

TURKEY - IRAN ROUND TABLE MEETINGS - 10

TURKEY - IRAN ROUND TABLE MEETING 10 FINAL REPORT

The **Final Report** of 10th Turkey - Iran Round Table Meeting organized in cooperation with Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Studies (**TASAM**) and The Institute for Political and International Studies (**IPIS** - Islamic Republic of Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs) under the main theme of "Turkey - Iran under the Sustainable Strategy" at the Wishmore Hotel in **Istanbul** on **12 February 2018** as follows:

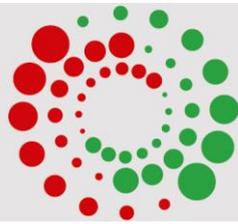
Relations with Turkey and Iran is now advancing in accordance with the bigger picture and transforming from one-dimensional to multi-dimensional. The relations of the two countries should get rid of the conflict method and put into economy-oriented cooperation; the solution of economic issues will also bring about the solution of political issues. Searching for solutions to new problems with old reflexes should be set aside and new parameters with **high competition - high co-operation** should be produced. Turkey - Iran relations are in a need of **sustainable, upgradeable and new non-cyclical policies adopted by either side**. However, there is a lack of central role distribution in the region and players from the Region need to be raised in order to overcome these needs.

The relations between the two countries have become very important in every period of history. At the moment, it has gained a "**game changer**" role in global and regional sense, and the prominence has come to the fore. This rapprochement, along with the Gulf Crisis, also shows itself in Syria and Iraq, and makes its influence felt. At the same time, however, it brings with it "**counter plans**" and these plans aim at the "game changer" effect of the relations. Even so, these "counter plans" are unsuccessful because they are not natural and interior originated movements.

Today's international relations tend to enter into a structure that is based on the relationships of persons. The US foreign policy, the relations of Saudi Arabia with Israel and the situation in the Gulf Crisis, are the results of these personal relationships. For this reason, high level and institutional relations cannot be established in the Middle East.

In Turkey - Iran Relations, there are four major elements:

- 1. History** (Turkey - Iran relations should avoid taking aggressive competition and move towards co-operation with the acceleration of the historical ties.)
- 2. Geography** (Turkey and Iran are the bridges between East and West, North and South. Both countries are on the trade corridors. This location is of great importance in the global projects. However, Turkey can cooperate with Iran and Russia in Caucasus)
- 3. Identity** (Both countries are facing threats from inside and outside that effect the relationships negatively. "Terrorist-radical groups" and "adaptation" issues of the new generations are some of them.)



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4. Economy (Economic relations have the effect to rule out these social problems. China's "Belt and Road" Project, can provide a significant contribution to this process. However, Turkey can participate in Chabahar Project started by Iran, Afghanistan and India in the context of Silkroad or global-scale projects. In addition, ECO should be reestablished in the leadership of Turkey and Iran and this institution should be given a dominant role in the institutionalization of multi-bilateral economic relations.)

The role of Turkey and Iran for ensuring sustainable peace and stability in the region and for the succession of reconstructing process of states like Iraq and Syria is undoubtedly very important. Turkey and Iran should be a continuous positive relationship in order to eliminate threats in their relations. **Complementary relations in the energy sector** (Iran's role in producing, Turkey's role in transferring productions to the West) could be an important step towards the establishment of this positive relationship. Possible interventions from global forces acting as "energy seller" of the region against this energy based potential should be eliminated.

"Belt and Road Project" process is a high-potential project that can bring the two countries closer and the project must be well understood. Silkroad may create a more integrated region by consolidating Turkey and Iran's role in bridging the East and the West. Turkey and Iran may **act as constructors of the process rather than to act as a participant of Silkroad project.**

Turkey - Iran relations should be assessed not only as binary but also taking into account the Western world. Because in the West there is a similar struggle as it is before the World War II, and this will also have an effect on regional politics.

There are indirect and direct interventions of the West on the basis of conflicts and rivalries in the region. The most fundamental element in the emergence of competition is "balance". With this balancing strategy, the West pushes the countries of the region into competition and hence conflict. Moreover, it does not give way to the stabilization and strengthening of the region through regime changes and stopping the growth of the countries.

Finally, by emphasizing three main tasks of think-tanks: **arranging, bridge building/integrating, conceptualizing/idea producing** and to be a basis for the next meeting, **TASAM** and **IPIS** delegations were agreed on preparing a 10-20 pages brief "vision paper" consisting of decisions in various areas for each sides and to share them mutually. In addition to this, both institutions have expressed their opinion that a **media roundtable meeting** should be organized with the media members and representatives of the two countries.

12 February 2018, Istanbul