justice is served and reconciliation happens throughout Syria, all actors involved in the crisis must work together. Steps that must be taken must involve a system to help reconcile the people and the government, a process to conduct trials on the international stage, and a collective effort that will aid in the reconstruction of Syrian society. To begin, one must recognize Syria's past, primarily the country's history with human rights violations.

Recent problems can be traced back to the start of the Hafez al-Assad regime in 1971 and was known for practicing brutal tactics in his country such as massacres, arbitrary arrests, and torture. These methods were employed after the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood, an organization that made several attempts to assassinate Hafez. Hafez had no mercy for the Muslim Brotherhood. One incident in a Tadmor prison, that contained a high population of Brotherhood members, involved a massacre of prisoners. Between 600-1,000 prisoners died in this event. Hafez assumed no responsibility for this occurrence and even claimed the prisoners were killed as a result of a prison riot. Another incident involving Hafez targeting Brotherhood members occurred on February 2nd, 1982. The Syrian military bombed the city of Hama, allegedly believing the city harbored Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated gunmen. The military shelled the city for weeks and then proceeded to arrest several citizens. The attack on Hama killed approximately 20,000 to 40,000 residents of the city and came to be known as "one of the deadliest acts by any Arab government against its own people."

An unexpected shift in power occurred when Bassel al-Assad who was supposed to take over after his father, died in a car accident in 1994. Hafez began grooming his youngest son, Bashar, to take his place. Syrian citizens thought that Bashar al-Assad might be different from his father; however he proved them wrong. Restrictions were imposed on freedom of speech, press, assembly, and religion. The internet and academic freedom were also restricted. Violence, sexual exploitation and societal discrimination against women continued. The government discriminated against minorities, particularly the Kurds, and severely restricted workers' rights. One example of those violations happened on July 19, 2009, when Wadee' Sha'booq, an engineer from Aleppo, died after he was assaulted by the Syrian Police. Human rights observers believe security forces attacked Sha'booq after he confronted them over his son's compulsory military service.

Currently, Syria and various opposition groups have been accused of committing many war crimes and human rights violations. The crimes we believe that need to be addressed immediately are mass killings, rapes, targeting medics, recruiting child soldiers, and the use of chemical weapons. Aleppo and Damascus are two prime examples of war crimes being committed by the Syrian government. By bombing the city of Aleppo, the Syrian government not only killed hundreds of citizens, but destroyed numerous medical centers. The United Nations spoke out against this saying, "The secretary-general reminds all parties to the conflict that targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure is a war crime. Those responsible for these and other atrocities in Syria, whoever and wherever they are, must one day be brought to account."

In Damascus, the Syrian government committed what is considered a heinous war crime, the use of chemical weapons against its own people. Hundreds died in the attack; videos were uploaded of large numbers of distressed and visibly sick adults and children. In some of the most

graphic footage, dozens of bodies, including many small children and babies, were seen laid out in rows on the floors of clinics, mosques, and on the streets. The Syrian government needs to be held accountable for what it has done and we believe the UN must interfere in this crisis.

At this moment, these war crimes have not been officially dealt with. Recently the UN has created a unit to gather evidence of war crimes that have been committed during the Syrian civil war. This unit will, according to a UN human rights official, "...analyze information, organize and prepare files on the worst abuses that amount to international crimes." The UN's Commission of Inquiry has issued twenty reports accusing Syrian government, rebel forces and the Islamic State of mass killings, rapes, disappearances and the recruiting of child soldiers. However, no official war crimes have been prosecuted. Many point to the International Criminal Court (ICC) to help in prosecuting those who have committed war crimes in Syria. However, the ICC has no jurisdiction in Syria because Syria is not a party to the Rome Statute. The only way the ICC could prosecute Syrian war crimes is if the United Nations Security Council referred the situation to the court. This is proving to be impossible since the UN is deadlocked when it comes to making a decision over the Syrian crisis. This is due to countries, such as Russia, vetoing Security Council decisions and proves once again that all countries must work together in order to truly end this war.

To solve this crisis, we should look at Rwanda's and South Africa's civil wars, how they were dealt with, and apply their strategies into this crisis. From the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, one can learn that prosecuting those guilty of war crimes, helps advocate for a greater justice system, one that brings justice for all. Rwanda's local reconciliation techniques could also be effective in Syria. In Rwanda, constitutional changes made laws that protected all citizens, the education system was reformed to teach without any prejudice;

patriotism was promoted; and efforts were made to fight any genocide ideology. Changes in the Syrian government similar to those made by Rwanda could benefit the people of Syria. In the long term perspective, the acts of changing the constitution and reforming the Syrian government would help stabilize the country and is a idea to keep in mind. Another change in government that we believe should happen is a slow transition of power. Assad should step down from his presidency; however, this should only happen once the country is stable. The strategy South Africa made to heal their country is also a good example that Syria could use as a template. South Africa had an Amnesty Committee, Reparation and Rehabilitation Committee, and Human Rights Violations Committee. By creating organizations to treat all the symptoms all at once, South Africa was able to effectively and efficiently resolve the aftermath of their own conflict. In order to truly end the Syrian crisis, all issues should be dealt with together and not separately.

Another major factor that caused the conflict in Syria is its mix of ethnic and religious groups. Before the civil war started in 2011, the Syrian population was estimated at roughly twenty-three million permanent inhabitants. Syrian society was not ethnically diverse prior to the conflict; 90% of the population were Arab, while Kurdish, Armenian, and other minorities made up 9.7% of the population. From a religious perspective, it is more difficult to compare the groups since Syria has not required religion in its census since 1963. However, it is estimated that the majority were the Sunni Muslims who were at least 70% of the population. Despite the Sunnis being the largest religious group in Syria, the Alawites held more power in the Syrian government, and composed 13%-20% of the Syrian population. This is because Bashar al-Assad himself is an Alawite Muslim and usually ruled in favor of the Alawite thus giving them more power. Syria's smaller religious groups consisted of Christians, Jews, and Druze. The root of the

Syrian conflict can be seen in the power struggle between the Sunni and the Alawites. Syria has been a country run by the minority for decades, oppressing the majority of the country. This oppression was the first step into what eventually led to a civil war. We hope that all actors involved will work together to reach a time of peace and prosperity for Syria. There also must be a slow transition of power because Assad cannot stay as President of Syria because of all the war crimes he has been accused of, but removing Assad from office right now would cause chaos. Unfortunately, Assad still plays the role of Syria's diplomatic leader. In the absence of a credible government, the environment in Syria is susceptible to anarchy where jihadists would have the chance to take control. Therefore we believe that a slow transition of power should occur.

Committee on Cross-Border Issues

The ongoing conflict in Syria has become a global issue, with its ramifications directly affecting the neighboring countries of Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, and Israel. In its sixth year, the crisis has caused a significant rift in relations between Syria and its adjacent nations with the threat of spillover violence, continual increase in refugees, clashes of culture, and direct effect on the stability of each nation. With no sign of slowing down, the crisis will continue to test Syria's neighboring countries, ultimately shaping the fate of the region as a whole.

As the Turkish Republic, we are an influential force in the conflict. Our relationship with Syria has been complex. Prior to 1998, we debated over issues regarding Syria's claim over the region of Hatay and disputed over water. Perhaps the most prominent issue surrounds Syria's support of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), a terrorist group in our eyes and the eyes of the United States. However, a shift occurred in the relationship beginning on October 20, 1998 when the Adana Agreement was signed, initiating cooperation against the PKK. Subsequently, when Bashar al -Assad rose to power, our nation expressed its intent to further develop relations. In 2009, the Joint Political Declaration in Establishing High Security Council (HLSCC) met, where agreements and Memorandums of Understanding between Turkey and Syria were recognized. This led to the establishment of a Quadripartite High Level Strategic Cooperation Council among Turkey, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon at a Foreign Ministries Level.

At the start of the conflict, we attempted a bilateral approach, wishing to keep in place our ties with Damascus. We attempted to utilize our expertise and democratic experience to convince Assad of reformation in hopes of resolving the crisis. After Assad's refusal of any such reforms and his increased pressure and violent methodology, we shifted our policy to one of

regime-change. The previously cordial and diplomatic relationship that we shared with Syria has been severed.

The relationship that Syria shares with its neighbor to the east, Iraq, has been unstable. Following the invasion of Iraq in 2003, Damascus became wary of the possibility that it was next in line for a forced regime change. This fear initiated Syria's disruption of the political process, during which they ignored and possibly facilitated the movement of foreign jihadist groups entering Iraq to fight the United States opposition forces. The relationship between Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and Assad continued to sour and reached a low point in 2009 when the Iraqi government placed blame on Syria for bomb blasts that occurred in Baghdad. Maliki believed that Syria was conspiring with jihadists to destabilize Iraq and keep American troops positioned there. The crisis that erupted in Syria instilled a different viewpoint in the Iraqi Shia Islamists who, under Prime Minister Maliki, are now in control of Baghdad. Maliki's increasingly authoritarian grip on the nation was based on a sectarian-dominated formation process in 2010 and the perception of an ongoing threat from hostile regional Sunni powers, particularly the Gulf states, influenced Maliki to quickly support Assad when the conflict ensued.

Syria and its southern neighbor Jordan have had a weak relationship since they became independent states. They maintained brief military alliances during wars with Israel. After the Treaty of Peace between the State of Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Jordan has been an important transit point for Syrian businessmen doing business in the Palestinian territories. The crisis in Syria has prompted a hesitant and controversial approach from Jordan. Focused on maintaining its resilience as a nation and inhibiting violence and instability, Amman has remained detached from Damascus. However, recognizing the potential long term effects of

the civil war, Jordan leans toward developing policies based on the political realities on the frontlines.

Syria and its neighbor to the west, Lebanon, have a complicated history consisting of varying events such as the Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation, and Coordination in 1991 and the assassination of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in 2005. Anti-Syrian parties in Lebanon blamed Syria for the assassination, forcing Syrian troops to withdraw the country. The relationship remained strained until 2009 when Saad Hariri took office, attempting to reconcile Lebanon's relationship with Syria. The conflict in Syria caused deadly sectarian clashes along the border that Lebanon shares with Syria, which then led to an increase in sectarian violence throughout Lebanon. The dominant Shiite group, Hezbollah, is a staunch ally of Assad, while the Future Movement, the largest Sunni party in Lebanon, has provided support to the opposition forces in Syria. With these sectarian wars raging, the relationship between Damascus and Beirut remains tense.

Prior to the civil war, Syria was a destination for refugees, particularly from Iraq, thanks to Syria's open-door policy. Over 1,300,000 refugees were housed in Syria by the end of 2010, according to UNHCR. Although Syria was the most prominent receiver of Iraqi refugees following the war, there is no accurate figure representing the number. According to the estimates of Palestinian Bureau of Statistics and Natural Resources of Damascus, in 2009, there were 467,956 Palestinians living in Syria. However, these are not necessarily migrants, rather second and third generation Palestinian immigrants dating back to the 1948 Palestinian War. The vast majority of refugees in Syria resided in the largest refugee camp of Yarmouk in Damascus. Before the crisis, Yarmouk and the eleven other Syrian refugee camps hosted the almost 500,000 Palestinians.

Leading up to the crisis, Syria was experiencing consequential environmental trauma. From 2006-2011, Syria was suffering a terrible drought and severe crop failure. Herders in the northeast lost approximately 85% of their livestock, affecting 1.3 million people. The United Nations reported that two to three million people were driven into extreme poverty as a result of the drought. The war exacerbates severe environmental issues, leaving behind a toxic footprint due to the increase of toxic residues from artillery and other bombs, the destruction of buildings and water resources, the targeting of industrial zones and the looting of chemical facilities. The military activity in Syria will cause contamination and indirect pollution that advances chronic risks to civilians and the environment.

Terrorism has been prevalent in Syria, negatively affecting the people of Syria and the relationships Damascus has with the outside world. Syria has historically been a perpetrator of terrorism. It provided political support and weapons to the terrorist organization Hezbollah, influencing Hezbollah's pro-Assad stance. The Terrorist groups such as the external leadership of Hamas, the Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PLFP), and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) were based in Damascus and operated within Syria's borders. Assad expressed support for Palestinian terrorist groups in their fight against Israel.

The threat that The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) poses for the region, Syria in particular, cannot be overstated. The terrorist organization holds control over ample territory in Syria and Iraq, using its position and power to commit atrocities. Islamic State's direct involvement in the Civil War has left thousands of people dead and two-thirds of the Syrian people in need of humanitarian aid. With the conflict showing no signs of slowing down, ISIS will continue to threaten the lives of Syrians.

The Syrian Civil War has been an immensely destabilizing and harmful conflict, resulting in hundreds of thousands of casualties and millions of refugees forced to flee their homeland. The varying forces involved in the crisis have left Syria in a state of turmoil. As the Turkish government, we prioritize the movement, protection, and integration of refugees into our nation. We will continue to work towards the eradication of terrorist threats.