

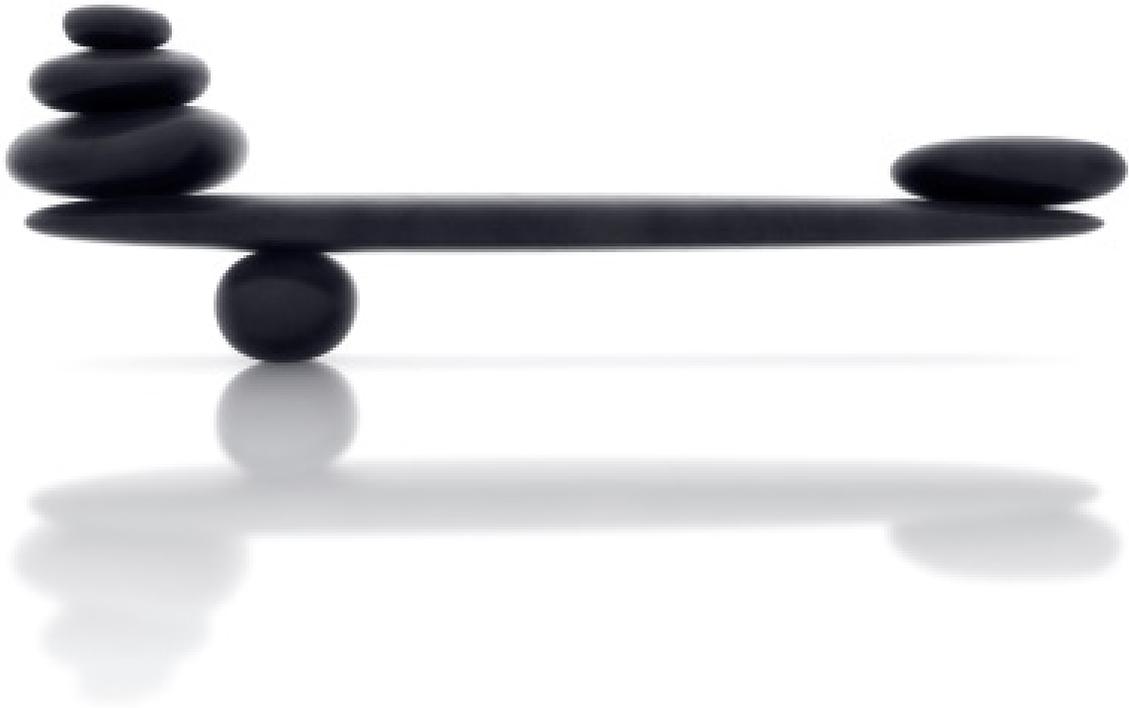
THE WORLD
REBALANCING
STRATEGIC STUDIES NETWORK
ANNUAL PLENARY CONFERENCE

2011

November 28th – December 1st, 2011 | Istanbul, Turkey

**TURKEY'S ROLE
IN A REBALANCING WORLD**

Professor Bülent Aras



center for
strategic
research
Republic of Turkey
Ministry of Foreign Affairs





TURKEY'S ROLE IN A REBALANCING WORLD

This past year has been the most tumultuous of the previous 40 years, though there is good reason to believe that the challenges facing the world in 2012 will be easier than what we experienced in 2011. The world is currently experiencing a regional and global rebalancing. As a result, the world is facing a series of global challenges. The first of these is the global political challenge. The existing institutions designed to address these challenges, namely the UN Security Council, lack the capacity and capability to address the current and forthcoming global challenges. During the 1990s, conflicts remained at the regional level, but it is becoming increasingly more difficult to prevent regional conflicts from becoming global problems. The recent short-lived war between Georgia and Russia is a relevant example of this issue. It began with the Georgians attempt to regain portions of the separatist region of South Ossetia and quickly expanded as Russia became involved, coming in on the side of South Ossetia. The conflict was barely a week-old before it had grown into a global issue of NATO versus Russia, as Georgia was being considered at the time for potential NATO membership. While this conflict was ultimately resolved through a French-brokered ceasefire, it exposed the lack of a political framework to effectively deal with similar conflicts in the future.

The lack of effective global institutions is not limited to military conflicts. The world is also currently facing a global economic crisis. This crisis, which began as a more localized financial crisis, soon expanded, impacting economies across the globe. Existing international organizations, such as the G-8 and G-20, simply were unable to resolve the conflict within their existing frameworks. This was prominently displayed as many members of the eurozone argued over who was responsible for providing the necessary funding to prevent several eurozone nations from defaulting on their debt. This is a situation that has yet to be fully resolved.

Additionally, cultural fault lines exist, creating international problems that lack mechanisms through which to reconcile these differences at the civilization and sectarian levels. The world is moving into a period of declining hegemony, with most regions of the world becoming increasingly on their own. This situation creates both challenges and opportunities. There is more room for regional actors to maneuver but no

Hegemonic power to establish order. It is under these conditions that the Arab Spring has emerged. There is now an era of both anxiety and excitement across the Middle East as Arabs reclaim their future and their governance. This is the first opportunity for many to express their identity, establish their own states and build their society in the search for good governance.

In this volatile, international environment, Turkey is presenting itself as an order instituting country. Turkey is playing a constructive role in the region and supports the search for good governance to the best of its abilities. In this role Turkey can take advantage of the ability to easily access the region. Accessibility is one of the most important advantages for Turkey, as Turkey has access to all related parties involved in the Arab Spring. It is a priority of Turkey to help countries in the region establish political stability and experience economic development. As the region experiences economic growth, it will become more open to the idea of cooperation, both politically and economically.

Strategic Studies Network Contact Information

strategicstudiesnetwork.org

@StrategicStuNet

Tyler Rauert

Director

rauertt@ndu.edu

@tylerrauert

Fahad Malaikah

Program Coordinator

Fahad.Malaikah.ctr@ndu.edu