The article is devoted to the problem of emerging new foreign-policy vision and security strategy in the Republic of Turkey. After analyzing Turkey’s recent dynamic and multidimensional foreign policy at local, regional and global levels its implications for the system of international relations are examined and some prognoses for the future development are made.

**Key words:** Turkey, foreign policy, strategic depth, multi-centrism, “zero-problem” policy.

Since 2002, when the Justice and Development Party (AKP, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi) won the parliamentary elections in Turkey with the landslide victory, the rhetoric and practice of Turkish foreign policy-makers have changed to a considerable extent. Dramatic shifts within the political and security elites as well as deep transformations inside the traditional society have caused for the emergence of a completely new style of Turkey’s behavior on the international arena. The person who stands in the background of these changes is a figure well-known both in political and academic circles — professor in international relations Ahmet Davutoglu who has served as a chief foreign-policy advisor to the Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan since his first days in office.

With the official appointment of A. Davutoglu to the position of a Foreign Minister on May 1, 2009 Turkey’s new dynamic and multidimensional foreign policy line becomes visible, most notably in country’s numerous efforts to play more active role in regional politics. Given the geographical proximity of Ukraine and its close bilateral relations with Turkey, these recent developments gain great topicality. Obviously, a new orientation of Turkey’s foreign policy needs to be carefully examined while old approaches explaining Turkish security strategies should be critically reconsidered.

The specific character of the problem as well as its novelty led to the lack of thorough researches and academic works providing profound analysis on this question. However, a very limited amount of Ukrainian and Russian publications is compensated by the scholarly papers and monographs of foreign authors. It seems reasonable to divide an ample number of pieces that have recently been written on this topic into two groups according to the national schools putting together researchers from Turkey on the one side and the non-Turkish (mostly European and American) academicians on the other. The
main tendency that can be traced in the Turkish sources (B. Aras, C. Candar, M. Yekin, F. Bila, S. Kardas) is their strong emphasis on the current situation and recent highlights in the government’s policy whereas the authors from the other countries (W. Hale, J. Daly, A. Murinson) generally start with providing a summary of past events and then go on to examine today’s major developments within a context of a historical background.

The present article is based mostly on the analysis of the theoretical framework of the Turkish foreign policy and, consequently, often refers to the academic writings by professor Ahmet Davutoğlu, who is widely known as the main intellectual architect of the ruling AKP’s foreign-policy vision and, therefore, a person in charge of promoting a new foreign-policy strategy for Turkey. A lot of ideas primarily expressed in his seminal book “Strategic Depth” (2001) [1] were elaborated in the later publications [2, 3].

The task of this article is to give a general overview of the revolutionary changes in the Turkish perception of the external world that have happened recently and to examine its multi-vectored and multi-dimensional foreign policy at the local, regional and global levels.

On May, 4 during a ceremony marking his appointment to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Davutoğlu said that Turkish foreign policy has changed “away from crisis-oriented to being based instead on “vision” allowing Turkish policy-makers to identify potential crises before they erupt and devise appropriate policies to tackle them” [4]. This statement symbolizes not simply differences in foreign policy practice associated with a new personality in office but, what is more important, points out at the new style of thinking of political elites. The latter stems from a sea change in the culture of national security and geopolitics in Turkey meaning the widening of geographical horizons and the diversification of the instruments of Turkish influence.

Davutoğlu’s foreign policy vision has Turkey’s domestic transformation in the background that makes considering the internal dimension crucial for understanding Turkey’s new activism in the international relations. According to Turkish policy-makers, the political development, economic capabilities, dynamic social forces and ability to reconcile Islam and democracy at home are the qualities that offer Turkey the possibility to develop and implement active and influential policies in both neighboring regions and distant geographies. Davutoğlu made it clear in his numerous works that Turkey’s most important soft power tool is its democracy that will improve country’s attractiveness in the region and let Turkey emerge as a new center of power. Mentioning five principles of Turkey’s new foreign policy, he starts with “a balance between security and democracy in a country” that is “promoting civil liberties without undermining security” as a necessary precondition for establishing an area of influence in its environs [2, P. 79]. Thus, more secure domestic atmosphere results in a more confident foreign policy line and enables Turkey to seek a leadership role in world politics.

Prior to Davutoğlu’s rise to prominence, security in Turkey had been treated, to a considerable extent, as an internal problem. Political elites tended to exaggerate and manipulate perceived external threats to preserve their hold
on power [5, P. 128]. The conventional view that had existed for many years was based on psychological feelings of distrust, antagonism and confrontation and regarded Turkey as being surrounded by enemy countries against which it should be prepared to defend itself. This “siege mentality” was frequently used to construct and justify authoritarian elements in home politics. Radical departure from this principle has redefined Turkey’s relations with its neighbours.

Implementing “zero-problem” policy instead of “zero-sum game” strategy at the local level is aimed at benefiting of all parties involved in problem-solving and turns the “democratic peace” at home into a vision for peace in the neighborhood. The most striking examples of Turkey’s success in its bilateral relations with the neighbouring countries are its improving relations with Syria, culminating in signing of a free trade agreement in 2007; intense cooperation with Georgia, especially within the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway and Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline projects; success in tackling Iraq-related risks thanks to the coordination of major military activities against PKK with other regional actors; stable relations with Iran providing international community with a channel for discussion over the nuclear issues and ensuring dialogue among different parties inside the country.

Turkish proactive diplomacy got its further development in 2008 when Davutoglu introduced a new concept saying that Turkey is now moving from a “zero-problem” policy with its neighbors to a stage of “maximum cooperation”. In this regard, he mentioned Turkey’s continued efforts to normalize relations with Armenia which, together with the Greek Cypriots, was one of the two missing dimensions of the zero-problem policy. As a result, the Road Map to normalization of bilateral Armenian-Turkish relations was announced in April 2009 and on the eve of April 24, the Armenian Day, Turkish politicians even talked about opening the border without preconditions. At the moment, the Armenian-Turkish rapprochement is suffering a slowdown because of Azerbaijan’s resentment against this possible warming. However, Turkey tries to mitigate its negative reaction by tying this process to the resolution of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in a way that would please Azerbaijan. If things move ahead as planned, the opening of the borders between Turkey and Armenia can be expected in the nearest future, proving the efficiency of Davutoglu’s new foreign-policy approach.

Letting the bygones be bygones, Turkish policy-makers try to liberate recent relations from the burden of the past conflicts and negative images existing in the public opinion. In order to put an end to the “alienation” of Turkey’s neighboring countries [1, P. 53] Davutoglu resorts to the “soft power” instruments unfolding cultural and civilizational affinities, reminding about common historical roots and creating economic interdependencies with the bordering states.

Obviously, Turkey’s cultural and economic space goes far beyond its political boundaries. This enables it to reach out to people in the region and develop contacts at the inter-societal level thus creating social bonds and extending its influence over the vast geography while respecting national sovereignty.
and state borders. As one Turkish researcher put it, “Turkey’s post-modernity seems to be embedded in its Ottoman past” [5, P. 131].

This makes the regional dimension of the Turkish foreign policy to be much about though not restricted to the so called “neo-Ottomanism” conception based on the principle that “no political problem in the region can be resolved without utilizing Ottoman archives” [Ibid], meaning that modern Turkish Republic gains advantage to get deeply involved in the regional politics and has undeniable right to play active role in the Middle East where Ottoman Turks had once ruled. In full correspondence with this vision, Davutoglu has recently been the architect of dialogue with all the political actors in the Middle East, including the most controversial ones, such as Hamas’s leader Khaled al-Mashal while maintaining regular contacts with Fateh, the Palestinian Authority and President Abbas. He was instrumental in Turkey’s mediation between Syria and Israel; devised the strategy of opening dialogue with all groups within Iraq, including the Kurds with whom Ankara had troubled ties; and pursued successful shuttle diplomacy between Damascus and Cairo during the recent Gazan crisis.

Being a “central country with multiple regional identities” Turkey enjoys a unique capability of maneuvering in several regions simultaneously. In Davutoglu’s view, in terms of its area of influence, Turkey is a Middle Eastern, Balkan, Caucasian, Central Asian, Caspian, Mediterranean, Gulf and Black Sea country [2, P. 78-79]. This specific “central country” status creates all necessary premises for Turkey to take on a more active, constructive role as a peace-promoter, mediator and facilitator in the Middle Eastern peace process as well as in the settlement of the “frozen conflicts” in the Caucasus by initiating confidence-building projects.

At the global level the same adherence to the Ataturk’s major foreign policy principle “Peace at home, peace in the world” ("Yurtta sulh, cihanda sulh") is observed, this time redefined in the imperative of providing order, stability and security not only for itself but also for the environs. Davutoglu argues that thanks to its geographical position Turkey possesses a “strategic depth” which it has hitherto failed to exploit. He suggests that rather than acting as a mere “bridge” between the West and the Muslim world, a conventional view of all previous foreign policy-makers, it should break away from a “static and single-parameter policy” and become a “problem solver” by contributing to global peace [3; 6].

Stressing that Turkey needs to play a more effective role as an “order-instituting country” in its regional environment, the AKP government denies accusations that this new policy vision is a departure from Turkey’s Western orientation and emphasizes that the European Union and NATO are the most important pillars of the policy of setting balance between security and freedom. Nonetheless, the recent parliamentary discussions highlighted the underlying divisions between the AKP and the opposition parties, over their positions on how to harmonize Turkey’s regional policies with those of other global actors. The opposition maintains a deep-rooted skepticism toward the agendas of international actors in the Middle East. In contrast, the AKP con-
siders Turkey’s cooperation with the international institutions and Western nations as supplemental to its own regional policies [7].

Elaborating an “integrated foreign policy approach”, Davutoglu aims to build relations with other global actors on a complementary, not competitive basis. The successful implementation of this strategy will signify Turkey’s transformation from a central country to a global power. However, the national interests of the actors involved do not always coincide and this discrepancy may cause for the situation when Turkey will fail to conduct its own consistent foreign-policy line and maintain independent role in world politics. In other words, if a multi-centered policy cannot be anchored to anywhere, that is to say if it is not equipped with basic principles, it will eventually transform into a policy that cannot reach any conclusion anywhere and that can try to please everyone [8].

To sum up, Turkey’s new foreign-policy strategy can be characterized as a new activism which is most notably witnessed in country’s numerous efforts to settle long-term problems with the neighbouring states, undertake further responsibilities in the regional issues, deepen its involvement in the world politics and play more active role in the international organizations.

Since 2002 the foreign policy vision promoted by the ruling AKP and the incumbent Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu has proved to be multi-dimensional (in terms of geography, Turkey is involved in the international relations locally, at the level of bilateral relations with neighbouring countries; regionally and globally); multi-faceted (in terms of instruments used, soft power and military power leverages are employed in coherence); multi-vectored (in terms of partners on the international arena, there is an integrated approach combining long-term relations with the West and deepening connections with the East; commitments to the EU membership and diplomatic engagement in the OIC; strategic partnership with the U. S. and close cooperation with Russia); multi-level (in terms of actors involved in the decision-making process, total performance of foreign policy is maintained at the level of international organizations, states, civil societies, ethnic groups etc.)

After seven years the new foreign-policy strategy of Turkey seems to be quite a success, although Davutoglu’s approach continues to raise some criticism both inside the country and abroad. At the moment Turkey has proved to be a regional player with a global reach. Whereas the return to geopolitical imperatives of the Ottoman Empire is absolutely impossible in the modern world, the ambitious goal of restoring Turkey’s sphere of influence within the former Ottoman territories and beyond is still on the national agenda as the country approaches year 2023, marking the one hundredth anniversary of the establishment of Turkish Republic.

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НОВАЯ ВНЕШНЕПОЛИТИЧЕСКАЯ СТРАТЕГИЯ ТУРЦИИ:
ЛОКАЛЬНОЕ, РЕГИОНАЛЬНОЕ И ГЛОБАЛЬНОЕ ИЗМЕРЕНИЯ

Резюме
Статья посвящена проблеме возникновения нового внешнеполитического вида-ния и стратегии безопасности в Турецкой Республике. Проанализировав современную динамичную и многовекторную внешнюю политику Турции на локальном, региональном и глобальном уровнях, автор исследует её импликации для системы международных отношений, а также делает некоторые прогнозы относительно её будущего развития.

Ключевые слова: Турция, внешняя политика, стратегическая глубина, мульти-центризм, политика “нульевых проблем”.

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НОВА ЗОВНІШНЬОПОЛІТИЧНА СТРАТЕГІЯ ТУРЕЧЧИНІ:
ЛОКАЛЬНИЙ, РЕГІОНАЛЬНИЙ ТА ГЛОБАЛЬНИЙ ВИМІРИ

Резюме
Стаття присвячена проблемі виникнення нового зовнішньополітичного бачення та стратегії безпеки в Турецькій Республіці. Проаналізувавши сучасну динамічну і багатовекторну зовнішню політику Туреччини на локальному, регіональному та глобальному рівнях, автор досліджує її імпликації для системи міжнародних відно-син, а також робить деякі прогнози щодо її подальшого розвитку.

Ключові слова: Туреччина, зовнішня політика, стратегічна глибина, мульти-центризм, політика “нульових проблем”.

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