



# TURKISH AMERICAN RELATIONS

1923 - 2023



G. Lincoln McCurdy

Commemorating the Centennial  
of the Republic of Türkiye

OCTOBER 29, 1923 – OCTOBER 29, 2023



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*\* To be posted in April 2024.*

## Introduction

As we celebrate the centennial of the Turkish Republic this year, I realized that many Turkish Americans are unaware of the dynamic relationship between Türkiye and the United States and the rich interaction between the Turkish and American people. To commemorate the 100th anniversary, I researched the bilateral relationship over the last one hundred years and summarized my findings in “A Historical Chronicle of Turkish American Relations.” This document can be a resource for Turkish Americans, Turkish nationals, and others to become acquainted with the history between Türkiye and the United States.

I also believe the Chronicle could inspire young Turkish Americans to appreciate their heritage and actively participate in the political arena to ensure a balanced dialogue about historical events and American foreign policy. Furthermore, their active participation would hopefully enhance the critical relationship between the two countries and contribute towards bringing peaceful solutions that the world is facing.

In the Chronicle, I present a list of significant events, leaders and ambassadors of both countries, bilateral state and private visits, highlights of influential people, community-focused stories, the historical background of diplomatic buildings in Washington, Ankara, İstanbul, and New York, and the establishment of key organizations (both non-governmental and private) that impacted the bilateral relationship during these 100 years from October 29, 1923, to October 29, 2023.

G. Lincoln McCurdy  
October 29, 2023

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One final note. I recommend reading the following two books for those interested in learning more about the Turkish American relationship. (1) *The Diary of Ambassador Joseph Grew and the Groundwork for the US-Turkey Relationship, 2022*, by Barış Ornarlı. (2) *Turkey & America / East & West – Where the Twain Meet, 2019*, by Henry P. Williams III.



## Chapter 1 | Historical Overview (1923-2023)

### 1920s

- 1923      The Republic of Türkiye officially declared by the Grand National Assembly and Mustafa Kemal Pasha elected as the Republic's first president on October 29.
- Türkiye and the U.S. signed "The Ankara Agreement" on December 24, resulting in payment to the United States of a lump sum of \$1.3 million in full settlement of claims of American citizens based on acts occurring during World War I.
- 1924      The Grand National Assembly abolished the Caliphate March 3. (Abdülmecit II was the last Caliph of the Ottoman Empire and the only caliph of the Republic of Türkiye.)
- The Grand National Assembly adopted a new constitution to replace the 1921 Constitution on April 20. The 1924 Constitution remained in force until 1961.
- 1927      U.S. Senate voted on the General Treaty Between the United States and Türkiye, known as the Turkish American Treaty of Lausanne or the other Lausanne Treaty, on January 18. The treaty had been signed on August 6, 1923, in addition to an extradition treaty. Anti-Turkish sentiment, mainly of missionary interests and Armenians, opposed ratification. Senator William H. King (D) of Utah led floor opposition to the treaty, aided by lobbyists of the American Committee Opposed to the Lausanne Treaty. This group evolved from the American Committee for the Independence of Armenia (ACIA), which later became the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA). Fifty senators voted in favor of the treaty, six short of the two-thirds of the Senate necessary for ratification. Source: *The Diary of Ambassador Joseph Grew and the Groundwork for the US-Turkey Relationship*.
- The U.S. and Türkiye established diplomatic relations on February 17.
- The first U.S. Ambassador to Türkiye, Joseph C. Grew, en route to İstanbul from New York, and the first ambassador from the Republic of Türkiye to the United States, Ahmet Muhtar Mollaoğlu, upon his arrival in the U.S., received Armenian assassination threats in protest. Source: *The Diary of Ambassador Joseph Grew and the Groundwork for the US-Turkey Relationship*.
- 1929      A new Treaty of Commerce and Navigation Between the United States and the Turkish Republic was signed in Ankara on October 1. This treaty was virtually identical to the General Treaty Between the United States and Turkey that was rejected by the U.S. Senate in 1927.

## 1930s

- 1930 U.S. Senate ratified the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation Between the United States of America and the Turkish Republic on April 22.
- 1933 Intense lobbying efforts by Turkish Ambassador Munir Ertegun at the U.S. Department of State and in Hollywood stopped Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's film production of The Forty Days of Musa Dagh. The movie, based on the novel of the same title, intended to depict a small community of Armenians in Hatay (Antakya) resisting deportation by Ottoman troops during World War I.
- 1936 An international agreement regulating maritime traffic through the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus—the Montreux Convention—was signed on July 20 and went into effect on November 9. The United States was not a party to the Convention.
- 1938 Atatürk passed away in Dolmabahçe Palace on November 10, 9:05 am.
- 1939 Hatay (Antakya) previously under the rule of France since the end of World War I was annexed by Türkiye as a result of a plebiscite.
- Nazi Germany invaded Poland on September 1, starting the European Theatre of World War II. Türkiye remained neutral.

## 1940s

- 1941 Türkiye and Nazi Germany signed the German-Turkish Treaty of Friendship, a non-aggression pact, on June 18.
- Japan attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7.
- The United States declared war on Japan on December 8.
- Nazi Germany declared war on the United States on December 11.
- Bulgaria declared war on the United States on December 13, causing Türkiye to share a border with a U.S. opponent.
- 1943 Turkish President İsmet İnönü met President Franklin D. Roosevelt of the United States and Prime Minister Winston Churchill of the United Kingdom at the Second Cairo Conference, December 4-6. Discussion was on reevaluating Türkiye's neutrality and the possibility of Türkiye joining the Allies in the war. The meeting also decided to build an air base for the Allies near Adana. Construction, however, did not begin until after the war.

- 1944 Türkiye severed diplomatic and commercial relations with Nazi Germany on August 2.
- Ambassador Munir Ertegun, the dean of the diplomatic community in Washington, died from a heart attack on November 11. His body was carried back to Türkiye on the USS Missouri in April 1946.
- 1945 Türkiye declared war on Nazi Germany and the Empire of Japan on February 23.
- World War II ended in Europe with Nazi Germany surrendering on May 8.
- World War II ended in the Pacific with the Empire of Japan surrendering on September 2.
- The United Nations (UN) officially came into existence on October 24. The U.S. and Türkiye were among the 51 original members.
- 1946 In response to Soviet demands on Türkiye for shared administration on the straits, the United States countered Soviet pressure by sending ships to Turkish waters. Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) *Turkey (Türkiye)-U.S. Relations: Timeline and Brief Historical Context* prepared by Jim Zanotti and Clayton Thomas.
- Congress created the Fulbright Program in August to promote peace and understanding in the world through an international educational exchange between the United States and other countries, including Türkiye. Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas had proposed this program in a bill in 1945.
- The body of Turkish Ambassador Munir Ertegun who passed away in November 1944 in Washington, DC, was carried back to Türkiye on the USS Missouri in April. The quarterdeck of the USS Missouri had been the site of the surrender of the Empire of Japan on September 2.
- 1947 President Harry S. Truman announced to Congress on March 12 his Administration's foreign policy of American "support for democracies against authoritarian threats." This became known as the Truman Doctrine and marked the accepted beginning of the Cold War between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the United States. Congress designated Türkiye and Greece as special aid recipients against Soviet threats under the Truman Doctrine.
- The United States and Türkiye signed the Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement under the Truman Doctrine on July 12 offering support to democratic nations against the Soviet threat. Türkiye received \$100 million of economic and military aid from the United States, which not only helped to strengthen the Turkish military but also contributed to the infrastructure development in Türkiye.

The American Military Mission for Aid to Türkiye (AMMAT) was established in Ankara in August. AMMAT became the Joint American Military Mission for Aid to Turkey (JAMMAT) in 1949. JAMMAT became the largest of the U.S. European Commands by 1951 and the world's largest military assistance and advisory group. JAMMAT was redesignated the Joint U.S. Military Mission for Aid to Turkey (JUSMMAT) in 1958.

1948            The United States was the first nation to recognize Israel on May 14.

1949            Turkey was the first Muslim majority country to recognize Israel in March 1949.

## 1950s

1950            North Korea crosses the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel into South Korea on June 25, start of the Korean War.

Türkiye declared its intent to send a brigade to fight under UN Command in Korea on July 25.

Arrival of the first troops of the Turkish brigade in the Korean War on October 19. The brigade was attached to the U.S. 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division throughout the war. Türkiye sent 15,000 troops to South Korea.

After its arrival the first Turkish brigade saved the U.S. 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division from total annihilation at the Battle of Wawon (Kunu-ri) and received a Presidential Unit Citation from President Harry Truman for its heroic efforts. General Douglas MacArthur, the Commander of the UN Coalition Forces, said, "the Turks are the hero of heroes. There is no impossibility for the Turkish Brigade." In its bulletin entitled *Turkey: Forgotten Ally in a Forgotten War*, marking the 59<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the war's armistice on July 27, 2012, the Turkish Coalition of America (TCA) highlighted "The Turkish intervention in Korea was unique in its timeliness and urgency. . .The camaraderie on the battlefield led to deep relations between American and Turkish soldiers. . ."

1951            Construction of an air base outside of Adana began by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; the base became operational in 1955. (The decision to build the air base was made during World War II at the Second Cairo Conference in December 1943.) The Turkish General Staff and the U.S. Air Force signed an agreement in 1954 for shared use of the base. The air base was officially named Adana Air Base on February 21, 1955 but renamed Incirlik Air Base on February 28, 1958. Incirlik was a base for CIA-operated U-2 flights in the 1950s; today it remains a strategic facility for U.S. military operations, housing tactical nuclear weapons. For more information: Wikipedia: Incirlik Air Base.

The first exchange of American and Turkish scholars and graduate students began under the Fulbright Program.



## A Chronicle of Turkish American Relations: 1923 – 2023

### Chapter 1 | Historical Overview (1923-2023)

- 1952 Türkiye joined NATO on February 18. As a result, The U.S. military began stationing personnel in the Izmir region later that year.
- 1953 Armistice signed on July 27, ending the Korean War.
- 1954 Turkish President Bayar addressed the U.S. Congress on January 29.
- Türkiye signed the Military Facilities Agreement with the United States on June 23, allowing a large-scale presence of U.S. troops in Türkiye.
- 1955 The Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), also known as the Baghdad Pact, was established by Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey, and the United Kingdom with support from the United States on February 24. CENTO was a Cold War military alliance against the Soviet Union based on the NATO model. However, the alliance proved to be ineffective. The headquarters for CENTO was initially located in Baghdad but was later moved to Ankara after Iraq left the alliance in 1958. CENTO was dissolved on March 16, 1979, after the Iranian Revolution.
- State-sponsored pogrom primarily against the Greek population in İstanbul, also known as the Turkish Kristallnacht, September 6-7. Mob attacks targeted private property and Greek Orthodox churches and cemeteries. Dozens were killed and over 1,000 people injured.

## 1960s

- 1960 The Turkish military overthrew the government of Prime Minister Adnan Menderes on May 27.
- Cyprus became independent from British rule on August 16 with the signing of the Treaty of Guarantee by the United Kingdom, Greece, and Türkiye.
- 1961 A constitutional referendum was held in Turkey on July 9 to replace the 1924 Constitution. The new Constitution was approved by nearly 62% of voters.
- Former Prime Minister Adnan Menderes was sentenced to death by a military court and was executed by hanging on September 17 U.S. President John F. Kennedy sent a plea to spare his life.
- 1962 The launching of President John F. Kennedy's Peace Corps program in Türkiye. The program was dissolved in 1971 due to growing anti-Americanism in Türkiye and the underutilization of volunteers. Some 1,457 Americans served as Peace Corps volunteers in Türkiye.

- 1962 In October, the United States and the Soviet Union were on the brink of war due to the deployment of Soviet missiles in Cuba. The two countries resolved the crisis in the end with an arrangement including U.S. removal of obsolete nuclear-armed Jupiter missiles in Türkiye.
- 1963 President John F. Kennedy was assassinated on November 22 in Dallas, Texas.
- Prime Minister İsmet İnönü attended the funeral of President John F. Kennedy, following his assassination on November 22.
- Intercommunal violence beginning on December 21 between Greek and Turkish populations in Cyprus intensified into an armed conflict known by Turkish Cypriots as “Bloody Christmas.”
- 1964 Intercommunal violence between Greek and Turkish Cypriots continued through the first months of the year. Türkiye threatened to intervene to protect Turkish Cypriots.
- 1964 President Lyndon B. Johnson sent a strongly worded letter on June 5 to Turkish Prime Minister İsmet İnönü opposing intervention in Cyprus. As a result, anti-Americanism increased in Türkiye.
- Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution on August 7 after a naval confrontation between the United States and North Vietnam a few days earlier. The joint resolution authorized President Johnson to take any measures to maintain international peace and security in Southeast Asia. It provided the legal basis for the United States to intervene militarily in the Vietnam War without Congress’s formal declaration of war. This resolution allowing the president to commit combat troops in Vietnam resulted in many anti-war protests in the United States and worldwide.
- 1965 First U.S. ground troops arrived in Da Nang, South Vietnam on March 8.
- 1967 A student anti-imperialism demonstration held at İstanbul University on June 24, protested the visit of four ships of the U.S. Navy’s Sixth Fleet to İstanbul.
- 1968 Prominent civil rights leader and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s assassination on April 4 prompted racial violence nationwide. Riots in over 100 American cities resulted in more than 40 deaths and extensive property damage.
- Thousands of demonstrators, mainly students from İstanbul Technical University (ITU), were at the Bosphorus on July 17, protesting the landing of the U.S. Navy’s Sixth Fleet. Protestors carried signs reading “Guardian of American Imperialism: Six Fleet, Get Lost!” The protestors threw a few of the American officers disembarking into the water.
- Source: <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/news/3829-trapped-in-between-1968-in-greece-and-turkey>

- 1969 U.S. troop presence in South Vietnam peaked at over 540,000.
- American Ambassador Robert Komer's car burned on the Middle East Technical University campus by leftist students on January 6.
- 1969 In February, thousands of left-wing students and labor unions gathered in İstanbul's Beyazıt District to protest the U.S. Navy's Sixth Fleet week-long visit to İstanbul, which started on February 10. The protestors marched to Taksim Square, met by right-wing students who marched from the Dolmabahçe Mosque. Up to 30,000 people were involved in the leftist protest and the rightist counter-protest, including pro-American elements. The violence occurred, resulting in the deaths of two with scores injured. The demonstrations on February 17 became known as "Bloody Sunday." Other anti-American protests occurred in İzmir, Adana, and Gaziantep during the visit of the U.S. Sixth Fleet.
- A few days before "Bloody Sunday," 300 female students marched with signs saying, "Turkey is not a brothel for Sixth Fleet."
- Source: <http://maviboncuk.blogspot.com/2013/03/1969-us-6th-fleet-incidents.html>
- Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel attended the state funeral for President Dwight D. Eisenhower on March 31.

## 1970s

- 1971 The Turkish government closed the Greek Orthodox Halki seminary on the island of Heybeliada, the second-largest of the Princes' Islands in the Sea of Marmara. The seminary founded in 1844 was the primary theological school of the Eastern Orthodox Church's Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople (İstanbul) for the training of priests. There has been a continuous campaign since the closing to have the school reopened, including the U.S. government's support for its reopening. The Turkish government maintained that it would have reopened the seminary if the Patriarchate had consented to administering the school under the Turkish government rather than being independent. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has also proposed an exchange between Greece and Turkey to resolve the issue. The Greeks would reopen the 17th century Fethiye Camii to a mosque to serve the current Muslim population in Athens, and Türkiye would reopen the Halki seminary. The status of the Halki seminary remains a contentious issue between Türkiye and Greece and for the Greek American community.
- Turkish Military Memorandum (Second Military Coup) on March 12 forced Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel to resign. The military intervention took place during the period of increased street violence among political factions.

Unfortunately, the military takeover did not resolve the street violence, and it continued to increase in the 1970s after civilian rule was restored.

In his “War on Drugs,” President Richard M. Nixon announced on June 30 that the Prime Minister of Türkiye Nihat Erim had agreed to eliminate the production of opium poppies by June, 1972. Officials of the Nixon Administration involved in the “War on Drugs” severely criticized Türkiye for its poppy production while overlooking drug smuggling in other countries. Members of Congress also introduced numerous resolutions in the 1970s to penalize Türkiye.

1973      The United States and North Vietnam signed the Paris Peace Accords on January 27, an agreement to end the war and restore peace in Vietnam. The United States withdrew the last American combat troops from South Vietnam on March 29.

1974      The Turkish government decreed the resumption of poppy cultivation on July 1 despite U.S. opposition.

Archbishop Makarios, the president of the Republic of Cyprus, is overthrown on July 15 by the Cypriot National Guard led by Greek officers and instigated by the junta in Athens. Nikos Sampson, an ultra-nationalist, an anti-Turkish fanatic, and pro-Enosis (union between Cyprus and Greece), was installed as the president of the new government. Joseph Sisco, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, was sent to the region by U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to attempt mediation. Türkiye’s Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit sought the United Kingdom’s intervention in Cyprus being one of the three nations signing the Treaty of Guarantee for the independence of Cyprus. The UK, however, did not take action.

Türkiye launched Peace Operation in Cyprus on July 20 to protect Turkish minority and occupied 3% of the island.

The Greek military junta collapsed on July 23 mainly because of Cyprus and civilian rule was restored in Greece. Shortly after the change of rule in Greece, Nikos Sampson renounced the presidency in Cyprus.

Peace talks regarding Cyprus were held in Geneva, Switzerland from July 25 to 30 among the three guarantor powers—United Kingdom, Greece, and Türkiye.

Richard M. Nixon’s resignation as president of the United States on August 9 influenced the U.S.’s response to the Cyprus crisis.

Türkiye launched its Second Peace Operation in Cyprus from August 14 to 16 and increased its occupation to 36.2% of the island.

American Ambassador Rodger Paul Davies to Cyprus was killed on August 19 by Greek Cypriot gunmen in Nicosia during an anti-American demonstration outside the U.S. Embassy in protest of the U.S. failure to stop the Turkish intervention.

1975 A U.S. arms embargo on Türkiye passed by the U.S. Congress in late 1974 went into effect on February 5 despite President Gerald Ford's opposition. Congress accused Türkiye of violating conditions of the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act which bars U.S. arms sales that are used in offensive acts and in violation of international law. Thus, Congress imposed the embargo because of Türkiye's use of U.S. weapons on Cyprus in the summer of 1974. Congressman Stephen John Brademas, Jr. (D-IN), the first Greek American elected to Congress, and the Greek American lobby had waged an aggressive lobbying to ensure the embargo's passage.

Türkiye declared on February 13 the areas in the northern part of the Republic of Cyprus that it controls as the "Federated Turkish State." The international community including the United States condemned Türkiye's action.

The Turkish government in July closed all U.S. military bases in Türkiye in retaliation to the congressional arms embargo on Turkey. The suspension of U.S. military activities in Türkiye did not affect the NATO command at the Incirlik and Izmir Air Bases.

1978 The revolution group Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) founded by Abdullah Öcalan with the objective to establish a Kurdish state in southeastern Türkiye.

The U.S. Senate on July 25, responding to President Jimmy Carter's appeals, voted 57 to 42 to repeal the arms embargo imposed on Türkiye for using U.S. weapons on Cyprus. Seven days later, the U.S. House of Representatives, under intense White House lobbying, also voted 208 to 205 to lift the arms embargo, effectively repealing the arms embargo imposed on Türkiye.

## 1980s

1980 The United States and Turkey signed on March 29 the Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement (DECA) to foster military, economic, and social development between the two countries. On defense matters, DECA addressed the U.S. use of military facilities in Türkiye and proposed military construction in addition to Turkish military needs.

The Turkish military on September 12 overthrew the government of Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel. Türkiye was on the verge of civil war averaging between 20 and 30 deaths per day from domestic terrorism by leftist and rightist groups and Kurdish separatists.

1981 President Ronald Reagan used the term "genocide" on April 22 in a statement about the Holocaust, "Like the genocide of the Armenians before it. . . the lessons of the Holocaust

must never be forgotten.” President Reagan, however, did not use the term “genocide” in his statements about Armenian Remembrance Day on April 24 during his two terms of office.

1982 JACG (Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide) members Hampig Sassounian and Krikor Saliba assassinated Turkish Consul General Kemal Arıkan in Los Angeles, California on January 28.

Armenian extremists assassinated Turkish Honorary Consul Orhan Gündüz on May 4 in Cambridge Massachusetts.

A constitutional referendum was held in Turkey on November 7 to replace the 1961 Constitution. It was approved by 91% of the voters.

1983 The Turkish Cypriot people declared their independence on November 15 from the Republic of Cyprus and established the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Türkiye was and continues to be the only country recognizing the TRNC. The declaration of independence by the Turkish Cypriots was condemned by the United Nations.

1984 Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI) was established to start producing American fighter aircraft locally under license for the Turkish Air Force.

The PKK launched an insurgency on August 15 to establish Kurdistan in southeastern Türkiye.

1987 The first American F-16Cs built in Türkiye were flown on October 20.

## 1990s

1990 Iraqi President Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait on August 2.

1991 The United States and Allied Forces conducted Operation Desert Storm and liberated Kuwait from Iraq, January 17 – February 28, known as Gulf War I. Türkiye permitted the U.S. and coalition forces the use of its airspace and bases during the war and postwar patrolling of northern Iraq.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) dissolved itself on December 26, thereby ending the Cold War between the USSR and the United States, March 12, 1947 – December 26, 1991.

The U.S. government between 1991 and 1992 closed eight of twelve of its military bases in Türkiye and discontinued major military grant aid to Türkiye due to the post-Cold War environment. Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) *Turkey (Türkiye)-U.S.*



*Relations: Timeline and Brief Historical Context* prepared by Jim Zanotti and Clayton Thomas.

1992 War broke out among Bosniaks (Muslims), Croats, and Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina on April 6 as a result of the breakup of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Türkiye actively supported the Bosniaks. The war continued until the end of 1995.

1993 A Turkish general took over the command of a combined military force of the United States and United Nations known as UNOSOM II (United Nations Operation in Somalia) in Mogadishu, Somalia, in April. UNOSOM was spearheaded by the United States to battle lawlessness and famine in Somalia.

President Turgut Özal died from a heart attack on April 17. Neither President William Clinton or Vice President Al Gore attended his funeral. There was disappointment in Türkiye that former President George H. W. Bush did not attend the funeral service. Americans representing the United States at the funeral included former Secretary of State James Baker, Ahmet Ertegun, and MG Fred Haynes (USMC Ret.), president of the American Turkish Council.

1994 Congress withheld military loans to Türkiye until submission of executive branch report on alleged human rights violations in relations to Türkiye-PKK violence. Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) *Turkey (Türkiye)-U.S. Relations: Timeline and Brief Historical Context* prepared by Jim Zanotti and Clayton Thomas.

The Joint U.S. Military Mission for Aid to Turkey (JUSMMAT) became the Office of Defense Cooperation Turkey (ODC-T) in 1994.

1995 The Bosnian War peace negotiations took place at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, in November, which resulted in the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, also known as the Dayton Peace Accords. The Dayton Peace Accords ending the Bosnian War were signed in Paris on December 14.

NATO deployed peacekeeping troops in Bosnia and Herzegovina starting in December to implement the Dayton Peace Agreement. Türkiye played a key role in the NATO deployment.

The European Union–Turkey Customs Union agreement came into effect on 31 December 1995, following a 6 March 1995 Decision of the European Community–Turkey Association Council to implement a customs union between the two parties. "The United States had supported Turkey's bid for EU membership through several steps in the process: from the EU Turkey Customs Union agreement in 1995 to Turkey's appointment as a candidate country in December 1999, and later to open the accession negotiations in October 2005. Backing Turkey's bid was a strategic component of the U.S. policy to anchor Turkey in the

transatlantic community." (Kirişçi, Kemal. 2018. Turkey and the West: Fault Lines in a Troubled Alliance. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.)

1996 With U.S. encouragement, Türkiye and Israeli signed two secret cooperation agreements strengthening defense and intelligence ties. The alliance between Türkiye and Israel also fostered cooperation between Jewish and Turkish Americans American Jewish organizations were particularly helpful in opposing Armenian genocide resolutions in Congress.

1997 The Turkish Military issued a memorandum on February 28 that initiated the resignation of Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan's government.

The PKK (the Kurdistan Workers Party) was designated as a foreign terrorist organization by the U.S. Department of State in October.

1999 The deployment of international peacekeeping troops in Kosovo led by NATO known as the Kosovo Force (KFOR) in June to stop the fighting between ethnic Serbs and ethnic Albanians. Both the United States and Türkiye participated in the peacekeeping operation.

PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan was captured in Kenya by MIT (National Intelligence Agency of Türkiye) with the assistance of the CIA on November 15.

President Clinton was the first American president to address the Turkish Grand National Assembly on November 15.

The agreement to build the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline was signed in Türkiye on November 18 by Turkish President Süleyman Demirel, Azeri President Heydar Aliyev, and Georgian President Eduard Shavdnadze in the presence of U.S. President William Clinton.

## 2000s

2001 Congressional Caucus on U.S.-Turkey Relations and Turkish Americans was formed in March by Congressmen Robert Wexler (D-FL/19th) and Ed Whitfield (R-KY/1<sup>st</sup>).

The Islamic extremist group al-Qaeda inflicted the deadliest terrorist attack on U.S. soil on September 11.

The United States launched Operation Enduring Freedom on October 7 in retaliation for terrorist attacks on September 11 by invading Taliban-ruled Afghanistan with a multinational force. Türkiye supported the U.S. in the war on terror and joined the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. Turkish contractors also played an important role in Afghanistan infrastructure projects funded by the United States and other countries.

- 2002 Following the AK (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi/Justice and Development Party) Party's electoral victories in November, President George W. Bush welcomed Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Chairman of the AK Party to the White House on December 10. Bush affirmed standing "side by side" with Turkey and supported Türkiye's efforts at the time to join the EU.
- 2003 The Turkish Grand National Assembly on March 1 failed to pass legislation allowing American troops to transit Türkiye to invade Iraq. The vote was 264 votes in favor and 250 votes opposed; a 276 absolute majority was necessary for passage.
- The U.S. began military operations into Iraq on March 20, the start of Gulf War 2.
- American military operatives stormed a Turkish compound in Northern Iraq on July 4. During the campaign 11 Turkish military operatives were taken captive. The Turkish soldiers were led out in hoods and later interrogated. After requests from Türkiye, the U.S. released the soldiers. A joint U.S.-Türkiye commission was later created to investigate the events. The commission released a joint statement of regret.
- 2008 Fethullah Gülen, an Islamic scholar, preacher, leader of the Gülen movement, and an ally of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan at the time, was granted permanent residency (Green Card) in the United States. He has lived in self-exile in the U.S. near Saylorsburg, Pennsylvania, since 1999.
- 2009 On his first bilateral trip abroad, President Barack Obama addressed the Turkish Grand National Assembly on April 6.

## 2010s

- 2010 Anti-government protests in Tunisia initiated the Arab Spring movement that spread across much of the Arab world. The Arab Spring became an important component of the U.S. - Türkiye relationship. It eventually led to civil war in Syria, which developed into a major problem in the bilateral relationship.
- Türkiye downgraded ties with Israel after Israel's raid on the *Mavi Marmara* (part of an activist-led flotilla seeking humanitarian relief for the Gaza Strip), leaving eight Turkish citizens dead. Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) *Turkey (Türkiye)-U.S. Relations: Timeline and Brief Historical Context* prepared by Jim Zanotti and Clayton Thomas.
- 2011 Türkiye agreed to U.S./NATO deployment of missile defense radar on its territory. Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) *Turkey (Türkiye)-U.S. Relations: Timeline and Brief Historical Context* prepared by Jim Zanotti and Clayton Thomas.
- On April 12, John Boehner became the first Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives to meet exclusively with leaders of the Turkish American community while in office.

Congressman Tom Cole (R-OK/4<sup>th</sup>) introduced H.R.2362, Indian Tribal Trade and Investment Demonstration Project Act of 2011, with 12 cosponsors on June 24. One aspect of this bill, initiated by the Turkish Coalition of America (TCA), sought to attract foreign investment on tribal land from all 155 World Trade Organization (WTO) member countries, including Türkiye. Although there was strong bipartisan support and full backing of major tribes, it failed to pass in the House because of the Armenian and Greek lobbies.

2013 On May 28, hundreds of protesters opposed to plans to replace İstanbul's Taksim Gezi Park with a shopping mall were arrested. Subsequent nationwide protests and corruption allegations increased domestic and Western criticism of Erdoğan and his government. Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) *Turkey (Türkiye)-U.S. Relations: Timeline and Brief Historical Context* prepared by Jim Zanotti and Clayton Thomas.

The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) provided a \$200,000 grant to Oregon's Confederated Tribes of Warm Spring (CTWS) to cover the cost of two water tanks that serve an elementary school. The Turkish Coalition of America (TCA) and the Turkish Embassy in Washington spearheaded funding of the project.

The leadership of the Turkish Industry and Business Association (TÜSİAD) and the Turkish Coalition of America (TCA) met with U.S. House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner (R/OH) in his office in the U.S. Capitol on October 10.

2014 FBI raided multiple Fethullah Gülen-affiliated charter schools in June seeking information on insider contracts and misuse of state funds.

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan took the oath of office as the 12<sup>th</sup> president of the Republic of Türkiye on August 28 after becoming the nation's first popularly elected president with 51.79% of the vote. The other presidential candidates were Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu with 38.44% and Selahattin Demirtaş with 9.76%.

ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) launched its siege of the canton of Kobani and its main city in northern Syria on the border of Türkiye on September 13. Some 400,000 Kurdish refugees fled into Türkiye. Türkiye was criticized by American and international press for not intervening. The battle for Kobani was the turning point in the war against ISIL. It was also the beginning of cooperation between the United States and YPG (Kurdish People's Defense Units), an offshoot of the PKK. American collaboration with the YPG further increased tension in the bilateral relationship between Türkiye and the U.S.

2015 Congressman Pete Sessions (R-TX/17<sup>th</sup>) introduced H.Res.226 on April 28 in the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress (2015-2016). The resolution called on the President to work toward equitable, constructive, stable, and durable Armenian-Turkish relations for the next 100 years based upon the two countries' common interests and the United States' significant security interests in the region. However, the resolution did not reach the House floor for a vote.

2016

Reza Zarrab, an Iranian-born businessman with Iranian, Azerbaijani, Turkish and North Macedonian citizenship was arrested in Miami on March 19 for violating U.S. sanctions against Iran involving millions of dollars of transactions. He was transferred to New York for trial where he was indicted with two others by the U.S. Department of Justice on March 21. This case would eventually affect U.S.-Turkish relations.

A faction of the Turkish military attempted a coup d'état against the Turkish government and President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on July 15. Among other groups, Fethullah Gülen and his followers were accused of attempting to overthrow the government. More than 250 people were killed, and more than 2,100 were wounded. Turkish Incirlik Base Commander General Bekir, who was involved in the coup attempt, sought asylum from the U.S., but his request was denied. President Barack Obama condemned the coup on the same day. After the coup attempt, Türkiye began direct military operations in Syria against the Islamic State and YPG (Kurdish-led forces).

Türkiye submitted a formal request to the U.S. in August for the extradition of Fethullah Gülen, who the Turkish government accused as the ringleader of the July 15 coup attempt. However, the U.S. government has not sent the case to court, maintaining that Türkiye has not provided sufficient evidence for the crimes that Gülen is accused of, as required by the bilateral extradition treaty.

General Joe Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, visited his Turkish counterpart, General Hulusi Akar, chief of the Turkish General Staff, in Ankara to show support as “one friend making sure another was well after a traumatic experience” in the July 15th coup attempt. General Dunford was the first senior American official and international leader to visit Turkey after the attempted coup. The general also met with Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım and İsmail Kahraman, the Grand National Assembly speaker. Source: Aug. 1, 2016 | By Jim Garamone, DOD News.

U.S. Vice President Joe Biden visited Ankara on August 24 to ease U.S.-Türkiye ties, further strained after the attempted July 15 coup attempt. He met with President Erdoğan and Prime Minister Yıldırım.

President Erdoğan met with President Barack Obama at the G20 Summit in Hangzhou, China on September 4. President Obama stated “This is the first opportunity that I’ve had to meet face to face with President Erdoğan since the terrible attempted coup that took place in July. By taking to the streets to resist the coup attempt, the Turkish people once again affirmed their commitment to democracy, and the strength and resilience of the democratic institutions inside of Turkey. . .”

Following the coup d'état attempt in July, the Turkish government arrested tens of thousands of people suspected of being associated with the Gülenist Terror Group (FETO), including approximately 20 individuals with American citizenship. One of these was Andrew Craig Brunson, an American evangelical pastor of the small Izmir Resurrection (Protestant)

Church. He was arrested in October on charges of being associated with the Gülenists and PKK. He was also accused of helping to plan the coup and involved with American espionage. His arrest and trial increased diplomatic tensions between the two governments and further damaged Türkiye's reputation in the U.S. Congress.

The Congressional Caucus on U.S.-Türkiye Relations and Turkish American achieved its highest peak of 160 members at the end of the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress in December. The Türkiye Caucus was in the top three of the largest bilateral caucuses in Congress along India and Taiwan. At this point, the Türkiye Caucus was represented in 43 out of the 50 states, District of Columbia, and all five of the U.S. territories.

2017

The United States began directly arming PKK-linked Kurdish forces in Syria against Turkish wishes. Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) *Turkey (Türkiye)-U.S. Relations: Timeline and Brief Historical Context* prepared by Jim Zanotti and Clayton Thomas.

Mehmet Hakan Atilla, in an expansion of the Zarrab case, an employee of Turkish state bank Halkbank was arrested on March 27 in New York on allegations of conspiring to conceal transactions with sanctioned Iranian entities. An updated indictment alleges corruption by several Turkish officials.

A constitutional referendum was held in Türkiye on April 16 to amend the Turkish constitution by abolishing the office of prime minister and replacing the parliamentary system with an executive presidency and presidential system. The proposed amendments were approved by a little over 51% of the vote.

A melee among pro-Turkey civilians, pro-PKK protestors, and Turkish security guards occurred outside of the Turkish Embassy residence in Washington, DC, on May 1 as President Erdoğan arrived for an event following meetings with the Trump administration at the White House.

A Washington, DC federal grand jury on August 30 indicted 19 people, including 15 Turkish guards over the melee outside of the Turkish Embassy residence. None of the pro-PKK protestors were indicted, despite having inflicted serious injuries on pro-Turkey civilians.

President Erdoğan suggested in a speech to a police academy on September 28 that the U.S. and Türkiye swap clerics. According to NPR's Peter Kenyon, President Erdoğan said, "You have a pastor too (Gülen). . . You give us that one and we'll work with our judiciary and give back yours (Brunson)." Source: NPR, "Turkey's Erdoğan Suggests Swap: Jailed U.S. Pastor for Turkish Cleric," September 29, 2017, by Bill Chappell.

Congressman Steve Stivers (R-OH/15<sup>th</sup>) introduced H.Res.573 on October 12 in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress (2017-2018). As in 2015, the resolution called on the President to work toward equitable, constructive, stable, and durable Armenian-Turkish relations based upon



the two countries' common interests and the United States' significant security interests in the region. However, it again did not reach the House floor for a vote.

Approximately one month before the start of the trial of Mehmet Hakan Atilla, Reza Zarrab pleaded guilty on October 26 to each of the six counts. Zarrab agreed to cooperate with the Government and would be one of the Government's principal witnesses against Atilla at Atilla's trial.

2018 In Syria's Afrin district, Türkiye and allied Syrian opposition militia intervened directly against PKK-linked Syrian Kurdish forces. Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) *Turkey (Türkiye)-U.S. Relations: Timeline and Brief Historical Context* prepared by Jim Zanotti and Clayton Thomas.

Mehmet Hakan Atilla is convicted on five of six counts against him by a New York federal jury on January 3.

Federal prosecutors on May 22 dropped charges against 11 of the Turkish guards involved in the melee outside of the Turkish Embassy residence.

Two lawsuits were filed in federal court in Washington, D.C. in May against the Government of Turkey and others for alleged injuries that occurred during the melee outside of the Turkish Embassy residence.

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan won reelection with 52.59 % of the vote on June 24 defeating Muharrem İnce (30.64%), Selahattin Demirtaş (8.40%), and Meral Akşener (7.29%).

During the summer of 2018, President Trump tweeted President Erdoğan about releasing American Pastor Andrew Brunson. The U.S. government enacted several measures against Türkiye due to Brunson's imprisonment, while President Trump unilaterally imposed tariffs on steel and aluminum imports from Türkiye. President Erdoğan's response was, "Just as America has its judiciary, Turkey does as well. . . Instead of respecting the decision of the (Turkish) judiciary, they are making this a matter of sanctions against Turkey. . . You cannot make Turkey step back with sanctions." Source: The *Washington Post*, "Erdoğan dismisses Trump's threat of sanction over detained American pastor," July 29, 2018, by Kareem Fahim.

American Pastor Andrew Brunson was convicted on October 12 by a Turkish court in Izmir on the charge of supporting terrorism. However, he was sentenced to time served and released from custody. Brunson returned to the United States on the same day and met with President Trump in the Oval Office.

2019 Türkiye took delivery of the S-400 air defense system from Russia, The U.S. removed Türkiye from the F-35 development program; some Members of Congress reportedly placed informal holds on major arms sales to Türkiye.

In northeastern Syria, Turkish-led forces attacked the U.S.-backed Syrian Kurdish forces, increasing the Syrian territory Türkiye administered along its border and triggering strong U.S. criticism. Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) *Turkey (Türkiye)-U.S. Relations: Timeline and Brief Historical Context* prepared by Jim Zanotti and Clayton Thomas.

Congressman Adam Schiff (D-CA/26<sup>th</sup>) introduced on April 4 H.Res.296 in the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress (2019-2020) with 141 sponsors. This resolution stated that it is U.S. policy to (1) commemorate the Armenian Genocide, the killing of 1.5 million Armenians by the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923; (2) reject efforts to associate the U.S. government with efforts to deny the existence of the Armenian Genocide or any genocide; and (3) encourage education and public understanding about the Armenian Genocide. The House passed the resolution on October 29, the same day of the founding of the Turkish Republic, with a vote of 405 Yeas, 11 Nays, and 3 Present.

Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ) introduced on April 19 S.Res.150 in the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress (2019-2020) with 28 cosponsors. This resolution stated that it is U.S. policy to (1) commemorate the Armenian Genocide, the killing of 1.5 million Armenians by the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923; (2) reject efforts to associate the U.S. government with efforts to deny the existence of the Armenian Genocide or any genocide; and (3) encourage education and public understanding about the Armenian Genocide. The Senate passed the resolution in December with unanimous consent.

Note: Since 1971, there have been some 25 Armenian genocide resolutions introduced in Congress. It should also be noted that there has not been an official U.S. recognition of the ethnic cleansing of Turks, Muslims, and Jews in Southeastern Europe from the late 1800s through the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

On October 15, the United States, indicted Halkbank on charges of conspiring to evade Iran sanctions, based on evidence adduced during the trial of Halkbank employee Mehmet Hakan Atilla,

President Trump hosted a meeting for President Erdoğan at the White House in November to talk with five Republican senators about the mood in Congress regarding Türkiye's acquisition of the Russian S-400 air defense system and the U.S. Kurdish allies in Syria. The five senators were Chairman of the Foreign Relation Committee Jim Risch of Idaho, Ted Cruz of Texas, Rick Scott of Florida, Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, and Joni Ernst of Iowa. The meeting between President Erdoğan and the five senators was contentious, with nothing resolved.

## 2020s

- 2020 Türkiye's successful use of drone aircraft against Russian-origin equipment in Syria and elsewhere gained it greater global notoriety linked to its arms exports.
- Eastern Mediterranean maritime border and energy disputes intensified between Turkey and some NATO countries and other U.S. partners.
- The Trump Administration imposed sanctions on Turkey's arms procurement agency and some of its officials for the S-400 acquisition. Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) *Turkey (Türkiye)-U.S. Relations: Timeline and Brief Historical Context* prepared by Jim Zanotti and Clayton Thomas.
- The federal court in Washington D.C. denied Turkey's motion on February 6 to dismiss the Kurd and Usoyan civil suits stemming from the melee outside of the Turkish Embassy residence.
- 2021 President Joe Biden became the first president on April 24 to recognize the massacre of Armenians under the Ottoman Empire officially as a genocide in the traditional presidential Armenian Remembrance Day proclamation.
- The U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit affirmed on July 27 that the civil suits stemming from the melee outside of the Turkish Embassy residence can go to trial.
- Turkish government begins on December 27 the process to have the republic's name officially changed to "Türkiye" through United Nations' channels.
- 2022 Russia's invasion of Ukraine leads to a multifaceted Turkish response: some military and political support for Ukraine, and increased economic and energy ties with Russia. Türkiye began mediating between the warring parties, especially the Black Sea grain deal. Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) *Turkey (Türkiye)-U.S. Relations: Timeline and Brief Historical Context* prepared by Jim Zanotti and Clayton Thomas.
- Mississippi became the 50<sup>th</sup> and final state to recognize the Armenian genocide in March.
- The United States completed the withdrawal of military forces and diplomatic corps on August 30 which marked the end of the U.S. 20-year involvement in the Afghanistan War from 2001 to 2021.
- The United Nations formally established the spelling of the Turkish Republic as "Türkiye" on June 2.

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan met with President Joe Biden during the NATO Summit in Madrid, Spain, on June 29.

President Erdoğan met with President Biden during G-20 Summit in Bali, Indonesia, on November 22.

2023

U.S. Department of State announced on January 5 that the American government would use the spelling of “Türkiye” in official communication.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled on April 19 that Halkbank was not immune from prosecution under the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act, but sent the case back to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit to determine whether the bank is immune under principles of common law and customary international law.

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in a run-off election on May 28 won a third term as president with 52.18 % of the vote defeating Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu (47.82%).

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan met with President Joe Biden during the NATO Summit in Vilnius, Lithuania, on July 1. President Erdoğan promised to lift Türkiye’s veto over Sweden’s entry into NATO whereas President Biden announced that his administration will proceed with the sale of F-16s to Türkiye and would give notification to Congress.

The U.S. military shot down an armed Turkish drone after it came too close to American troops in northeastern Syria on October 5. It was a rare incident of force by one NATO member against another.

Hamas militant groups staged a surprise attack on Israel from Gaza on October 7 igniting a new war in the Middle East with thousands of casualties. The war increased tensions between the United States and Türkiye.

Türkiye assumed command of the NATO-led force in Kosovo in October as tensions flared again between ethnic Serbs and ethnic Albanians.

## Chapter 2 | Leaders of United States and Türkiye

### Presidents of the United States of America

**Calvin Coolidge**

August 2, 1923 - March 4, 1929

**Herbert Hoover**

March 4, 1929 - March 4, 1933

**Franklin D. Roosevelt**

March 4, 1933 - April 12, 1945

**Harry S. Truman**

April 12, 1945 - January 20, 1953

**Dwight D. Eisenhower**

January 20, 1953 - January 20, 1961

**John F. Kennedy**

January 20, 1961 - November 22, 1963

**Lyndon B. Johnson**

November 22, 1963 - January 20, 1968

**Richard M. Nixon**

January 20, 1969 - August 9, 1974

**Gerald Ford**

August 9, 1974 - January 20, 1977

**Jimmy Carter**

January 20, 1977 - January 20, 1981

**Ronald Reagan**

January 20, 1981 - January 20, 1989

**George H.W. Bush**

January 20, 1989 - January 20, 1993

**William J. Clinton**

January 20, 1993 - January 20, 2001

**George W. Bush**

January 20, 2001 - January 20, 2009

**Barak Obama**

January 20, 2009 - January 20, 2017

**Donald Trump**

January 20, 2017 - January 20, 2021

**Joseph R. Biden, Jr.**

January 20, 2021 -

## Presidents of Republic of Türkiye

### **Mustafa Kemal Atatürk**

October 29, 1923 - November 10, 1938

### **İsmet İnönü**

November 10, 1938 - May 27, 1950

### **Celal Bayar**

May 27, 1950 - May 27, 1960

**General Cemal Gürsel** -Chairman of  
the National Unity Committee (Military Rule)  
May 27, 1960 - October 10, 1961

### **Cemal Gürsel**

October 10, 1961 - February 2, 1966

**İbrahim Şevki Atasagun** - Acting President  
February 2, 1966 - March 28, 1966

### **Cevdet Sunay**

March 28, 1966 - March 28, 1973

**Tekin Arıburun** - Acting President  
March 28, 1973 - April 6, 1973

### **Fahri Korutürk**

April 6, 1973 - April 6, 1980

**Ihsan Sabri Çağlayangil** - Acting President  
April 6, 1980 - September 12, 1980

**General Kenan Evren** - Chairman of National  
Security Council (Military Rule)  
September 12, 1980 - November 9, 1982

### **Kenan Evren**

November 9, 1982 - November 9, 1989

### **Turgut Özal**

November 9, 1989 - April 17, 1993

**Hüsamettin Cindoruk** - Acting President  
April 17, 1993 - May 16, 1993

### **Süleyman Demirel**

May 16, 1993 - May 16, 2000

### **Ahmet Necdet Sezer**

May 16, 2000 - August 28, 2007

### **Abdullah Gül**

August 28, 2007 - August 28, 2014

### **Recep Tayyip Erdoğan**

August 28, 2014 -



## Prime Ministers of Republic of Türkiye

### **İsmet İnönü**

October 30, 1923 - March 6, 1924  
March 6, 1924 - November 22, 1924

### **Fethi Okyar**

November 22, 1924 - March 6, 1925

### **İsmet İnönü**

March 6, 1925 - November 1, 1927  
November 1, 1927 - September 27, 1930

### **İsmet İnönü**

November 1, 1927 - September 27, 1930  
September 27, 1930 - May 4, 1931  
May 4, 1931 - March 1, 1935  
March 1, 1935 - November 1, 1937

### **Celal Bayar**

November 1, 1937 - November 11, 1938  
November 11, 1938 - January 25, 1939

### **Refik Saydam**

January 25, 1939 - April 3, 1939  
April 3, 1939 - July 8, 1942

### **Şükrü Saraçoğlu**

July 8, 1942 - March 9, 1943  
March 9, 1943 - August 7, 1946

### **Recep Peker**

August 7, 1946 - September 9, 1947

### **Hasan Saka**

September 9, 1947 - June 10, 1948  
June 10, 1948 - January 16, 1949

### **Şemsettin Günaltay**

January 16, 1949 - May 22, 1950

### **Adnan Menderes**

May 22, 1950 - March 9, 1951  
March 9, 1951 - May 17, 1954  
May 17, 1954 - December 9, 1955  
December 9, 1955 - November 25, 1957  
November 25, 1957 - May 27, 1960

**General Cemal Gürsel** - Chairman of  
the National Unity Committee (Military Rule)

May 27, 1960 - January 5, 1961  
January 5, 1961 - October 27, 1961

### **İsmet İnönü**

October 27, 1961 - June 25, 1962  
June 25, 1962 - December 25, 1963  
December 25, 1963 - February 20, 1965

### **Suat Hayri Ürgüplü**

February 20, 1965 - October 27, 1965

### **Süleyman Demirel**

October 27, 1965 - November 3, 1969  
November 3, 1969 - March 6, 1970  
March 6, 1970 - March 21, 1971

### **Nihat Erim**

March 26, 1971 - December 11, 1971  
December 11, 1971 - April 17, 1972

### **Ferit Melen**

April 17, 1972 - April 15, 1973

### **Naim Talu**

April 15, 1973 - January 25, 1974

### **Bülent Ecevit**

January 25, 1974 - November 17, 1974

### **Sadi Irmak**

November 17, 1974 - March 31, 1975

**Süleyman Demirel**

March 31, 1975 - June 21, 1977

**Bülent Ecevit**

June 21, 1977 - July 21, 1977

**Süleyman Demirel**

July 21, 1977 - January 5, 1978

**Bülent Ecevit**

January 5, 1978 - November 12, 1979

**Süleyman Demirel**

November 12, 1979 - September 12, 1980

**Bülent Ulusu**

September 20, 1980 - December 13, 1983

**Turgut Özal**

December 13, 1983 - December 21, 1987

December 21, 1987 - November 9, 1989

**Yıldırım Akbulut**

November 9, 1989 - June 23, 1991

**Mesut Yılmaz**

June 23, 1991 - November 20, 1991

**Süleyman Demirel**

November 20, 1991 - May 16, 1993

**Tansu Çiller**

June 25, 1993 - October 5, 1995

October 5, 1995 - October 30, 1995

October 30, 1995 - March 6, 1996

**Mesut Yılmaz**

March 6, 1996 - June 28, 1996

**Necmettin Erbakan**

June 28, 1996 - June 30, 1997

**Mesut Yılmaz**

June 30, 1997 - January 11, 1999

**Bülent Ecevit**

January 11, 1999 - May 28, 1999

May 28, 1999 - November 18, 2002

**Abdullah Gül**

November 18, 2002 - March 14, 2003

**Recep Tayyip Erdoğan**

March 14, 2003 - August 29, 2007

August 29, 2007 - July 6, 2011

**Ahmet Davutoğlu**

August 29, 2014 - August 28, 2015

August 28, 2015 - November 17, 2015

November 17, 2015 - May 24, 2016

**Binali Yıldırım**

May 24, 2016 - July 9, 2018

Türkiye held a constitutional referendum on April 16, 2017. One of the proposed changes to the constitution called for abolishing the prime minister's office after the next presidential election. The Turkish electorate approved the proposed changes. Thus, after the presidential election on June 18, 2018, the prime ministry was abolished on July 9, 2018, and Binali Yıldırım was Türkiye's last prime minister.

**Note:** Turkish leaders with an American connection are:

President Süleyman Demirel was an Eisenhower Fellow in 1954 and received The Eisenhower Medal for Leadership Service in 1992.

Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit, graduate of the American school Robert College in İstanbul in 1944, who spent three months in the U.S. as a guest journalist for the Winston - Salem Journal in North Carolina in 1955 on a State Department Fellowship. He also received a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship Scholarship in 1957 to study at Harvard University for eight months.

President Turgut Özal was employed as a consultant to the World Bank in Washington, DC, from 1971 to 1973.

Prime Minister Tansu Çiller, a graduate of the American school Robert College in İstanbul in 1967, resided in the U.S. in the 1970s for her master's degree in economics from the University of New Hampshire, her doctorate in economics from the University of Connecticut, and postdoctoral studies at Yale University. She later taught economics at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

The children of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Prime Ministers Tansu Çiller and Mesut Yılmaz studied at American universities or worked in the U.S.

## Chapter 3 | Bilateral State and Private Visits by Leaders

**Note:** The list of visits does not include meetings between the leaders of Türkiye and the United States during the UN General Assemblies.

### Before 1923:

The first President of the United States to visit İstanbul was Ulysses S. Grant in March 1878, during his world tour after he left the presidency. President Grant visited Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II in İstanbul from Jerusalem, which was then part of the Ottoman Empire. In İstanbul, Grant learned that Ottoman military officers studied his military campaigns during the American Civil War. He also visited Sultan Abdul Hamid II's stable of purebred Arabian stallions. The Sultan presented two of his Arabian horses as a gift to President Grant, who was an excellent equestrian. However, Grant was critical of how the Ottoman government treated its people and the class and gender divisions in society. For more information on Grant's visit, Ron Chernow's "Grant" and Ronald C. White's "American Ulysses: A Life of Ulysses S. Grant."

As a teenager, the future 26<sup>th</sup> president of the United States, Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt, Jr., visited the Ottoman Middle East (Egypt, Beirut, and the Holy Land) in 1872. Later in life he expressed his disdain about the Ottomans. Some of his remarks are, "I have always regretted that the nations of Western Europe could not themselves put an end to the rule of the Turk, and supplant with some other nationality." "Spain and Turkey are the two powers I would rather smash than any in the world." He also wrote how annoyed he was that European powers had not intervened in the Ottoman Empire to protect the Armenians. The Boston-based American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions heavily influenced Teddy Roosevelt's attitude towards the Ottomans. Source: "The American Missionary Network and Theodore Roosevelt's Middle East Policy" by David Grantham in American Diplomacy / Righteous Foreign Policy, October 2013.

### Date

### Leader

January 28 – February 27, 1954

President Celal Bayar's official visit to Washington, DC. After addressing the U.S. Congress on January 29, he visited Princeton, NJ; New York, NY; Cleveland and Toledo, Ohio; Chicago, IL; San Francisco and Los Angeles, CA; Las Vegas, NV; Dallas, TX; and Raleigh, NC.

May 31 – June 5, 1954

Prime Minister Adnan Menderes's official visit to Washington, DC, to discuss economic and financial matters.

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### Chapter 3 | Bilateral State and Private Visits by Leaders

October 7-9, 1959	Prime Minister Adnan Menderes attended CENTO Ministerial Meeting in Washington, DC.
December 6-7, 1959	President Dwight D. Eisenhower paid an informal visit to Ankara.
November 24-25, 1963	Prime Minister İsmet İnönü attended funeral of President John F. Kennedy in Washington, DC.
June 21-23, 1964	Prime Minister İnönü paid an informal visit to Washington, DC. Also visited Williamsburg, VA and New York, NY.
April 2-13, 1967	President Cevdet Sunay's state visit to Washington, DC. Afterwards visited Philadelphia, PA; Cape Kennedy, FL; Palm Springs, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, CA; Kansas City, KS; Chicago, IL; Detroit and Lansing, MI; and Niagara Falls, and New York, NY.
March 31 – April 1, 1969	Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel attended President Eisenhower's funeral and met with President Richard Nixon in Washington, DC.
March 18-23, 1972	Prime Minister İsmail Nihat Erim's official visit to Washington, DC. Also visited New York, NY.
May 30-31, 1978	Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit attended North Atlantic Alliance Summit conference in Washington, DC.
April 1-5, 1985	Prime Minister Turgut Özal's official working visit to Washington, DC.
February 2-8, 1987	Prime Minister Turgut Özal's private visit to Washington, DC. Met with President Reagan on February 5.
February 10, 1987	Prime Minister Özal had triple-bypass heart surgery in Houston, Texas.
December 5, 1987	Prime Minister Özal had eye surgery in Houston, Texas.
June 26 – July 3, 1988	President Kenan Evren's state visit to Washington, DC. Also visited New York, NY.

## A Chronicle of Turkish American Relations: 1923 - 2023

### Chapter 3 | Bilateral State and Private Visits by Leaders

September 25, 1990	President Turgut Özal private visit to Washington, DC., during which he met with President George Herbert Walker Bush.
March 23-25, 1991	President Özal private visit to Washington, DC. during which he again met with President George Herbert Walker Bush.
July 20-22, 1991	President George Herbert Walker Bush's visit to Ankara and İstanbul, where he met with President Özal.
February 10-12, 1992	Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel official working visit to Washington, DC.
April 28-30, 1992	President Özal private visit to Washington, DC. during which he met with President George Herbert Walker Bush.
February 8, 1993	President Özal met with President William J. Clinton in Washington, DC, during a private visit. Also visited Ft. Lauderdale, FL.
October 14-18, 1993	Prime Minister Tansu Ciller met President Clinton during a private visit to Washington, DC.
April 14, 1994	Prime Minister Ciller met President Clinton during a private visit to Washington, DC.
April 17-20, 1995	Prime Minister Ciller private visit to Washington, DC, during which he met with President Clinton. Also visited New York, New York and Houston, Texas.
October 18, 1995	President Demirel working visit to Washington, DC.
March 27-30, 1996	President Demirel working visit to Washington, DC.
December 18-21, 1997	Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz working visit to Washington, DC.
April 23-25, 1999	President Demirel attended NATO's 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Summit in Washington, DC.



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### Chapter 3 | Bilateral State and Private Visits by Leaders

September 26-29, 1999	Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit official working visit to Washington, DC. Also visited New York, New York.
November 15-19, 1999	President William J. Clinton's state visit to Ankara and attended the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Summit meeting in İstanbul. Also visited Ephesus, and the areas impacted by the İzmit earthquake in August 1999.
November 15, 1999	President William J. Clinton was the first American president to address the Turkish Grand National Assembly.
September 7, 2000	President Ahmet Necdet Sezer met with President Clinton at the Millennium Summit in New York, NY.
January 14-18, 2002	Prime Minister Ecevit working visit to Washington, DC.
December 10, 2002	Following the AK Party's electoral victories in November, President George W. Bush welcomed Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Chairman of the AK Party to the White House. Bush affirmed standing "side by side" with Türkiye and highlighted supporting Türkiye's efforts of the time to join the EU.
January 27-28, 2004	Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan working visit to Washington, DC. Also visited New York, NY.
June 9-11, 2004	Prime Minister Erdoğan met with President George W. Bush during the G-8 Economic Summit at Sea Island, GA. Also attended the funeral of former President Reagan.
June 7-8, 2005	Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan working visit to Washington, DC.
September 30 – October 2, 2006	Prime Minister Erdoğan working visit to Washington, DC.
November 4-5, 2007	Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan working visit to Washington, DC.
January 7-8, 2008	President Abdullah Gül working visit to Washington, DC.

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November 14-15, 2008	Prime Minister Erdoğan attended the G-20 Economic Summit in Washington, DC.
April 5-7, 2009	President Barack Obama's first bilateral trip abroad was to Türkiye.
April 6, 2009	President Barack Obama addressed the Turkish Grand National Assembly highlighting both nations' struggle to democracy.
September 24-25, 2009	Prime Minister Erdoğan attended the G-20 Economic Summit in Pittsburgh, PA.
April 12-13, 2010	Prime Minister Erdoğan attended the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, DC.
December 7, 2010	Prime Minister Erdoğan working visit to Washington, DC.
May 20-21, 2012	President Gul attended the NATO Summit in Chicago, IL.
May 14-17, 2013	Prime Minister Erdoğan working visit to Washington, DC.
March 31 – April 1, 2016	President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan attended the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, DC.
August 1, 2016	<p>General Joe Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, visited his Turkish counterpart, General Hulusi Akar, chief of the Turkish General Staff, in Ankara to show support as "one friend making sure another was well after a traumatic experience" in the July 15th coup attempt.</p> <p>General Dunford was the first senior American official and international leader to visit Turkey after the attempted coup. The general also met with Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım and Ismail Kahraman, the Grand National Assembly speaker. Source: Aug. 1, 2016   By <u>Jim Garamone</u>, DOD News.</p>

## A Chronicle of Turkish American Relations: 1923 - 2023

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August 25, 2016

Vice President Joe Biden visited Turkey to show U.S. support for the Turkish government after the attempted coup.

May 16, 2017

President Erdoğan official working visit to Washington, DC.

November 12-13, 2019

President Erdoğan working visit to Washington, DC. President Trump hosted a meeting for President Erdoğan at the White House to talk with five Republican senators about the mood in Congress regarding Türkiye's acquisition of the Russian S-400 air defense system and U.S. Kurdish allies in Syria. The five senators were Chairman of the Foreign Relation Committee Jim Risch of Idaho, Ted Cruz of Texas, Rick Scott of Florida, Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, and Joni Ernst of Iowa. The meeting between President Erdoğan and the five senators was contentious, with nothing resolved.

## Chapter 4 | A List of Turkish and U.S. Ambassadors

**Note:** Normal diplomatic relations between Türkiye and the U.S. were not established until February 17, 1927. **Rear Admiral Mark Lambert Bristol served as the U.S. High Commissioner in İstanbul from 1919 to 1927 when İstanbul was under Allied military occupation and in the first years of the Turkish Republic before U.S. recognition.**

### Turkish Ambassadors

**Ahmet Muhtar Mollaoğlu**  
November 28, 1927 to April 20, 1934

**Mehmet Münir Ertegün**  
June 18, 1934 to November 1, 1944

**Hüseyin Ragıp Baydur**  
March 16, 1945 to August 27, 1948

**Feridun Cemal Erkin**  
August 11, 1948 to June 15, 1955

**Ali Haydar Görk**  
May 31, 1955 to April 19, 1957

**Suat Hayri Ürgüplü**  
August 27, 1957 to March 23, 1960

**Melih Esenbel**  
March 24, 1960 to October 28, 1960

**Bülent Uşaklıgil**  
November 1, 1960 to June 20, 1962

**Turgut Menemencioğlu**  
April 24, 1962 to January 2, 1967

**Melih Esenbel**  
January 9, 1967 to November 1, 1974

**Aydın Yeğen**  
November 1, 1974 to April 1, 1975

**Melih Esenbel**  
April 1, 1975 to July 14, 1979

**Şükrü Elekdağ**  
July 23, 1979 to June 28, 1989

**Nüzhet Kandemir**  
August 14, 1989 to April 15, 1998

**Baki İlkin**  
April 17, 1998 to September 18, 2001

**Faruk Loğoğlu**  
September 24, 2001 to December 26, 2005

**Nabi Şensoy**  
January 1, 2006 to January 17, 2010

**Namık Tan**  
February 17, 2010 to March 31, 2014

**Serdar Kılıç**  
April 14, 2014 to March 14, 2021

**Hasan Murat Mercan**  
March 15, 2021 to present

## U.S. Ambassadors

### **Joseph C. Grew**

October 12, 1927 to March 13, 1932

\*Resided in İstanbul.

### **Charles Hitchcock Sherrill**

May 20, 1932 to March 23, 1933

\*Resided in İstanbul.

### **Robert Peet Skinner**

October 16, 1933 to January 16, 1936

\*Resided in İstanbul.

### **John Van Antwerp MacMurray**

March 16, 1936 to November 28, 1941 \*The last American ambassador to reside in İstanbul and the first American ambassador to reside in Ankara, moving there in 1937.

### **Laurence A. Steinhardt**

March 10, 1942 to April 2, 1945

### **Edwin C. Wilson**

June 11, 1945 to

August 20, 1948

### **George Wadsworth**

October 1, 1948 to

January 2, 1952

### **George C. McGhee**

January 15, 1952 to

June 19, 1953

### **Avra M. Warren**

September 17, 1953 to

February 17, 1956

### **Fletcher Warren**

June 13, 1956 to

November 15, 1960

### **Raymond A. Hare**

April 5, 1961 to August 27, 1965

### **Parker T. Hart**

October 11, 1965 to

October 3, 1968

### **Robert Komer**

December 3, 1968 to

May 7, 1969

### **William J. Handley**

July 1, 1969 to April 19, 1973

### **William B. Macomber**

May 16, 1973 to

June 15, 1977

### **Ronald L. Spiers**

July 12, 1977 to

January 11, 1980

### **James W. Spain**

February 26, 1980 to

August 16, 1981

### **Robert Strausz-Hupe**

September 7, 1981 to

May 18, 1989

### **Morton I. Abramowitz**

August 1, 1989 to

July 25, 1991

### **Richard Clark Barkley**

November 8, 1991 to

December 15, 1994

### **Marc Grossman**

January 3, 1995 to

June 1, 1997

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**Mark Robert Parris**

November 12, 1997 to  
September 8, 2000

**W. Robert Pearson**

September 21, 2000 to  
July 23, 2003

**Eric S. Edelman**

August 29, 2003 to  
June 19, 2005

**Ross Wilson**

December 8, 2005 to  
August 9, 2008

**James Franklin Jeffrey**

December 3, 2008 to  
July 31, 2010

**Francis J. Ricciardone**

January 28, 2011 to  
July 8, 2014

**John R. Bass**

October 20, 2014 to  
October 15, 2017

**David M. Satterfield**

August 28, 2019 to  
January 7, 2022

**Jeffry Lane Flake**

January 26, 2022 to present

## Chapter 5 | Turkish American Elected Officials

**Note:** Up to October 29, 2023, only fourteen Turkish Americans are known to have been elected to public office. Only one Turkish American has been elected to state-level office, whereas the other thirteen were elected in local jurisdictions. As of this date, no Turkish American has won an election to serve in Congress.

**Sel Erder Yackley** is believed to be the first Turkish American elected to public office. She was elected to the Elementary School Board in Ottawa, Illinois in 1976 and served until 1987. Later, she served on the elected Illinois Valley Community College Board of Directors from 1987 to 1997, a position covering seven counties.

**Malik Tunador** was elected to a seat on the Council of the Thornburg Borough of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, in November 1994 and served for four years.

**Mehmet “Matt” Yar** was elected to the Bloomfield County Education Board in New Jersey in 1998 and served until 2001.

**Jay Karahan** (Republican) was elected in November 2002 and was sworn in the following January as Judge of Harris County Criminal Court-at-Law No. 8. He was reelected to that office three times and served until December 31, 2018, when he retired from active judicial service.

**Esin Busche** (Republican) was elected as a Naperville Township Trustee in DuPage County, Illinois, in 2005 and was reelected several times.

**Ali Paksoy** (Republican) was the first Turkish American elected to a state-level position. He was elected District Court Judge for the 27B Judicial District of North Carolina, which presides over Cleveland and Lincoln counties, in 2006. He has been reelected to this position in 2010, 2014, 2018, and 2022.

**Dr. Erdem Ural** was elected to the Stoughton School Committee in Stoughton, Massachusetts, in 2008. He served in that position until 2011. In 2012, Ural was again elected to the School Committee until 2015.

**John Alpay** (Republican) was an elected Trustee for the Capistrano Unified School District for Area 3, the ninth-largest school district in California, from 2010 until 2016.

**Edward Kranick** (Republican), the son of a Turkish mother, was elected as a supervisor of the Town Board of Delafield in Waukesha County, Wisconsin, in 2015 and was reelected in 2017, 2019, and 2021. He was elected Chairperson of Delafield’s Town Board in 2023. (Note: The Town of Delafield is a separate municipality from the City of Delafield, also in Waukesha County.)

**Kemal Bozkurt** was elected to the board of Lawrence Public Schools (Massachusetts) in 2015 and served until 2016.

**Tayfun Selen** (Republican) was elected to the Chatham Township Council in Morris County, New Jersey, in 2017. He was elected Mayor of Chatham Township in 2019, thereby becoming the first Turkish American to serve as a municipality mayor. In February 2020, he filled a vacancy on the Morris County Board of Commissioners and later, in November of the same year, won a three-term as a County Commissioner. He served as Director of the Morris County Board of Commissioners in 2022. He was reelected as a Morris County Commissioner in 2023

**Hacıbey ‘Hacı’ Çatalbaşoğlu** (Independent) was elected to the Board of Alders for Ward 1 in New Haven, Connecticut, in 2017. He was 19 years old and a junior at Yale University. He was the

youngest Turkish American ever to run and be elected to public office and one of the youngest Alders to ever serve on the Board of Alders in New Haven.

**Ayça (Şirvancı) Sawa** (Democrat) was elected City Comptroller of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a nonpartisan position, in 2020. She is the first Turkish American to become a Chief Financial Officer for a major American city and the second woman elected as a city official in Milwaukee.

**Onur Arugaslan** was elected to serve a six-year term as a trustee (nonpartisan) on the Mattawan Consolidated School Board of Education in Michigan in 2022.



## **Chapter 8 | Diplomatic Buildings in Ankara, İstanbul, Washington, DC, and New York**

### **Ankara - U.S. Embassy and Ambassador's Residence**

Following the signing of the Mudros Armistice on October 30, 1918, the Ottoman Sultan in İstanbul capitulated to Allied forces. However, the Turkish Nationalist Movement in Anatolia opposed this decision. Turkish Nationalists established a new government in Ankara and inaugurated the Grand National Assembly on April 23, 1920. Mustafa Kemal became its first president.

The Turkish Grand National Assembly abolished the Ottoman sultanate on November 1, 1922. U.S. High Commissioner Mark Lambert Bristol reached out to the new regime, using a railroad car at the Ankara train station for the U.S. representative office when traveling to Ankara from İstanbul. The U.S. liaison officer residing in Ankara at this time was Howland Shaw. After the Grand National Assembly declared the Republic of Türkiye on October 29, 1923, the railway car continued to serve as the U.S. office in Ankara until 1924.

The United States did not recognize the newly-formed Republic of Türkiye until 1927. During these early years, the U.S. government leased premises for an Ankara office in a development called the Evkaf Houses in Ulus, near Gençlik Park. The property belonged to the Evkaf, a religious foundation the Turkish government had recently taken over. The property today is the location of the Central Bank.

In 1927, diplomatic relations were established between the two countries, and the US representative office in Ulus became the U.S. Embassy, which remained in the same location until 1939. However, the first U.S. ambassadors to the Republic of Türkiye continued to reside in İstanbul. John Van Antwerp MacMurray (1936-1941) in 1937 became the first U.S. ambassador to live in Ankara.

The U.S. Embassy relocated to 243 Atatürk Bulvarı in Kavaklıdere in February 1939. In the 1950s, the embassy and the ambassador's residence were moved to Çankaya. The ambassador's residence at İran Caddesi 59 was occupied in 1952 when George C. McGhee served as ambassador (1952-1953), and Avra M. Warren was the ambassador (1953-1956) during the relocation to the new embassy at 100 Atatürk Bulvarı. The new embassy opened in January 1954 and was designed by the prestigious firm Eggers & Higgins.

For more information about the early U.S. diplomatic presence in Ankara, please refer to Dr. Koray Ozalp and Tolga Aydoğan's book, *Ankara'daki Diplomatik Misyollar 1920-1970*.

During Ambassador Francis J. Ricciardone's tenure (2011-2014), the U.S. government bought land, over three and a half hectares (nine acres), in Çankaya for a new embassy facility. It was the most expensive real estate acquisition by the U.S. government at that time. The U.S. Embassy began its operations at the new facility, 1480 Sokak No. 1, Çukurambar Mahallesi (Çankaya), on August 29, 2022. Jeffrey Lane Flake, a former congressman and U.S. senator, was the ambassador during the move. The complex was designed by Ennead Architects and the general contractor was B.L. Harbert International with a project budget of \$514 million.

## **İstanbul – U.S. Embassy and Consulate General**

The history of the U.S. diplomatic mission in İstanbul during the Ottoman Empire. The United States and the Ottoman Empire established diplomatic relations in 1831 when David Porter (a former naval officer) presented his credentials as U.S. Chargé d'Affaires at İstanbul on September 13. Porter served as head of the American Legation until May 23, 1840. (It is interesting to note that the Ottomans did not send its first minister, Edouard Blak Bey, to Washington, DC, until 1867.)

It wasn't until the 1880s that the U.S. government obtained a permanent building in İstanbul for the American Legation to the Ottoman Empire, which is still in its possession today. In 1882, the U.S. government obtained the renowned Palazzo Corpi through a lease, an architectural gem in the European quarter of İstanbul's Tepebasi. Italian architect Giacomo Leon built the palazzo for Genoese merchant Ignazio Corpi. Lew Wallace was the U.S. Minister Resident at İstanbul, serving from September 6, 1881, until September 4, 1882, when his diplomatic status was elevated to U.S. Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary. He served in that capacity until May 15, 1885. (A note of interest. Wallace was a Union general during the Civil War and author of the bestselling novel "Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ" published in 1880.) The Palazzo Corpi's acquisition occurred during Sultan Abdul Hamid II's reign and the presidency of Chester A. Arthur.

The American Legation to the Ottoman Empire was finally elevated to embassy status under the administration of President Theodore Roosevelt. John G.A. Leishman, who was serving as the U.S. Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at İstanbul since March 29, 1901, became the first U.S. ambassador to the Ottoman Empire when he presented his credentials as the Ambassador on October 5, 1906. Thus, the Palazzo Corpi became the U.S. Embassy and residence for the U.S. Ambassador.

In 1907, Ambassador Leishman, a businessman who had worked with steel magnate Andrew Carnegie before becoming a diplomat, believed that the U.S. government should own the Palazzo Corpi as the U.S. Embassy. He purchased the Palazzo Corpi with his funds for 28,000 Ottoman gold liras, about \$2.5 million today. After learning that Congress would not reimburse him for the purchase, Leishman, on a visit to Washington, invited the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and key committee members of both the Senate and the House for a night of poker. During the evening, Leishman proposed to his congressional guests that they play for the Palazzo Corpi. The stakes were that the government would reimburse him for the purchase if he won. Leishman won, and the U.S. government reimbursed him for the purchase. Incredibly, through a poker game, the U.S. government acquired the Palazzo Corpi, the first U.S. government-owned diplomatic building in Europe and the second worldwide.

After the acquisition of the Palazzo Corpi, the U.S. government employed the services of the prolific architect George Oakley Totten, a New York City native who graduated from Columbia University's School of Architecture in 1892 and afterward studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, to design an annex next to the palazzo as a chancery 1908. (While in İstanbul, Totten also designed the residence of İzzet Holo Pasha, a confidant of Sultan Abud Hamid II who had served as the sultan's vizier, head of the intelligence agency (Yıldız İstihbarat Teşkilatı), and chief secretary. Totten was also offered a position as the "Private Architect to the Sultan". In Washington, DC, Totten designed the Everett House, which later became the Turkish Embassy's Chancery and Ambassador's Residence.)

During World War I, neither the United States nor the Ottoman Empire declared war against each other. However, in response to pressure from its ally Germany, the Ottomans severed diplomatic relations with the U.S. on April 20, 1917, and the U.S. abandoned the Palazzo Corpi. The Swedish Legation in İstanbul then handled diplomatic affairs for the United States. Abram I. Elkus was the last U.S. ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, serving from October 2, 1916, until the break in diplomatic relations. Despite the severance in diplomatic relations, it should be noted that the prestigious American school Robert College and its sister school, the Constantinople (İstanbul) College for Women, and the schools and hospital facilities under the American Board Mission remained in operation in the empire throughout World War I.

After the war, the U.S. government sent Department of State diplomat Lewis Heck as the United States Commissioner to Allied-occupied İstanbul on December 27, 1918. Heck, who had previously served in İstanbul before the severance of diplomatic relations, reopened the Palazzo Corpi as a U.S. representative office. The Palazzo Corpi once again became the residence the senior U.S. official when Rear Admiral Mark Lambert Bristol on January 28, 1919, arrived in İstanbul as U.S. High Commissioner to look after American interests. Bristol became a legend in Türkiye and remained in İstanbul until after diplomatic relations were established between the U.S. and the Republic of Türkiye on February 17, 1927. Replacing Admiral Bristol was Joseph Grew, who served as the first U.S. ambassador from October 12, 1927 to March 13, 1932.

With the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1927, the U.S. Embassy gradually moved from İstanbul to Ankara. The Palazzo Corpi, however, remained the U.S. ambassador's residence until 1937, when Ambassador John Van Antwerp MacMurray (1936-1941) moved to Ankara--thereby becoming the last U.S. ambassador to reside in İstanbul and the first to live in Ankara. (Note: A villa on the Bosphorus in Yeniköy was leased as a summer residence during this period.)

The Palazzo Corpi became the U.S. Consulate General in İstanbul after the U.S. Ambassador's residence was relocated to Ankara in 1937. It functioned as the consulate until 2003 when the consulate moved to new quarters in İstanbul's İstinye district.

The U.S. government still owns the Palazzo Corpi, and since 2014, it has leased the property to Soho House, a global hotel chain which has converted the building into a hotel and private club. The Hollings Center for International Dialogue also has an office on the premises. Note: For more detailed information about the Palazzo Corpi, read Thomas J. Carolan, Jr.'s article on the U.S. Embassy's (Ankara) website: <https://tr.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/istanbul/history/>

## **Turkish Embassy and Ambassador's Residence- Washington, DC**

The Ottoman Empire's official presence in Washington ended on April 20, 1917, after the Ottomans severed diplomatic relations with the United States under pressure from its ally Germany in World War I. Five years after the war, the Ottoman sultanate was replaced with the Republic of Türkiye on October 29, 1923. However, it wasn't until February 17, 1927, that the United States and the new government in Türkiye established diplomatic relations.

Ahmet Muhtar Mollaoğlu was the first ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to the United States, serving in this role from November 28, 1927, until April 20, 1934. One of his first tasks in carrying out President Mustafa Kemal's instructions was to find a prestigious site for the Turkish embassy. President Mustafa Kemal predicted that the United States would become the world leader after the next world conflict and wanted the embassy in Washington to represent the Republic of Türkiye as a modern nation state and to cultivate American public opinion.

Before securing a permanent site, Ambassador Mollaoglu first leased a wing of the Wardman Park Hotel on Connecticut Ave, NW, in Washington's Woodley Park neighborhood (now a Marriott Hotel) for the embassy's operations. Later, he leased a townhouse at 1708 Massachusetts Ave, NW, now the Embassy of Trinidad & Tobago. While the Turkish embassy was at 1708 Massachusetts, Ambassador Mollaoglu also leased the country estate Airlie overlooking Rock Creek at 27th Street, NW, and Military Road for social functions and as a summer residence. (Airlie was razed in 1957 for constructing the Saint John's College High School campus.)

For the permanent embassy site, there were two main areas in Washington for diplomatic missions that Ambassador Mollaoğlu considered—the traditional 16th Street, NW, corridor north of the White House and once known as the Avenue of Presidents, and the Sheridan Circle and Massachusetts Avenue, NW, vicinity which was becoming a popular location for the diplomatic corps.

In 1931, Ambassador Mollaoğlu considered leasing the Shahan Mansion at 1633 16th St, NW, on the corner of R Street but later decided to lease the Beaux-Arts Everett House on Sheridan Circle in Washington's upscale Kalorama neighborhood. Thus, the Everett House became the embassy's chancery and residence in late fall 1932.

The exquisite Everett House, also known as "The Little White House," was built by Edward Hamlin Everett, known as the "Bottle King", the owner of the American Bottle Company. Construction of the stately home took over five years and was completed in late 1916. The mansion's architect was the highly respected George Oakley Totten, Jr, who had designed the chancery for the U.S. embassy in İstanbul in 1908 and the residence for the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II's confidant İzzet Holo Pasha. (Totten was also offered a position as the "Private Architect to the Sultan.") In April 1936, under its second ambassador to the United States, Mehmet Munir Ertegun (June 18, 1934 to November 1, 1944), the Turkish government purchased the Everett House and all its furnishings for less than a million dollars.

Ambassador Ertegun and his sons, Nesuhi and Ahmet, played a significant role in the fight against segregation in the American capital. As Turkish ambassador, he had an open-door policy, inviting African Americans to the embassy and residence. His sons, Nesuhi and Ahmet, would also have jazz jam sessions with African American musicians. Thus, outside the White House, the Turkish embassy was one of the few institutions in segregated Washington where Whites and Blacks could socialize in the 1930s and 1940s.

It wasn't until 1989 that the Turkish government moved the chancery from the ambassador's residence to a four-story building at 1714 Massachusetts, NW. The chancery remained there for more than ten years. Construction for a new chancery was started in July 1997 at the site of the former Economic-Commercial

Building, 2525 Massachusetts Ave, NW, which was owned by the Turkish government and demolished for the construction of the new chancery.

The opening ceremony of the new embassy building was held on Friday, April 23, 1999, which coincided with the 79th anniversary of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye and with the participation of President Süleyman Demirel during his visit to Washington on the occasion of the annual NATO summit. However, the chancery's move from 1714 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, to 2525 Massachusetts was not completed until June 1999. The impressive new chancery was designed by Shalom Baranes Associates, ensuring it had a Turkish vernacular style.

The next major project for the Turkish government was the three-year restoration of the ambassador's residence (Everett House) on Sheridan Circle, completed in 2007 at \$20 million. A distinguished team of specialists undertook the restoration, and in 2007, it received a District of Columbia Award for Excellence for Historic Preservation.

For more information about the Everett House: *The Turkish Ambassador's Residence and the Cultural History of Washington, D.C.* by Skip Moskey, Caroline Mesrobian Hickman, and John Edward Hasse.

## **Turkish Consulate General - New York**

The Turkish Consulate General in New York was the first consular representation of the Republic of Türkiye in the United States, starting operations in 1925 before the United States and Türkiye established diplomatic relations in 1927. Celal Münif Bey was the first consul general from January 1, 1925, to July 9, 1927.

In 1977, the Turkish government purchased the building on 821 First Avenue in New York City at \$3 million for its UN Mission and Consulate General, which became known as the Türk Evi (Turkish House). Sabri Çaglayangil was the foreign minister at the time. After razing the old premises, construction started in September 2017 for a new Türk Evi with 35 stories costing \$300 million. Mevlut Çavuşoğlu was the foreign minister during the construction period. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the opening on September 20, 2021.

The new Türk Evi houses the offices of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Türkiye to the United Nations and the Consulate General of New York. It also provides space for the Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) office, meeting rooms, a library, an auditorium, a prayer room, residences for staff, and underground parking.

## **G. Lincoln McCurdy Bio Summary**

G. Lincoln McCurdy is an international affairs professional with over 40 years of leadership and management experience in the U.S. government, private sector, NGOs, and community service.

Currently, he serves as a consultant on U.S.-Türkiye relations and grassroots organizing. He advises five Turkish American political action committees (PACs) under the Ten Thousand Turks Campaign and previously served as an officer for the Turkish Coalition USA PAC. Until recently, he was the president of the Turkish Coalition of America (TCA), an independent not-for-profit organization in Washington, DC. He also served on the Board of Directors of the Turkish Philanthropy Funds. Prior to TCA, Mr. McCurdy was the president of the American-Turkish Council in Washington, DC. Earlier in his career, he worked at the U.S. Department of Commerce, served as the Consul for Commercial Affairs at the U.S. Consulate General in İstanbul, and was a consultant for the Bank of Boston in Türkiye.

He has received several awards and honors throughout his career. In 2018, Mr. McCurdy was one of the laureates of the Gusi International Peace Prize in Manila, Philippines, Asia's foremost award for the attainment of peace and respect for human life. In 2023, he was honored at the 10th Turkish World Business Council (DTIK) Congress in İstanbul with a Friend of Türkiye Award presented by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Previously, the U.S. Department of State and the İstanbul Chamber of Commerce recognized Mr. McCurdy for his contributions to enhancing commercial relations between the United States and Türkiye, and he received the Turk of America Outstanding Achievement Award in Leadership & Management.

He graduated from Hanover College in Indiana and holds an M.A. in International Management from George Washington University. He and his wife have two daughters and two grandchildren.