FORTRESS EUROPE PROPELS TURKEY TOWARDS EURASIA

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Following strenuous negotiations, the European Union has finally approved its seven-year budget covering years 2014-2020. As no item exists in the budget concerning Turkeys possible membership, it has become official for Turkey that the European Union will continue as a fortress closed to the outside world for the next seven years, the Schengen barbed wire erected, with all its ugliness, along the River Maritsa will continue to delineate the borders of fortress Europe and the European Union will not be unifying and inclusive for the continent of Europe, but will be discriminatory and exclusionary.

For Turkey, whose place as a Balkan and European country cannot be debated in terms of its historical, geographical, social and cultural ties, the European Unions approach with emotional and subjective undertones and possibly with religious zealotry is upsetting. Worse still, it not only creates disappointment but also reveals how the concept of European values, attributed with moral high ground can be manipulated and is open to misuse in an arbitrary manner. Turkey is also a Eurasian country at the nexus of Europe and Asia. The EUs approach cannot change this fact. On the other hand, in line with the shifting of global economic and political gravity towards Asia, it inevitably spurs for additional acceleration to Turkeys opening to Asia.

It would be narrow-minded and misleading to base Turkeys opening to Eurasia as a reaction towards the EU. Turkeys using its full potential of its location in Eurasia could also enable her to open new horizons not only for the EU, but also for further cooperation with the global power ally, the US. In the Pacific, which can be defined as the Far East, Turkeys option to establish cooperation with the developing economies there, to start with China, this opening could commence with galvanizing and mobilizing the capacity of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), formed by ten countries in near east Asia, in other words, in central and western Asia. With this initiative, Iran could be engaged into cooperation from isolation, Afghanistan and Pakistan become economically active in the region, Central Asia and the Caucasus join the global economy. ECO, currently chaired by Azerbaijan is an established organization possessing the infrastructure and experience necessary in overcoming the short term difficulties that could arise from the political conjuncture and could be assisted by Turkey, a founding member, through its creative initiatives.

At this newly emerging era, the European Union and its Western allies support to Turkey, also taking into consideration Turkeys global responsibilities assumed with its G-20

membership, would no doubt contribute to the reestablishing of the new global balances devoid of conflict.

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