



**PSIR 439 - TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY**

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**Turkey's Maritime Strategy Ambitions: Blue Homeland Doctrine and Its Impact on  
Foreign Policy**

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**Abstract**

The aim of this study is to provide information about the Blue Homeland doctrine, which is the boundaries of Turkey's maritime jurisdiction, which has been actively implemented after 2015, and the reflections of the doctrine on Turkish foreign policy. In this study, the reasons of the rising tension in the Eastern Mediterranean in recent years and the steps taken by Turkey in line with the purpose of the doctrine will be explained. The study will also analyze the agreements and actions made by Turkey to protect its legitimate rights and interests in the Eastern Mediterranean.

**Key Words:** Turkey, Eastern Mediterranean, Limitation the Maritime Jurisdiction, Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

**Abbreviations:**

EEZ: Exclusive Economic Zone

USA: United States of America

TRNC: Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

**Word Count:** 3810 + 1071(Bibliography) = 4881

## Introduction

"There is no difference between claiming rights in the maritime jurisdictions of Turkey and claiming in their own land."<sup>1</sup> The Blue Homeland doctrine is a doctrine prepared by Turkish Rear Admiral Cem Gürdeniz in order to determine Turkey's jurisdiction areas at sea and to protect these areas. The purpose of the doctrine is to determine the maritime jurisdiction areas of Turkey in the Black Sea, the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean. Especially in recent years, Turkey has taken steps in the problems based on the sharing of energy resources in the Eastern Mediterranean by looking at this doctrine. Implementing a strategy based on army power in the Eastern Mediterranean, Turkey aimed to protect its legitimate rights in this way. In addition, Turkey is looking for energy resources within the borders it accepts as the Blue Homeland. However, these borders were met with reaction from some European Union countries, Egypt and Israel and threatened sanctions against Turkey. With the Blue Homeland Doctrine, not only the borders of the maritime jurisdiction of the country were shaped, but also its foreign policy was shaped accordingly.

### The Reasons for the Emergence of the Doctrine

The Blue Homeland doctrine was first put forward in 2006 by former Rear Admiral Cem Gürdeniz. According to Cem Gürdeniz, the doctrine is a concept that states that Turkey has a sovereignty in the seas and that these areas are as important as the mainland.<sup>2</sup> The concept of Blue Homeland is a concept found for the maritimeization of Turkey. According to Cem Gürdeniz, Turkey is a sea state due to its geography.<sup>3</sup> Turkish states established in the past have not developed sufficiently in the field of maritime from past to present. During the period of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, great importance was given to maritime and the establishment of navies was given priority.<sup>4</sup> However, his short rule of 15 years was not enough for Atatürk to achieve his superior goals. But as Gürdeniz said, Turkey has to advance in maritimeization regardless of the conditions. Looking at the states that have become a naval civilization today, it is clear that these states are nation states governed by

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<sup>1</sup> Cihat Yaycı, Mavi Vatan nasıl doğdu? Doktrinin mimarları Cem Gürdeniz ve Cihat Yaycı anlatıyor, BBC Türkçe, Retrieved from: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MizmZQZ1qiU&feature=youtu.be&ab\\_channel=BBCNewsT%C3%BCrk%C3%A7e](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MizmZQZ1qiU&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=BBCNewsT%C3%BCrk%C3%A7e). 00:25-00:40. Accessed December 14, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Cem Gürdeniz, Mavi Vatan nasıl doğdu? Doktrinin mimarları Cem Gürdeniz ve Cihat Yaycı anlatıyor. 01:05-01:25.

<sup>3</sup> Cem Gürdeniz, Mavi Uygarlık, Türkiye Denizcileşmelidir, İstanbul, 2015, p.345.

<sup>4</sup> Cem Gürdeniz, Atatürk ve Türk Denizciliği, Aydınlık, November 9, 2013, Retrieved from: <https://www.aydinlik.com.tr/ataturk-ve-turk-denizciligi>. Accessed December 14, 2020.

secular democracy.<sup>5</sup> For this reason, developments in the maritime field will both provide improvements in the security of the country and contribute to the democracy of the country. According to Gürdeniz, the most important events that brought the Ottoman Empire to destruction were the raids in Sinop, Çeşme and Navarino.<sup>6</sup> As a result of these raids, the Ottoman Empire faced collapse. Nevertheless, the process that started with the victory at sea with the Battle of Çanakkale led to the establishment of modern Turkey. Seeing that the future is in the seas, Cem Gürdeniz and Cihat Yaycı worked on the Blue Homeland doctrine and produced the concept that guides Turkey's foreign policy today. Many reasons are influential in the emergence of the doctrine, but the most important factor is a map prepared by Seville University academic Juan Luis Suarez.<sup>7</sup> According to Gürdeniz, an area of roughly 150,000 square kilometers was tried to be unlawfully seized from Turkey.<sup>8</sup> This area, which is equal to almost 1/5 of Turkey's area on the map, is given to Greece.

### **Seville Maritime Territory Map**

The Seville Map is a study be prepared for the settlement of the Eastern Mediterranean Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) dispute between Turkey, Greece and Cyprus.<sup>9</sup> According to the map, maritime jurisdictions are given to Meis Island, an island 2 km from Turkey and 580 km from the Greek mainland. In the statement made by the Turkish Foreign Ministry, it was stated that this was unlawful and rejected.<sup>10</sup> When looking at the content of the map, it is seen that the Turkish side is treated quite unfairly. Based on this map, the Greek side opened a hydrocarbon tender in the south of Crete and the Ionian Sea on 3 December 2011.<sup>11</sup> One of the reasons why the Greek side acts unilaterally is the political turmoil in Libya. Turkey responded to the unilateral steps taken by the Greek side with an agreement with Libya on 27 November 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Cem Gürdeniz, Denizcileşmek, Aydınlık, July 15, 2018, Retrieved from: <https://www.aydinlik.com.tr/denizcilesmek-cem-gurdeniz-kose-yazilari-temmuz-2018>. Accessed December 14, 2020.

<sup>6</sup> Cem Gürdeniz, Tarihimizdeki donanma baskınları ve sonuçları, Aydınlık, March 31, 2013, Retrieved from: <https://www.aydinlik.com.tr/arsiv/tarihimizdeki-donanma-baskinlari-ve-sonuclari>. Accessed December 14, 2020.

<sup>7</sup> Sevilla Haritası nedir?, BBC Türkçe, September 22, 2020, Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-dunya-54244760>. Accessed December 14, 2020.

<sup>8</sup> Cem Gürdeniz, Cüneyt Özdemir'e cevapladı: Mavi Vatan nedir? Libya Anlaşması neden önemli?, CNN Türk, Retrieved from: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=my39MuwdfIM&ab\\_channel=CNNT%C3%9CRK](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=my39MuwdfIM&ab_channel=CNNT%C3%9CRK). 01:15-01:30. Accessed December 14, 2020.

<sup>9</sup> Cihat Yaycı, Doğu Akdeniz'in Paylaşım Mücadelesi ve Türkiye, İstanbul, 2020, p.48-50.

<sup>10</sup> T.C. Dışişleri Bakanlığı, SC-66, 25 Ekim 2019, Dışişleri Bakanlığı Sözcüsü Hami Aksoy'un Uluslararası Af Örgütü Tarafından Yayımlanan Rapor Hakkındaki Soruya Cevabı, Retrieved from: [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/sc\\_-66\\_-uluslararasi-af-orgutu-nun-raporu-hk-sc.tr.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/sc_-66_-uluslararasi-af-orgutu-nun-raporu-hk-sc.tr.mfa). Accessed December 15, 2020.

<sup>11</sup> Yaycı, Doğu Akdeniz'in Paylaşım Mücadelesi ve Türkiye, p.51-52.

### **Why the Eastern Mediterranean Important?**

The Eastern Mediterranean has been in a diplomatic and strategic struggle for many years. In the past, struggles for control of trade routes are now being held for energy resources. In the researches, it has been declared that there are huge natural gas and oil reserves in the region.<sup>12</sup> For this reason, the Eastern Mediterranean has turned into a struggle area for countries such as Turkey, Greece, Israel, Egypt, Libya, France, Germany, USA and Russia. In the report published by the United States Geological Survey(USGS), it was announced that it is estimated that there are 122 trillion cubic feet of natural gas reserves in the region between Cyprus, Lebanon, Syria and Israel.<sup>13</sup> This estimate shows that one of the largest natural gas reserves in the world is in the Eastern Mediterranean. It is said that the hydrocarbon reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean will be sufficient for Turkey's 572-year need.<sup>14</sup> The natural wealth in the region attracts the attention of all imperialist countries with or without a coast to the Eastern Mediterranean. While Russia is trying to gain a voice with the military ports in Syria, France is trying to get rights through Greece and Southern Cyprus, while the USA is working with countries such as Israel, Egypt and Greece in the region.<sup>15</sup> Turkey, on the other hand, seems a bit lonely in this regard. For political reasons, Turkey does not establish diplomatic communication with most of these countries. For this reason, Turkey is becoming more and more isolated in the region, and it expresses its demands not through diplomacy but through military power.

### **Practices Made by Turkey in Accordance with the Doctrine**

Although the Blue Homeland doctrine emerged as a concept in 2006, Turkey was actively implementing practices before 2006 in the areas it considered as its maritime jurisdiction. A seismic research ship belonging to the Republic of Southern Cyprus was blocked by the TCG Giresun frigate and the first active application started within the borders of the Blue Homeland.<sup>16</sup> Turkey has been actively continuing this practice of gunboat

<sup>12</sup> Umut Kedikli & Önder Çalağan, Enerji Alanında Bir Rekabet Sahası Olarak Doğu Akdeniz'in Önemi, 2017, Retrieved from: <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/770057>. Accessed December 15, 2020.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Geological Survey, Natural Gas Potential Assessed in Eastern Mediterranean, 2010, Retrieved from: <https://www.usgs.gov/news/natural-gas-potential-assessed-eastern-mediterranean>. Accessed December 15, 2020.

<sup>14</sup> Cihat Yaycı, Türkiye ve Yunanistan'ın Ege-Doğu Akdeniz tezleri ne? Teke Tek, Habertürk TV, Retrieved from: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cq\\_5UhzYNd4&t](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cq_5UhzYNd4&t). Accessed December 15, 2020.

<sup>15</sup> Cem Gürdeniz, ABD Doğu Akdeniz'de ne yaptığını biliyor mu?, Aydınlık, 2020, Retrieved from: <https://www.aydinlik.com.tr/haber/abd-dogu-akdeniz-de-ne-yaptigini-biliyor-mu-208125>. Accessed December 15, 2020.

<sup>16</sup> Cem Gürdeniz, Son sözü donanmalar söyler, Aydınlık, February 25, 2018, Retrieved from: <https://www.aydinlik.com.tr/son-sozu-donanmalar-soyler-cem-gurdeniz-kose-yazilari-subat-2018>. Accessed December 15, 2020.

diplomacy, which started in 2002, today.<sup>17</sup> With the diplomatic correspondence given to the United Nations on March 2, 2004, Turkey took one of the first steps in determining the maritime jurisdiction areas in the Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>18</sup> Turkey signed a continental shelf delimitation agreement with the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in 2011.<sup>19</sup> With the treaty, diplomatic practices were also carried out for the first time in addition to the army power strategy. From 2002 until 2016, 21 ships were blocked by the Turkish Navy in 14 years, including 14 ships, 6 seismic research ships and 1 drilling ship.<sup>20</sup> Turkey is a country with 3 drilling and 3 seismic research vessels. These ships conduct research and drilling in areas within the boundaries of the Blue Homeland doctrine. These practices cause the reaction of Greece, Egypt and some European Union countries.

### **The Effect of Doctrine on Foreign Policy**

The fact that Turkey conducts research and drilling activities within the borders accepted by its maritime jurisdictions has caused the reaction and threats of countries with interests in the Eastern Mediterranean. Especially the increased reactions from the European Union countries progressed to the threats of sanctions after a while.<sup>21</sup> According to Cihat Yaycı, these sanction threats are both unlawful and should not be taken seriously.<sup>22</sup> Yaycı says that every diplomatic step to prevent these sanctions will cause Turkey to be forced into the Seville Map. Greece, Southern Cyprus and France are the leading states demanding sanctions against Turkey.<sup>23</sup> Turkey, on the other hand, has not taken a step back against the threats of sanctions for now. The Ankara Government says sanctions imposed by the European Union will not

<sup>17</sup> Gunboat Diplomacy: In international politics, gunboat diplomacy refers to the pursuit of foreign policy objectives with the aid of conspicuous displays of naval power, implying or constituting a direct threat of warfare should terms not be agreeable to the superior force. Retrieved from: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gunboat\\_diplomacy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gunboat_diplomacy). Accessed December 15, 2020.

<sup>18</sup> Yaycı, Doğu Akdeniz'in Paylaşım Mücadelesi ve Türkiye, p.137.

<sup>19</sup> T.C. Dışişleri Bakanlığı, No: 216, 21 Eylül 2011 Türkiye – KKTC Kıta Sahaneliği Sınırlandırma Anlaşması İmzalanmasına İlişkin Dışişleri Bakanlığı Basın Açıklaması, Retrieved from: [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no\\_216\\_21-eyul-2011-turkiye\\_-kktc-kita-sahanligi-sinirlandirma-anlasma-si-imzalanmasina-iliskin-disisleri-bakanligi-basin-ac\\_.tr.mfa#:~:text=Bakanlıđı%20Basın%20Açıklaması,No%3A%20216%2C%2021%20Eylül%202011%20Türkiye%20-%20KKTC%20Kıta%20Sahanlıđı,İlişkin%20Dışişleri%20Bakanlıđı%20Basın%20Açıklaması&text=Anlaşma%20Kıbrıs%20Türklerinin%2C%20aynen%20Kıbrıslı,ayrılmaz%20haklarını%20da%20dikkate%20almaktadır](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_216_21-eyul-2011-turkiye_-kktc-kita-sahanligi-sinirlandirma-anlasma-si-imzalanmasina-iliskin-disisleri-bakanligi-basin-ac_.tr.mfa#:~:text=Bakanlıđı%20Basın%20Açıklaması,No%3A%20216%2C%2021%20Eylül%202011%20Türkiye%20-%20KKTC%20Kıta%20Sahanlıđı,İlişkin%20Dışişleri%20Bakanlıđı%20Basın%20Açıklaması&text=Anlaşma%20Kıbrıs%20Türklerinin%2C%20aynen%20Kıbrıslı,ayrılmaz%20haklarını%20da%20dikkate%20almaktadır). Accessed December 16, 2020.

<sup>20</sup> Mehmet Kancı, Analiz - Mavi Vatan'ı savunmak, 2019, Retrieved from: <https://www.denizbulten.com/mobil.php?islem=haber&id=24482&i=1>. Accessed December 16, 2020.

<sup>21</sup> AB'den Türkiye'ye yaptırım tehdidi, Deutsche Welle, December 4, 2020, Retrieved from: <https://www.dw.com/tr/abden-türkiyeye-yaptırım-tehdidi/a-55820851>. Accessed December 16, 2020.

<sup>22</sup> Cihat Yaycı, Doğu Akdeniz'deki gelişmeleri ve son durumu, Açık ve Net, Habertürk TV, Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E9NnqjFoMzo>. Accessed December 16, 2020.

<sup>23</sup> Macron'dan rezil açıklama: Türkiye'ye yaptırım uygulanmalı, Sözcü, August 1, 2020, Retrieved from: <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2020/dunya/son-dakika-macron-dan-rezil-turkiye-aciklamasi-yaptirim-uygulanmali-5947850/>. Accessed December 16, 2020.

have any effect.<sup>24</sup> The European Union decided to sanction Turkey as a result of the meeting held on 11 December 2020.<sup>25</sup> However, considering the decisions taken, it is seen that the sanctions are very light. The reason for this seems to be that the new US President Joe Biden is expected to take office on January 20 and Germany's decisions are effective. The loneliness of the Turkish Government in the region due to political reasons may lead to widening and aggravation of the sanction decisions. Cihat Yaycı and Cem Gürdeniz say that Turkey, which has become isolated as a result of political choices, should find an ally as soon as possible. It is very important to improve relations with Egypt, Israel and Syria and abandon the isolation policy in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Ankara government does not negotiate with Sisi, who came to power in Egypt with a coup, does not meet with the Assad government in Syria, and does not negotiate with the Israeli government due to Palestinian problems. While Turkey is bringing its diplomatic relations with Israel to the point of ending due to Palestinian problems, Palestine is negotiating with Greece for the Eastern Mediterranean. Although it was said that education and the problems between Israel and Palestine were discussed in two summits held by Greece, Southern Cyprus and Palestine, it is known that the Eastern Mediterranean issue was also discussed in the talks.<sup>26</sup> Turkey, which lost an ally like Israel due to Palestinian problems, establishes diplomatic relations only with Libya and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The Government of Turkey does not act with the interests of Turkey in mind, but with the interests and goals of the Justice and Development Party. But as it is known, states are pragmatic, not ideological or theological, that is, they act according to their interests. For this reason, countries such as Egypt and Israel, which were enemies in the past, establish diplomatic relations.

### **Multilateral Summits in the Eastern Mediterranean**

Many summits were held in the Eastern Mediterranean, especially under the leadership of Greece and Southern Cyprus. Turkey was not invited to these summits.

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<sup>24</sup> Erdoğan: AB'nin yaptırım kararı Türkiye'yi ırgalamaz, Sözcü, December 9, 2020, Retrieved from: <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2020/gundem/erdogan-biden-ile-yabanci-bir-isim-degilim-6160094/>. Accessed December 16, 2020.

<sup>25</sup> AB'den Türkiye'ye aşamalı yaptırım kararı, Deutsche Welle, December 11, 2020, Retrieved from: <https://www.dw.com/tr/abden-türkiyeye-aşamalı-yaptırım-kararı/a-55901377>. Accessed December 16, 2020.

<sup>26</sup> Joint Communiqué issued after the Trilateral Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Greece, Cyprus And Palestine, Athens, December 17th, 2018, Retrieved from: <https://www.mfa.gr/missionsabroad/en/jerusalem-en/news/joint-communique-issued-after-the-trilateral-meeting-of-the-ministers-of-foreign-affairs-of-greece-cyprus-and-palestine-athens-december-17th-2018.html>. Accessed December 16, 2020.



### **Cyprus-Greece-Egypt Trilateral Summit**

Egypt, which was frequently brought to the agenda with the Arab Spring and the military coup in 2013, is now on the agenda with the power and policies of energy resources in the Eastern Mediterranean. Egypt has made agreements with Greece and the Republic of Cyprus for the extraction and use of energy resources in the region. The first summit between 3 countries was held in November 2014. Until 2018, 6 summits were held in total. In the joint declaration published at the end of the summit, Turkey was called upon to end its illegal activities.<sup>27</sup>

### **Cyprus-Greece-Israel Trilateral Summit**

Israel first signed an EEZ agreement with the Republic of Cyprus in 2010 and declared its own EEZ borders in 2011.<sup>28</sup> Israel, which had good relations with Turkey before 2008, therefore did not establish close relations with Greece. However, as a result of the Gaza Operation that started in 2008 and the attack on the Mavi Marmara ship in 2010, relations between Turkey and Israel rapidly deteriorated.<sup>29</sup> Relations between Israel and Greece increased during this period. With the participation of the Republic of Cyprus, relations have turned into triple summits. Summits that started in 2012 were held for the 6th time in 2020. The US Secretary of State attended the summit held in 2019 and it was stated in the final declaration that the USA would support the East-MED Pipeline Project.<sup>30</sup>

### **Cyprus-Greece-Palestine Trilateral Summit**

Although Turkey has done a lot of work to help Palestine, Palestine is working with Greece and the Republic of Cyprus in the Eastern Mediterranean. The negotiations that started in 2016 ended in 2017. Although the main aim of Greece is thought to be a solution to the Palestinian problem, its main purpose may be to prevent a possible EEZ announcement of Palestine.

### **EastMed Gas Forum**

Considering that the basis of the struggle in the Eastern Mediterranean is energy-based, the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum is the greatest danger for Turkey. The

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<sup>27</sup> Joint Declaration at the 6th Cyprus- Egypt-Greece Trilateral Summit, Independent Balkan News Agency, October 10, 2020, Retrieved from: <https://balkan.eu/joint-declaration-at-the-6th-cyprus-egypt-greece-trilateral-summit/>. Accessed December 17, 2020.

<sup>28</sup> Yaycı, Doğu Akdeniz'in Paylaşım Mücadelesi ve Türkiye, p.116.

<sup>29</sup> Shira Efron, The Future of Israeli-Turkish Relations, 2018, p. 9-10. Retrieved from: [https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RR2400/RR2445/RAND\\_RR2445.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR2400/RR2445/RAND_RR2445.pdf). Accessed December 17, 2020.

<sup>30</sup> Greece-Cyprus-Israel summit in Jerusalem, Hurriyet Daily News, March 21, 2020, Retrieved from: <https://www.hurriyetaidailynews.com/greece-greek-cyprus-israel-summit-in-jerusalem-142058>. Accessed December 17, 2020.

energy ministers of Greece, Israel, the Republic of Cyprus, Jordan, Palestine, Italy and Egypt met in the capital of Egypt on January 14, 2019. The purpose of the forum was explained as dialogue and cooperation for extraction and exploitation of natural gas resources in the Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>31</sup> Another reason for the establishment of the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum is argued that the increasing influence of Turkey in the Eastern Mediterranean and the concerns created by its initiatives in the region.<sup>32</sup> The Gas Forum Summit was last held on 26 July 2019 with the participation of energy ministers. From the point of view of Turkey, the fact that Greece and Southern Cyprus are in multilateral cooperation and Turkey does not have a mechanism against this structuring will affect Turkey politically and economically in the future. For this reason, Turkey must quickly make moves to break the alliance against it or seek alliance. Otherwise, Turkey's current gunboat diplomacy may not be as effective in the future as it is today. It is unacceptable for countries such as Palestine, Israel and Egypt to enter into a common alliance for the interests of countries that were enemies to each other in the past, and that this alliance excludes a country like Turkey, which has the largest coast on the Eastern Mediterranean. According to Cihat Yaycı, measures should be taken urgently against this alliance that Turkey is excluded from.<sup>33</sup> This recommendation of Yaycı will have been taken into account by the government that on November 27, 2019, the Agreement on Limitation of Marine Jurisdictions was signed between Turkey and Libya.<sup>34</sup>

### **Turkey-Libya Maritime Delimitation Agreement**

The concept of Exclusive Economic Zone lies at the basis of the struggle for sharing the seas in the Eastern Mediterranean. The concept, formerly known as the continental shelf, has now been replaced by the concept of EEZ. The concept of EEZ entered into international law in 1982 and it is the granting of economic rights to the coastal states over the seabed of the sea areas with a width of 200 nautical miles, the living and non-living resources of the underground and above waters.<sup>35</sup> However, due to geographical reasons in the Mediterranean

<sup>31</sup> Eastern Mediterranean countries to form regional gas market, Reuters , January 14, 2019, Retrieved from: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-egypt-energy-gas-idUSKCN1P81FG>. Accessed December 17, 2020.

<sup>32</sup> Ofir Winter & Gallia Lindenstrauss, Beyond Energy: The Significance of the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum, The Institute for National Security Studies, 2019, Retrieved from: <https://www.inss.org.il/publication/beyond-energy-significance-eastern-mediterranean-gas-forum/>. Accessed December 17, 2020.

<sup>33</sup> Cihat Yaycı, Doğu Akdeniz'de Yetki Alanlarının Paylaşılması Sorunu Ve Türkiye, Bilge Strateji, 2012, Retrieved from: <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/bs/issue/3804/51021>. Accessed December 17, 2020.

<sup>34</sup> T.C. Dışişleri Bakanlığı, Türkiye - Libya Siyasi İlişkileri, Retrieved from: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-libya-siyasi-iliskileri.tr.mfa>. Accessed December 17, 2020.

<sup>35</sup> Cihat Yaycı, Sorular ve Cevaplar ile Münhasır Ekonomik Bölge (MEB) Kavramı, İstanbul, 2019, p.9-10.

region, it is not possible for any state to claim a continental shelf of 200 nautical miles. This geographical reason is that the width of the Mediterranean region is less than 400 miles. For this reason, EEZ is considered instead of the continental shelf in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Republic of Southern Cyprus, realizing this situation in early years, declared its own EEZ in 2004. Southern Cyprus has unilaterally declared EEZ. To date, 7 states in the Mediterranean, Morocco, Tunisia, Syria, Southern Cyprus, Libya, Israel and Lebanon, have declared EEZ.<sup>36</sup> Although Turkey has declared many times that it has rights and interests, especially in the Eastern Mediterranean, it has not declared the EEZ border in the Eastern Mediterranean. Until 2019, it had not made a delimitation agreement with any country other than the TRNC. This situation has been tried to be used by Greece and Southern Cyprus for their own interests. Turkey must urgently declare an EEZ in order to prevent the Seville Map, which is tried to be imposed by Greece and the European Union. According to Cihat Yaycı, if the theses on the Seville Map are realized, Turkey will lose an area of 145,000 square kilometers, the size of 15 Cyprus Islands.<sup>37</sup> The loss of an area of this size will cause major disasters for Turkey in the future. Southern Cyprus signed exclusive economic zone delimitation agreements with Egypt, Lebanon and Israel, especially after the announcement of EEZ.<sup>38</sup> With these agreements, it has granted oil and natural gas exploration licenses in EEZ areas that it deems legitimate. Some of the licensed areas are within the borders of Blue Homeland. Turkey, on the other hand, uses force to distance ships that want to conduct research within these borders.

Turkey signed a memorandum of understanding on the limitation of maritime jurisdictions with Libya on 27 November 2019 against the Seville Map that was tried to be imposed.<sup>39</sup> The agreement between Libya and Turkey was actually brought to the agenda during the 2010 talks. The work done by the commanders in 2010 was shown to Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and these opinions were found appropriate. In 2010, discussions were made with Libyan President Muammar Gaddafi about the works and a

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<sup>36</sup> Kedikli & Çalağan, Enerji Alanında Bir Rekabet Sahası Olarak Doğu Akdeniz'in Önemi.

<sup>37</sup> Cihat Yaycı, Doğu Akdeniz'de Deniz Yetki Alanlarının Sınırlandırılmasında Libya'nın Rolü ve Etkisi, 2011, Retrieved from: <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/guvenlikstrji/issue/7529/99176>. Accessed December 18, 2020.

<sup>38</sup> Ömer Lütfi Taşcıoğlu, GKRY'nin Münhasır Ekonomik Bölge Anlaşmaları ve Petrol ve Doğal Gaz Arama Çalışmaları, 2018, Retrieved from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329776534\\_GKRY\\_NIN\\_MUNHASIR\\_EKONOMIK\\_BO\\_LGE\\_ANLASMALARI\\_VE\\_PETROL\\_VE\\_DOGAL\\_GAZ\\_ARAMA\\_CALISMALARI](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329776534_GKRY_NIN_MUNHASIR_EKONOMIK_BO_LGE_ANLASMALARI_VE_PETROL_VE_DOGAL_GAZ_ARAMA_CALISMALARI). Accessed December 18, 2020.

<sup>39</sup> Doğu Akdeniz: Türkiye-Libya anlaşması bölgede dengeleri nasıl etkiler?, BBC Türkçe, December 6, 2019, Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-dunya-50682215>. Accessed December 18, 2020.

mutual agreement was reached.<sup>40</sup> However, shortly after this meeting, the Arab Spring riots started and Muammar Gaddafi was killed. With the death of Gaddafi, Libya entered into a civil war. It should not be forgotten that Recep Tayyip Erdogan also decided positively to military intervention in Libya at the beginning of this civil war that continues today. With the treaty signed in 2019, Turkey signed an Exclusive Economic Zone restriction agreement with a state neighbor by sea for the first time. With this agreement, the western border of the maritime jurisdiction areas determined by the Blue Homeland doctrine was determined in accordance with international law and political superiority was obtained. In addition, it has been shown that Turkey, which has been practicing gunboat diplomacy for a long time, uses law and diplomacy tools, especially to the European Union. With the treaty signed with Libya, the threat of the Seville Map that was imposed on Turkey was prevented. In particular, Greece, Israel and Egypt reacted to the agreement and described it as contrary to international law.<sup>41</sup>

### **Things to do for the Blue Homeland**

The effect and accuracy of the treaty between Turkey and Libya is very clear. These treaties are the only way for Turkey to gain its rights in the Eastern Mediterranean through democratic means. With the agreements made and to be made, threats of sanctions in the future will be prevented. The plans tried to be implemented by Greece and Southern Cyprus can only be prevented by democratic methods. Turkey must first come to terms with its old ally, Israel. In the Nagorno-Karabakh War that started at the end of 2020, Israel and Turkey had become Azerbaijan's biggest supporters.<sup>42</sup> Relations between Turkey and Israel were progressing very well with reciprocal military and diplomatic agreements until the 2010 Mavi Marmara attack.<sup>43</sup> Turkey, which determines its western border with the Libya treaty, must determine its eastern borders with a treaty with Israel. In addition, it is necessary for Turkey to make EEZ agreements with Egypt and Lebanon for the success of the Blue Homeland doctrine.

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<sup>40</sup> Yaycı, Sorular ve Cevaplar ile Münhasır Ekonomik Bölge (MEB) Kavramı, p.66.

<sup>41</sup> Rahmi Gündüz, İsrail ve Yunanistan'dan Türkiye'nin Libya ile yaptığı anlaşmaya tepki, Euronews, December 5, 2019, Retrieved from: <https://tr.euronews.com/2019/12/05/israil-ve-yunanistan-dan-turkiye-nin-libya-ile-yaptigi-anlasma-ya-tepki>. Accessed December 18, 2020.

<sup>42</sup> Rafael Sadi, Türkiye ve İsrail, Azerbaycan'ın en büyük destekçisi, October 19, 2020, Retrieved from: <https://odatv4.com/turkiye-ve-israil-azerbaycanin-en-buyuk-destekcisi-19102042.html>. Accessed December 18, 2020.

<sup>43</sup> Stephen Kinzer, Quake Relief Shows Israel Feels Deeply For Turkey, August 28, 1999, Retrieved from: <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/08/28/world/quake-relief-shows-israel-feels-deeply-for-turkey.html>. Accessed December 18, 2020.

### Difficulties in the Emergence of the Blue Homeland Doctrine

Cem Gürdeniz, the name father of the doctrine, and Cihat Yaycı, who gave the doctrine its final shape, are people who have been conspired in the past. According to Cem Gürdeniz, taking important steps for the Blue Homeland was prevented by the so-called Sledgehammer Coup plan. Gürdeniz, who was arrested on February 11, 2011 on false evidence, was sentenced to 18 years in prison. As a result of the operations initiated by the Gülen Movement prosecutors, 15 admirals were arrested in 1 night.<sup>44</sup> Gürdeniz, one of the thousands of soldiers arrested on false evidence, spent 3.5 years in prison. During the days of his arrest, the Gülen Movement was not a threat to Turkey, especially according to the Justice and Development Party. This structure, which arrested thousands of soldiers with fake coup plans, was recognized as a terrorist organization by Turkey in May 2016.<sup>45</sup>

Cihat Yaycı resigned from the army not because of the Gülen Movement but because of the Justice and Development Party government. Shortly before Yaycı's resignation, Yaycı was sued for "allegedly bid-rigging".<sup>46</sup> However, the most important reason that led Yaycı to resign was his appointment to the General Staff with the Presidential Decree published in May.<sup>47</sup> It is also said that Cihat Yaycı did not agree with the Minister of National Defense Hulusi Akar and was therefore dismissed by Akar.

### Conclusion

It is clear that today the Eastern Mediterranean is of vital importance for Turkey. The Seville Map, which is a second Sevres Treaty map, should be blocked. It is necessary to struggle with the countries aiming to squeeze Turkey on the Antalya beaches with both army power and diplomacy. Turkey, which shaped the west of the Blue Homeland borders with the Libya treaty, urgently needs to agree with Israel and Egypt. The Justice and Development Party needs to take a pragmatic approach to the problem and abandon its opposition to Israel and Egypt. Diplomatic steps must be taken for the success of the Blue Homeland doctrine,

<sup>44</sup> Mavi Vatan nasıl doğdu? Doktrinin mimarları Cem Gürdeniz ve Cihat Yaycı anlatıyor, BBC Türkçe, Retrieved

from: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MizmZQZ1qiU&feature=youtu.be&ab\\_channel=BBCNewsT%C3%BCrk%C3%A7e](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MizmZQZ1qiU&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=BBCNewsT%C3%BCrk%C3%A7e). 06:20-07:05. Accessed December 25, 2020.

<sup>45</sup> Turkey officially designates Gulen religious group as terrorists, Reuters, May 31, 2016, Retrieved from: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-gulen/turkey-officially-designates-gulen-religious-group-as-terrorists-idUSKCN0YM167>. Accessed December 25, 2020.

<sup>46</sup> Tümamiral Cihat Yaycı kimdir, neden istifa etti?, BBC Türkçe, May 23, 2020, [https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-52704556#:~:text=Son%20olarak%20istifasından%20kıs a%20bir, karıştırma%20iddiasıyla"%20savcılığa%20sevk%20edildi.&text=Tümamiral%20Cihat%20Yay cı%27nın%20Genelkurmay.üc%20gün%20sonra%20istifa%20etti](https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-52704556#:~:text=Son%20olarak%20istifasından%20kıs a%20bir, karıştırma%20iddiasıyla). Accessed December 25, 2020.

<sup>47</sup> Tümamiral Cihat Yaycı istifa etti, Oda TV, May 18, 2020, Retrieved from: <https://odatv4.com/tumamiral-cihat-yayci-istifa-etti-18052047.html>. Accessed December 25, 2020.

which shapes Turkey's foreign policy, and for the correct use of energy resources in the Eastern Mediterranean. Instead of giving meaningless answers to the threats of sanctions rising by the European Union, agreements to be made should prevent sanctions. The maritime jurisdictions areas that are tried to be seized by Greece and Southern Cyprus must be protected in every circumstances. A country that fought the War of Independence 100 years ago and succeeded in establishing a modern Turkey must also risk fighting for its rights in the Eastern Mediterranean, if necessary. As Cihat Yaycı said, Turkey's future and energy resources are in the seas.<sup>48</sup> Blue Homeland is a doctrine above parties and ideologies. It is a doctrine that all political parties in Turkey must defend. Turkey should take the necessary steps without wasting any more time, while it is already quite late on this matter. The Blue Homeland is a real survival issue for Turkey. It must be protected under all circumstances.

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<sup>48</sup> Mavi Vatan nasıl doğdu? Doktrinin mimarları Cem Gürdeniz ve Cihat Yaycı anlatıyor, BBC Türkçe, Retrieved from: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MIZmZQZ1qiU&feature=youtu.be&ab\\_channel=BBCNewsT%C3%BCrk%C3%A7e](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MIZmZQZ1qiU&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=BBCNewsT%C3%BCrk%C3%A7e). 17:30-17:35. Accessed December 25, 2020.

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