

Selim Sarper: A Critical Actor in Turkish Foreign Policy

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ABSTRACT

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Selim Sarper served Turkey in critical positions and periods between the mid-1940s and the early 1960s; however, few studies have examined his life and career, and he remains a mysterious actor in Turkish foreign policy. He was Turkey's ambassador in Moscow and Rome in the 1940s, permanent representative in the United Nations (UN) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the 1950s, and Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs after the military intervention in 1960. Significant developments occurred during Sarper's diplomatic career. During his ambassadorial mission in Moscow after the Second World War, he dealt with Soviet demands on Turkey. Later, during his permanent representative mission in the UN, Turkey became a member of the UN Security Council. Finally, following the military intervention in 1960, Sarper became the Minister of Foreign Affairs. This study aims to shed

light on Sarper's career and his role during critical moments in Turkish foreign policy with the rigorous use of primary sources. This paper argues that Sarper was a defender of Turkish governments' US-centricism, which was considered vital for Turkey's security and development and shaped both Sarper's diplomatic career and Turkey's foreign policy between the mid-1940s and early 1960s as a part of Turkey's Cold War policies.

Keywords: Selim Sarper, Turkey, USA, Cold War, National Unity Committee.

ÖZ

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Selim Sarper 1940'lı yılların ortalarından 1960'lı yılların başına kadar kritik görevlerde ve dönemlerde Türkiye'ye hizmet etmiştir ancak Sarper'in hayatı ve kariyeri hakkında yapılan çalışmalar oldukça sınırlıdır. Bunun sonucunda Sarper Türk dış politikasının gizemli bir aktörü olarak kalmıştır. Sarper 1940'lı yıllarda Türkiye'nin Moskova ve Roma Büyükelçiliği, 1950'li yıllarda Birleşmiş Milletler (BM) ve NATO daimî temsilciliği ve 1960 askeri darbesinin ardından dışişleri bakanlığı görevlerini yürütmüştür. Diplomatik kariyeri boyunca İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrasında Sovyetler Birliği'nin Türkiye'den talepleri, Türkiye'nin BM Güvenlik Konseyi geçici üyeliği ve 1960 darbesi ve sonrasında yaşanan gelişmeler gibi önemli olaylara tanıklık etmiştir. Bu çalışmanın amacı birincil kaynakların yoğun bir şekilde kullanımıyla Sarper'in kariyerini ve önemli gelişmelerde oynadığı rolleri analiz etmektir. Bu çalışmanın temel savunusu Sarper'in Soğuk Savaş Dönemi'nin 1940'lı yılların ortalarından 1960'lı yılların başına kadar geçen sürecinde Türk hükümetlerinin de politikalarıyla uyumlu bir şekilde Amerikan merkezli dış politikanın önemli bir savunucusu olduğu ve bu çerçevede politikalar yürütülmesinde önemli bir rol oynadığıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Selim Sarper, Türkiye, ABD, Soğuk Savaş, Millî Birlik Komitesi.

Introduction

Although Sarper was a critical actor in Turkish foreign policy, studies on his life and career are limited.¹ He was born in Istanbul in 1899, and completed high school and his bachelor's degree in Germany in 1918. He returned to Turkey and graduated from Ankara University Law Faculty. After a long career

¹ Cüneyt Akalın's study "Tarihin Dönemecinde Bir Diplomat: Selim Sarper," *Mülkiye*, Volume XXIX, Issue 249, 2005, pp.49-61 is the only biography of Selim Sarper.

in the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he was appointed as the General Director of Press in 1940. In 1944, he was appointed as Turkey's ambassador in Moscow, playing a critical role in Turkish-Soviet negotiations following the Second World War (WWII). Two years later, he was appointed as Turkey's ambassador in Rome and worked in Italy for a year. In 1947, he became Turkey's permanent representative at the United Nations (UN), a position he held for ten years. In 1957, he became Turkey's permanent representative to NATO.² Before the military intervention in 1960, the Democrat Party (DP) government appointed him as the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Then, he was Minister for the National Unity Committee Government (NUC) until the elections in 1961. In the elections, he became the Deputy of Istanbul as a representative of the Republican People's Party (RPP) and was appointed as the Minister of Foreign Affairs by Prime Minister İsmet İnönü until March 1962.³

During his long diplomatic career, Sarper witnessed significant developments in Turkish foreign policy and played a critical role in these developments, particularly those related to Turkish-Soviet and Turkish-American relations. Akalın argues that Sarper was an example of a diplomat who prioritised Turkey's integration with the West unlike those who prioritised Turkey's national independence.⁴ This study focuses on Sarper's diplomatic career after the mid-1940s, starting with his ambassadorial role in Moscow between 1944 and 1946, which dramatically shaped Turkey's Cold War policy. The aim is to shed light on Sarper's career and his role at critical moments in Turkish foreign policy, drawing rigorously on primary sources, especially American archives, due to the lack of information in Turkish archives. The paper argues that Sarper advocated for US-centrism of Turkish governments. This attitude was crucial for Turkey's security and development and shaped both Sarper's diplomatic career and Turkey's foreign policy between the mid-1940s and early 1960s as part of Turkey's Cold War policy.

Ambassador in Moscow (1944–1946)

The Turkish government appointed Sarper as Ambassador in Moscow in 1944. He had to deal with the diplomatic crisis related to the renewal of the Friendship Treaty between Turkey and the Soviet Union, which made him

² https://www.mfa.gov.tr/sayin_selim_r_sarper_in_ozgecmisi.tr.mfa. (Accessed: 21 May 2025)
See also George S. Harris, *Atatürk's Diplomats & Their Brief Biographies*, ISIS Press, İstanbul, 2010, p.362.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Akalın, op. cit., p. 61.

popular in Turkish foreign policy literature.⁵ On 9 March 1945, the United States (US) Ambassador to Turkey, Laurence Steinhardt, reported to the US Secretary of State that the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyacheslav Molotov had informed Sarper that his government wanted to talk to the Turkish government about revising the Montreux Convention of 1936. Sarper responded that the Montreux Convention was an international issue.⁶ On 19 March 1945, Molotov sent a diplomatic note to Sarper in which he explained that the Soviet government recognised the value of the Treaty of Friendship and Neutrality that the two countries had signed in 1925, but considered it necessary to revise the treaty due to the considerable changes in the international situation as a result of WWII, as it no longer corresponded to the new global economic situation. Sarper replied that he would immediately send Molotov's notice to the Turkish government.⁷

Ürgüplü claims that the delivery of this notice to Ankara without rejection annoyed President İnönü. He was angry with Sarper, but Prime Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu and Ambassador Numan Menemencioğlu saved him. Ürgüplü adds that Sarper's appointment to Moscow was a mistake because, having completed his education in Germany and being known as pro-German, he was not well-regarded by the Russians.⁸ However, Sarper continued to work as Turkey's Ambassador in Moscow until he was appointed to Rome in 1946.

On the other hand, in his meeting with Earl Packer, the US Chargé in Turkey, Sarper stated that he did not believe the Soviet Union would claim territorial changes, such as Kars and Ardahan, but insisted on changing the Montreux Convention. However, Sarper emphasised in his reply to Molotov in March 1945 that the Montreux Convention had to be considered multilaterally, not bilaterally. He also added that the Soviet press criticised the US and United Kingdom (UK) more than Turkey. More importantly, the Soviet Union sent fifth-class representatives to the San Francisco Conference, because they believed that Yalta Conference, in which the 'Big Three' participated, was

⁵ For details of Sarper's contacts with the Soviet officials on this issue before March 1945 see Sadık Erdaş, "Türk Diplomatik Arşivi Belgelerinde Selim Sarper" in Moskova Büyükelçiliği (1944-1946), *Cumhuriyet Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Volume XX, Issue 40, 2024, p.363-369.

⁶ FRUS Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Near East and Africa, v. VIII. The Ambassador in Turkey (Steinhardt) to the Secretary of State. 9 March 1945.

⁷ FRUS Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Near East and Africa, v. VIII. The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Harriman) to the Secretary of State. 21 March 1945; Erdaş, op.cit., p.369; Mustafa Aydın, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Türkiye", in Baskın Oran (ed), *Türk Dış Politikası*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2006, p. 472.

⁸ Oktay Ekşi, *Beyefendi Suat Hayri Ürgüplü'nün Anıları*, MD Basım, İstanbul, 2020, pp.45.

superior to the San Francisco Conference.⁹ Packer and Sarper met on 22 May 1945; after their conversation, Sarper claimed that any coercive action from the Soviet Union towards Turkey was unlikely.¹⁰

On 7 June 1945, Sarper visited Molotov in Moscow again. On this occasion, Molotov started the conversation by saying that before a new treaty could be signed, all the problems between the two countries had to be resolved. He claimed that the Moscow Treaty of 1921 was signed when the Soviet Union was weak, so some territorial changes had occurred. Therefore, the first problem was the resolution of the territorial dispute. Upon this claim, Sarper asked whether Molotov implied changes in Turkey's eastern borders. Molotov replied that he referred to the revision of "these unfair arrangements". Sarper replied that the Soviet government had not been coerced to sign the treaty, and he thought that unfair arrangements had been resolved with this treaty. Molotov claimed that Poland had revised the treaty of 1921 between Poland and the Soviet Union and friendly relations had developed between the two countries. Sarper replied that any government in Turkey could not be able to justify such a revision to Turkish society, so the Soviet government had to give up territorial changes.¹¹

Molotov added that the Soviet Union had lost a lot in WWII and considered its security in the Black Sea throughout the war. The Turkish government was not responsible for this, but 200 million people depended on jurisdiction over the Turkish Straits; however, the Soviet government wanted to feel secure about the Straits. Sarper replied that if Molotov was implying the right to Soviet bases in the Straits, this was unacceptable. Molotov asked Sarper whether or not the Turkish government would concede some bases to the Soviet Union in wartime. Sarper rejected these demands. Finally, Molotov explained that a new treaty of friendship would accompany a revision of the Montreux Convention. Sarper replied that it was not a matter of debate and the Turkish government did not consult with any state using its sovereignty rights.¹² After the

⁹ FRUS Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Near East and Africa, v. VIII. The Charge in Turkey (Packer) to the Secretary of State. 28 April 1945.

¹⁰ FRUS Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Near East and Africa, v. VIII. The Charge in Turkey (Packer) to the Secretary of State. 22 May 1945.

¹¹ Aydın, op.cit, p. 473; FRUS Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Conference of Berlin (The Potsdam Conference) v. I. The Ambassador in Turkey (Wilson) the Acting Secretary of State. June 18, 1945; FRUS Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Near East and Africa, v. VIII. The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Winant) to the Secretary of State. 14 June 1945.

¹² Ibid.

transmission of this conversation to Turkey, the Turkish government supported Sarper's stance in Moscow.¹³

Sarper and Molotov had another meeting on 18 June 1945 and Molotov reiterated Soviet Union's demands for the renewal of the treaty of 1925.¹⁴ The Molotov–Sarper talks dominated the debates in diplomatic circles. At a meeting between the acting US Secretary of State Joseph Grew and the British Chargé John Balfour on the same day, Balfour declared that his government supported Turkey because Molotov's demands contradicted Joseph Stalin's declarations at Yalta. He added that the US and British governments had to act jointly on this matter. Grew replied that the two governments had to avoid any immediate action before the end of the San Francisco Conference and before the 'Big Three' met at the Potsdam Conference. Balfour and Grew agreed to delay their joint action until the end of San Francisco Conference.¹⁵ Similarly, in a telegram from the Department of State to the British Embassy, it was stated that as far as the US department could ascertain, the conversation between Molotov and Sarper took place in a 'friendly and exploratory' manner. Therefore, the US department regarded it premature to protest the Soviet action.¹⁶

Similarly, Grew sent a telegram to Edwin Wilson, the US Ambassador in Ankara, to summarise the US position on the Molotov–Sarper conversation. Grew stated that the conversation seemed to occur in an atmosphere 'unclouded by threats'. Therefore, it would be untimely to protest Soviet action; moreover, any protest might overemphasise the conversation and create an 'unfortunate background' for Straits talks at the 'Big Three' meeting.¹⁷ It can be argued that the Molotov–Sarper conversation did not persuade the US or British governments to take action against the Soviet Union. Its friendly and exploratory atmosphere prevented them from taking a stance against their ally in WWII.

In his meeting with US Ambassador Wilson, Sarper confirmed that Molotov had not threatened him during their conversation on 7 June 1945, but the mobilisation of Soviet troops withdrawn from Poland and Hungary in Bulgaria

¹³ Erdaş, op.cit, p.375.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ FRUS Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Conference of Berlin (The Potsdam Conference) v. I. Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State. 18 June 1945.

¹⁶ FRUS Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Conference of Berlin (The Potsdam Conference) v. I. The Department of State to the British Embassy. 23 June 1945.

¹⁷ FRUS Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Conference of Berlin (The Potsdam Conference) v. I. The Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Turkey (Wilson). 23 June 1945.

led to what the Turkish government perceived as a Soviet threat. Wilson asked Sarper whether he believed that the Soviet Union would attack Turkey. Sarper replied that this was unlikely, but that Turkey should not be caught unprepared. In this conversation, Sarper also claimed that Soviet Union had to stop after Turkey's unequivocal reply, but if the Turkish government accepted these demands, the Soviet Union would intervene in Turkish domestic issues and force Turkey to be the new Poland. He added that the Soviets were not bluffing and had two major goals: a desire to close the Black Sea to states outside the Soviet bloc, and a desire for expansion from the Caucasus through eastern Turkey to Alexandretta and the Mediterranean and through Iran and Iraq to the Persian Gulf. In the meantime, Sarper met the Soviet Ambassador in Ankara with the knowledge of the Turkish government. These conversations were general in nature and related to the security of the Black Sea and revision of the Montreux Convention.¹⁸

After his meeting with Sarper, Wilson had a conversation with the Soviet Ambassador Sergey Vinogradov in Ankara. At this meeting, Vinogradov explained that Molotov had told Sarper that if Turkey was interested in a new treaty, a number of problems would have to be solved, including the return of Kars and Ardahan and measures for the security of the Black Sea. Wilson asked Vinogradov why Molotov asked for territorial changes; he replied that these changes were necessary for Armenia because the Armenian Republic lacked sufficient territory. Regarding the Straits, Vinogradov argued that under the present regime the Soviet Union did not feel secure in the Black Sea.¹⁹

Ambassador Wilson visited Turkish Prime Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu on 3 July 1945. In the meeting, Saraçoğlu criticised the US and UK inaction regarding the Molotov–Sarper conversation. He argued that the US and the UK had many problems, but Turkey had one problem: 'life or death'. If the Soviet Union attacked Turkey, Turkey would have to fight despite all its military challenges. He also added that the US and UK, but more than the UK, the US would decide the future of the world. Saraçoğlu argued that the Soviet Union had gone mad and if it could find a weak spot, they would exploit it. In contrast, Turkey wanted to tackle its economic and social problems in a peaceful environment. Turkey was prepared to discuss the issue of passage through the straits but not to accept Soviet domination. Saraçoğlu emphasised that the US and the UK were trying to restore order and stability, while the

¹⁸ FRUS Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Conference of Berlin (The Potsdam Conference) v. I. The Ambassador in Turkey (Wilson) to the Acting Secretary of State. 26 June 1945.

¹⁹ FRUS Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Conference of Berlin (The Potsdam Conference) v. I. The Ambassador in Turkey (Wilson) to the Acting Secretary of State ad interim. 29 June 1945.

Soviet Union was causing disorder and mistrust. He expected the two Western powers to say 'stop' to the Soviet Union in the meeting of 'Big Three' and refuse any negotiations in principle.²⁰

The Potsdam Conference was held between 17 July and 2 August 1945. The Soviet proposals to Turkey were discussed by the leaders of the 'Big Three'. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill stated that it was not the first time he and Stalin discussed the regime of the Straits and the Montreux Convention. His government was ready to revise the agreement and make some amendments to the advantage of the Soviet Union with the participation of all signatories except Japan. The convention could be revised without alarming the Turkish government; however, the activities of Bulgarian and Soviet troops on the Bulgarian border and the Molotov–Sarper conversation had alarmed Turkey. If Turkey asked for an offensive or defensive alliance with the Soviet Union, it might be the right moment to raise the Soviet demands.²¹

Molotov replied that Turkey had expressed interest in an alliance with the Soviet Union. Upon their proposal, he asked for a revision of the territories that had been taken from Soviet Armenia and Georgia as well as some changes in the Straits regime and the Montreux Convention. The Soviet Union informed its allies that the Montreux Convention was not the correct arrangement and that they were not satisfied with it. Molotov also informed the Turkish delegation that the Soviet Union was ready to settle the disputes raised by the Turkish government. Otherwise, the Soviet Union would revise the Straits regime between the Black Sea powers. After a discussion between Churchill and Molotov, the former stated that his government was not ready to push Turkey to accept Soviet proposals. He added that, in principle, he agreed with Stalin to press for changes to the Montreux Convention, but he felt free to act on these new proposals for Turkey.²² In short, Soviet demands from Turkey were not supported by Churchill during the Potsdam Conference, although he promised Stalin to put pressure on Turkey to revise the Montreux Convention. Churchill's reaction also implied criticism of the Soviet course of action. The US and the UK were waiting for the Potsdam Conference to take action on the Soviet demands from Turkey. Churchill declared that his government, and the US, would act freely on the Turco-Soviet Crisis.

²⁰ FRUS Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Conference of Berlin (The Potsdam Conference) v. I. The Ambassador in Turkey (Wilson) to the Secretary of State. 3 July 1945.

²¹ FRUS Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Conference of Berlin (The Potsdam Conference) v. II. Thompson Minutes. 22 July 1945.

²² Ibid.

US Ambassador Wilson had several meetings with the Soviet Ambassador Vinogradov in Ankara. In these conversations, Wilson asked Vinogradov what could be done to settle Turkish-Russian relations. Vinogradov replied similarly that for a solution, the Turkish government had to accept Soviet proposals, that is, the rearrangement of borders to the advantage of Soviet Georgia and Soviet Armenia, as well as a revision of the Straits regime and the Montreux Convention.²³ As time passed, the tension born out of the Soviet proposals for a renewal of the 1925 treaty between Turkey and the Soviet Union receded, but the proposals irreversibly caused relations between the two countries to deteriorate. In the following period, Turkey tried to become a part of the Western alliance led by the US and conducted a purely anti-Soviet foreign policy until the late 1960s.

To summarise, Sarper played a decisive role in this process. Erdaş argues that Sarper enabled the Turkish government to decide on a policy regarding the Soviet demands by providing Ankara with timely information and his opinions. In addition, he tried to understand the new Soviet policy and approach to Turkey by liaising with Soviet officials. Therefore, the Turkish government made its decisions based Sarper's information and opinions.²⁴ Although his conversation with Molotov cannot be regarded as a threat or undiplomatic, it was exaggerated and presented as a 'Soviet threat' rather than Soviet 'proposals' or 'claims'. Sarper's conversation with the US Ambassador on 26 June 1945 shows how Soviet intentions or probable actions were exaggerated without any clear evidence. In addition, the Soviet Union did not attack or force Turkey to accept their proposals or sign a new treaty, but made some proposals as a precondition for the renewal of the old treaty. Therefore, the Turkish government could choose to sign or not to sign the treaty.

Permanent Representative in the UN (1947–1957)

After playing a critical role during the Turkish–Russian crisis at the end of WWII, Sarper was appointed Ambassador in Rome in 1946. Erdaş argues that although there was no change in the ministry after the formation of the Recep Peker government, Sarper was replaced by Faik Zihni Akdur, Turkish Ambassador in Sofia, and appointed to Rome. He adds that the Turkish government aimed to start a new deal in Turkish-Russian relations with this

²³ FRUS Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Near East and Africa, v. VIII. The Ambassador in Turkey (Wilson) to the Secretary of State. 28 December 1945; FRUS 1946, The Near East and Africa, v. VII. The Ambassador in Turkey (Wilson) to the Secretary of State. 2 February 1946.

²⁴ Erdaş, *op.cit.*, p.387.

change due to the lack of progress in Turkish-Soviet relations.²⁵ One year later, he was appointed Turkey's Permanent Representative at the UN and remained in this position for a decade. Sarper's major goal in the UN was to work for Turkey's temporary membership to the UN Security Council (SC), which was a matter of prestige, and to increase Turkey's profile in the international arena.

In 1948, Sarper requested US support for Turkey's candidacy as Syria's successor in the SC. In a telegram to the Embassy in Ankara, US Secretary of State George Marshall stated that his department favoured India for the Near East vacancy rather than Turkey for undisclosed reasons. He added that Turkey was a member of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and not anxious for a SC seat; however, he asked Ambassador Wilson's opinion on whether Sarper was acting with the full support of the Turkish government and whether the lack of US support for Turkey's candidacy would deteriorate Turkish-American relations.²⁶ What is interesting here is that Marshall was considering the possibility of Sarper's independent action from the Turkish government in his efforts at the UN. Normally, an ambassador in the UN could not act independently from his government.

In his reply, Ambassador Wilson stated that the Secretary General of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs accepted Turkey's candidacy for the SC seat, but he rejected Sarper's mission to ask the US for support. The Secretary General claimed that he could look into possibly supporting Turkey's candidacy. Wilson added that the US delegation to the UN should explain to Sarper why it supports India. In that case, Turkey could withdraw its candidacy and co-operate with the US or maintain its candidacy and ask the US for support. Wilson claimed that if Turkey requested US support and the US failed to do so, bilateral relations and cooperation might be jeopardised.²⁷

After a while, Turkey and Egypt became the candidates as Syria's successor for the Near East seat in the SC. In a US Department of State report to the Embassy in Iraq, Marshall argued that the Middle Eastern countries would support Egypt, while Sarper told him that Greece, Iran, and Afghanistan would support Turkey. He added that the US had to consider Egypt's role in the SC agenda: the Anglo-Egyptian dispute and the Palestinian Crisis.²⁸ In a report

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ FRUS, 1948, General; The United Nations, v. I, p. I. The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Turkey. 9 August 1948.

²⁷ FRUS, 1948, General; The United Nations, v. I, p. I. The Consul General at Istanbul (Macy) to the Secretary of State. 12 August 1948.

²⁸ FRUS, 1948, General; The United Nations, v. I, p. I. The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Iraq. 3 September 1948.

prepared by the US delegation in the UN, the UK was opposed to Egypt's candidacy to the SC. Furthermore, the UK insisted on supporting the collectively agreed candidate. In the meantime, Turkey and Egypt had conversations on the candidacy of the SC but could not come up with a decision. Turkey was not actively campaigning for the candidacy, but if the US declared its support, Turkey would make a real effort to be elected.²⁹

Advisors to the US delegation in the UN compared Turkey and Egypt in a report and stated the reasons for supporting each country. Turkey resisted pressure from the Soviet Union and was determined to support US policy. It was looking to the US to orient its foreign policy. Moreover, Turkey was a part of the aid program with Greece and was strategically important for the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. Sarper, who was able, would represent Turkey in the SC, and the problem of succeeding an Arab state with another one would be eliminated. Turkey had the support of the Middle East except the Arab states, but it had a detached position on the Palestinian issue. Lastly, but more importantly, Turkey would be a more reliable member of the SC than Egypt regarding the US interests.³⁰

Egypt, however, had the unanimous support of the Arab states and desired US support for its SC candidacy. The US support or non-support for Egypt might have some reflections on the Palestinian problem. Turkey was already a member of ECOSOC and Egypt would declare its support for Turkey's SC membership next time. Moreover, the Egyptian government needed to be a SC member to increase stability in the country. Fawzi Bey considered a reasonable man to deal with on a reasonable basis, would represent Egypt in the SC. Unlike Turkey's efforts led by Sarper, the Egyptian government was directly interested in the seat.³¹

In a meeting of the US delegation at the UN right before the election, the delegates were divided between Turkey and Egypt. Some delegates argued that the US delegation would find it easier to work with the Turkish representative Sarper and Egyptian representative Bey. According to some delegates, the election of Egypt could provide a basis for the solution of the Palestine problem and the dissolution of the old Italian colonies. Some delegates argued

²⁹ FRUS, 1948, General; The United Nations, v. I, p. I. Minutes of the Fifth Meeting of the United States Delegation. 25 September 1948.

³⁰ FRUS, 1948, General; The United Nations, v. I, p. I. Memorandum by Mr. Henry S. Villard to Mr. Donald C. Blaisdell, Both of the Advisory Staff of the United States Delegation. 6 October 1948.

³¹ Ibid.

that the Palestine problem would not be easy to solve in the long term. At the end of the meeting, the delegates agreed to support Egypt in the first round of voting and to reconsider the election in the following rounds. They also agreed to keep US support for Egypt secret to the last minute so that it would not be publicised and cause a reaction.³²

Egypt was elected to the SC after the ballots. Turkey had to wait until the elections in 1950 to become a temporary member of the SC between 1951 and 1952. In this negotiation and election process, Sarper played a critical role. He tried to find support for Turkey's candidacy despite the Turkish government's lack of initiative and support. In return, he was considered an able permanent representative who could be worked easily by the US delegation. However, his influence was insufficient to realise Turkey's seat in the SC.

Subsequently, Sarper again campaigned for Turkey's candidature for a seat on the SC. In 1950, Turkey was a candidate for temporary membership of the SC and competed with Lebanon for two years in 1951 and 1952. During the votes, the Turkish representatives, Sarper and Adnan Kural, spoke with Harry N. Howard, the US delegate. The Turkish representatives told him that Turkey's candidacy was in jeopardy because some of the Latin American delegations had not told them the truth about their support to Turkey's candidacy, something they would never forget. Moreover, they requested the US's support for Turkey's candidacy in the election for a SC seat.³³ After fourteen ballots between Turkey and Lebanon, Turkey became a temporary member of the SC on 7 October 1950 after getting the support of 53 delegations, while Lebanon only received support from four.³⁴

In 1953, the UN General Assembly voted for three temporary members of the SC for the next two years to succeed Chile, Greece, and Pakistan. The US government supported a Latin American state for Chile's seat and New Zealand for Pakistan's. However, the Greek seat was problematic because Soviet 'satellites' had been elected until 1949. Yugoslavia was elected in 1949, and Greece was elected in 1951 to the seat dominated by the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the US Department of State expected the Soviet Union to push

³² FRUS, 1948, General; The United Nations, v. I, p. I. Minutes of the Twelfth Meeting of the United States Delegation. 7 October 1948.

³³ FRUS, 1950, The United Nations; The Western Hemisphere, v. II. Memorandum of Conversation, by Mr. Harry N. Howard of the Advisory Staff of the United States Delegation. 29 September 1950.

³⁴ İbrahim Kumek, "Türk Dış Politikasında Statü Arayışı: Birleşmiş Milletler Güvenlik Konseyi Geçici Üyeliği (1951-52, 1954-55, 1961, 2009-2010)", *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi*, Volume LXXVII, Issue 3, 2022, p. 566.

for electing one of its 'satellites' and would not support the Soviet candidate. Instead, they preferred Turkey to succeed Greece. In this vein, the US delegation in the UN informed Sarper that the US was ready to support Turkey's candidacy. The US Secretary of State asked the US Ambassador in Ankara to send a *demarche* to the Turkish government, telling them how a Soviet-supported state in the SC would impede the work of the SC and give the Soviet Union additional power. Moreover, the US ambassador should assure the Turkish government of US support.³⁵

Sarper delivered the US proposal to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but the Turkish government was unwilling to be a candidate. Turkey had just vacated its seat on the SC, so a new candidacy might result in difficulties getting wider UN support. Moreover, if Turkey declared its candidacy and failed, it would embarrass the Turkish government and hurt Turkey's national prestige. However, if the two governments worked in collaboration and success was assured by the US, the Turkish government was ready for the new candidacy.³⁶ Two days later, the US delegate to the UN, Henry Cabot Lodge Jr, discussed Turkey's candidacy with Sarper. Sarper emphasised that for domestic reasons and national prestige, Turkey was not willing to be a candidate for the SC seat. Sarper also argued that he was not convinced of Turkey's success in the election because it was dependent on Arab and Asian votes, and the Turkish delegation had observed that many would not support Turkey's candidacy. He added that the support of NATO and Latin American delegates was necessary, but these delegates were interested in the Korean War. Therefore, Sarper insisted that the US take a stance and get NATO and Latin American delegations behind Turkey's candidacy.³⁷

When the US Chargé in Turkey visited the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cevat Açıkalın, the Secretary reiterated the same reservations that Sarper expressed to the Chargé. Failure in the elections could embarrass the government ahead of the Turkish elections. The Secretary General added that the government had authorised Sarper to consult with the US delegation on the chances of Turkey's success. If the US delegation supported Turkey's candidacy, Sarper would collaborate with the US

³⁵ FRUS, 1952–1954, United Nations Affairs, v. III. The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Turkey. 10 August 1953.

³⁶ FRUS, 1952–1954, United Nations Affairs, v.III. The Chargé in Turkey (Rountree) to the Department of State. 13 August 1953.

³⁷ FRUS, 1952–1954, United Nations Affairs, v. III. The United States Representative at the United Nations (Lodge) to the Department of State. 25 August 1953.

delegation.³⁸ In the meantime, the British delegation discussed the SC seat succeeding Greece with the US delegation and agreed on the preventing the election of a Soviet 'satellite'. The UK might prefer Turkey as a NATO member and a neighbour of Eastern European countries; however, if Turkey were elected, the Middle East would be over-represented in the SC due to the ongoing membership of Lebanon. Lastly, Turkey had just left the SC in 1952. Instead, the British delegation proposed to support Thailand for the seat in the SC as a 'consolation prize'; moreover, Thailand was resisting communist pressure in the Far East and it would be easier for the UK to support Thailand than Turkey. If Turkey was not supported for a seat on the SC, Sarper could be nominated to the Chairmanship of Committee 1, the UN Committee on Disarmament and International Security.³⁹

Sarper spoke with the US Deputy Representative in the UN, James J. Wadsworth, regarding the possibility of Turkey's success in the SC election. Sarper reiterated the Turkish government's position and requested US support. Wadsworth replied that the issue was complicated and that the USA could not guarantee success. Sarper appreciated the offer of Chairmanship of Committee 1 but underlined that an SC seat was more important for him and the Turkish government.⁴⁰ The US government considered the British proposal about Thailand but insisted on Turkey's candidacy and asked the US Ambassador in Turkey to tell Sarper not to give up on Turkey's SC candidacy. Although the US government did not guarantee the result, the British attitude and its influence over the Commonwealth and Western European members were encouraging.⁴¹

Turkey became a candidate for the SC seat for two years (1954 and 1955) with the support of the USA. After eight ballots between Turkey and Poland, Turkey was elected as a temporary SC member on 23 September 1953 with 40 votes against Poland's 19 votes.⁴² After Turkey's election to the SC, the US representative in the UN, Lodge, suggested the State Department send a message to the Turkish government that Turkey's election to the SC was a great success for both the Turkish and the US governments. Moreover, this success showed the popularity of Sarper among UN delegates and his successful

³⁸ FRUS 1952–1954, United Nations Affairs, v. III. The Chargé in Turkey (Rountree) to the Department of State. 7 September 1953.

³⁹ FRUS 1952–1954, United Nations Affairs, v. III. The Deputy United States Representative at the United Nations (Wadsworth) to the Department of State. 8 September 1953.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ FRUS 1952–1954, United Nations Affairs, v. III. The Secretary of State to the Mission at the United Nations. 11 September 1953.

⁴² Kumek, op.cit., p. 566.

advocacy of Turkey's candidacy. Lodge also suggested that the US Ambassador in Ankara express his satisfaction with Turkey's election and appreciation of the fine spirit exhibited by the Turkish delegation to the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs at an appropriate time.⁴³

Consequently, Selim Sarper was an able and popular figure for the US and other delegations in the UN. His popularity and prestige enabled Turkey to be elected as a temporary member of the SC for the two periods: 1951–1952 and 1954–1955. He collaborated with the US delegation, particularly before the second election, to ensure Turkey's success, although the Turkish government was not initially willing to be a candidate. In other words, Sarper again played a critical role in Turkish foreign policy after his ambassadorial position in Moscow. Sarper's mission in the UN ended in 1957 when he was appointed to NATO as Turkey's Permanent Representative for two years. After his mission in NATO, he was appointed as the Secretary General of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs until the military intervention in 1960.

Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1959–1960)

Sarper succeeded Melih Esenbel as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Secretary General in 1959. Semih Günver, a former diplomat, claimed that although Zorlu had appointed Sarper, he did not trust him.⁴⁴ Sarper participated in the Baghdad Pact members' meeting with Zorlu in Teheran in 1960. Although some members of the Turkish delegation were hosted in the Turkish Embassy, Sarper preferred to stay in a hotel with the soldier members of the delegation. Günver implied that Sarper was cooperating with the soldiers who conducted the military intervention in 1960 and took over from the DP government.⁴⁵

Another former diplomat and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Feridun Cemal Erkin, criticised Sarper for his efforts to bring his diplomatic initiative to the Vatican, the centre of Catholicism, in order to gain the support of Catholic countries in Latin America on the Cyprus issue. Erkin said Sarper expected the Vatican's influence in these countries but misjudged it. Erkin argued that Latin

⁴³ FRUS 1952–1954, United Nations Affairs, v. III. The United States Representative at the United Nations (Lodge) to the Department of State. 6 October 1953.

⁴⁴ Semih Günver, *Fatin Rüştü Zorlu'nun Öyküsü: Z Zorro Gibi*, Bilgi Yayınevi, Ankara, 1985, pp. 132–133.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 141.

American countries followed Spain as their homeland rather than the Vatican in international matters.⁴⁶

After his short mission as the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sarper was appointed by the NUC government as the Minister of Foreign Affairs following the military intervention on 27 May 1960.

Minister of Foreign Affairs (1960–1962)

A Turkish military junta displaced the DP government on 27 May 1960. The junta, which would be the NUC for a short while, declared that they were loyal to NATO and Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), as well as Turkey's other international commitments. The NUC needed legitimacy and US support from the beginning and looked for a reliable actor to provide the needed support and conduct close relations with the US. Sarper was the man who could enable the NUC to obtain US support.⁴⁷ Dikerdem defines Sarper as 'a diplomat fully trusted by the USA'.⁴⁸

The NUC offered Sarper the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but Sarper initially declined the offer. He was not sure about the direction and success of the military intervention. He also feared that being the only civilian member of the NUC government would damage his diplomatic career, especially in the West. As a result, Admiral Fahri Korutürk was announced twice as the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the radio. After Sarper had accepted to be the minister after the success of the military intervention, he was announced as the minister of foreign affairs in the third radio announcement.⁴⁹

Two days after the formation of the NUC government, President Cemal Gürsel asked Sarper to visit İnönü and they had a two-hour conversation. Sarper asked İnönü for his opinion on foreign policy, and İnönü stated that Turkey should remain in the Western bloc. He appreciated Turkey's loyalty to the NATO and CENTO alliances; more importantly, İnönü told Sarper that Turkey should not be a bad-tempered ally.⁵⁰ During Sarper's tenure at the

⁴⁶ Feridun Cemal Erkin, *Dışişlerinde 34 Yıl: Anılar-Yorumlar V.1*, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, Ankara, 1987, p. 215.

⁴⁷ Abdi İpekçi and Ömer Sami Coşar, *İhtilalin İç Yüzü*, Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, İstanbul, 2012, pp. 182-183.

⁴⁸ Mahmut Dikerdem, *Bir Büyükelçi'nin Anıları: Üçüncü Dünya'dan*, İstanbul Matbaası, İstanbul, 1977, pp. 30-31.

⁴⁹ Metin Toker, *Demokrasimizin İsmet Paşalı Yılları: Yarı Silahlı, Yarı Kılıklı Bir Ara Rejim 1960-1961*, Bilgi Yayınevi, Ankara, 1990, p.42; İpekçi and Coşar, op.cit., pp. 182-183, 214.

⁵⁰ Toker, op.cit., pp. 23, 32.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkey's economic and military needs, army officers' retirement, and the Jupiter missile (intermediate-range ballistic missiles, IRBMs) crisis dominated Turkish-American relations.

On 28 May 1960, US Ambassador Warren visited Gürsel, accompanied by Sarper. Gürsel and Warren had a long conversation about the coup, as well as possibilities and difficulties after the coup. In this informal talk, Gürsel summarised the developments and emphasised that the Menderes government had pushed them to act but assured the US Ambassador that there would be no mistreatment of the former DP members. He emphasised that Turkey would cooperate closely with the US because his government faced economic and financial difficulties. Gürsel requested financial support from the US. Warren replied that it was 'by far [the] most precise, efficient and rapid coup' he had ever seen. He added that the military junta faced serious difficulties during the easiest part of the coup. More importantly, he and his government were ready to help the new government solve these problems.⁵¹

At the tenth meeting of the provisional government on 7 July 1960, the Sarper stated that Turkey urgently needed \$34 million. There were negotiations with the IMF, but they would end in mid-June 1961. Turkey had to push the US government to obtain this amount urgently. He shared his conversation with the US ambassador to request \$40 million, which exceeded Turkey's actual needs. The government approved Sarper's action to put pressure on the US government.⁵²

In addition to economic difficulties and appeals for US support, the NUC government requested US support to reconstruct the Turkish army's hierarchy. Gürsel met Warren on 12 July 1960 to share the NUC's plan regarding the Turkish army. Alpaslan Türkeş and Sarper accompanied Gürsel. Gürsel shared the Turkish army's problems and the urgent need to restore the army's hierarchical structure with Warren. The government needed 100 million Turkish liras because 10% to 15% of the colonels had to be retired despite all the challenges associated with this decision. Warren replied that while the Turkish army was significant to the Western world in the fight against communism, the Turkish military only operated at 60% of its officer strength, and the retirement of officers might weaken the army. More importantly, US money for foreign aid was not unlimited, and the US Congress was considering

⁵¹ FRUS, 1958–1960, Eastern Europe; Finland; Greece; Turkey, v. X, p. 2. Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State. 28 May 1960.

⁵² Cemil Koçak, *27 Mayıs Bakanlar Kurulu Tutanakları v.1*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2010, p. 266.

a reduction in foreign aid. Warren and his military advisors found the project unrealistic.⁵³

At the nineteenth meeting of the provisional government on 26 July 1960, Sarper shared his conversations with Paul Henri Spaak, Secretary General of NATO, General Lauris Norstad, Supreme Allied Commander of Europe (SACEUR) and Commander-in-Chief of the United States European Command (EUCOM). Sarper assured Spaak that there would be no change in Turkish foreign policy and explained Turkey's relationship with the Soviet Union. Spaak responded that Turkey could establish relations with the Soviet Union within the limits of its NATO alliance.⁵⁴

Sarper met the US Secretary of State Christian Herter at the UN General Assembly meeting in New York in September 1960. At the meeting, Sarper stated that the NUC government was 'anxious to continue its close and friendly cooperation with the US administration'. Sarper repeated that Turkey would be loyal to its NATO and CENTO alliances and other international obligations. More importantly, Gürsel was determined to set up elections as soon as possible to keep the NUC's promise of a transition to democracy; however, problems and developments in the country, such as those related to the new constitution, could delay the date of the elections. At the same meeting, the participants also discussed the Yassıada trials, which was a source of concern for the US administration because the US did not want its arrangements with the DP government and the secret bilateral treaties of 1959 to be examined and publicised. In return, Sarper assured that these arrangements would not be raised in court because 'the basic charge would be the violation of constitution'. However, the trials could include the 'killing of students in anti-government demonstrations, attempted murder of İnönü, attempt to provoke civil war, and abuse of power'. The US secretary also asked whether Turkish-Soviet relations had changed. Sarper replied that there had been no remarkable development between Gürsel and Khrushchev since the letters were exchanged and reiterated the NUC government's commitment to its alliances and obligations.⁵⁵

In August 1960, Ambassador Raymond Hare replaced Warren. In his contact with Sarper on 3 February 1961, the Jupiter missiles (IRBMs) and the Soviet reaction to the missiles via Soviet Ambassador Nikita Semenov Rıjov

⁵³ FRUS, 1958–1960, Eastern Europe; Finland; Greece; Turkey, v. X, p. 2. Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State. 13 July 1960.

⁵⁴ Koçak, op.cit., pp.409–411.

⁵⁵ FRUS, 1958–1960, Eastern Europe; Finland; Greece; Turkey, v. X, p. 2. Memorandum of Conversation. September 21, 1960.

were discussed. Sarper also shared the Soviet Ambassadors' activities in Turkey with the US Ambassador, and that Rijov was in contact with various cabinet and NUC members to persuade them to accept Soviet economic and technological assistance.⁵⁶ During a meeting on 4 April 1961, Sarper and Hare discussed Turkey's economic situation and the Yassıada trials. Sarper argued that both Gürsel and İnönü were following the trials closely, hoping that the best decision would be taken at the end. Hare replied that the trials were a domestic issue, but an ultimate decision (death sentence) might damage Turkey's position in the eyes of Americans.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, the Yassıada trials came to an end and sentenced Adnan Menderes, Fatin Rüştü Zorlu, and Hasan Polatkan to death on 15 September 1961. The US Ambassador contacted Sarper, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and asked him whether he could do anything about it. Sarper replied that 'there was absolutely nothing further he and his government could do'. Sarper also added that the cabinet and the commander of the armed forces were against the execution of death penalties. He said 'that [the] present situation was [a] turning point in Turkey's history and both sides in the NUC were fully aware of that. [The] problem was that on one side was reason and experience, and on [the] other was rashness and disposition, resort[ing] to brute force'.⁵⁸ On the contrary, Menderes, Zorlu and Polatkan were executed in the following days.

Furthermore, the IRBMs dominated Turkish-American relations in the following period. In a telegram from Norstad to the US Secretary of Defence Robert McNamara, Norstad stated that the deployment of IRBMs in Turkey had to continue because the 'curtailment of the project would be an embarrassment for the USA and NATO'.⁵⁹ Similarly, Sarper raised the issue of IRBMs and increased military aid to Turkey in his conversations with the new NATO Secretary General, Dirk U. Stikker, and Norstad at the NATO meeting in Oslo. Sarper argued that, for Stikker, the Jupiter missiles were old-fashioned and would serve as a target in a possible Soviet attack. Stikker asked him if

⁵⁶ FRUS, 1961–1963, v. XVI, Eastern Europe, Cyprus, Greece, Turkey. Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State. 5 February 1961.

⁵⁷ FRUS, 1961–1963, v. XVI, Eastern Europe, Cyprus, Greece, Turkey. Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State. 4 April 1961. For a similar conversation between Sarper and Hare see FRUS, 1961–1963, v. XVI, Eastern Europe, Cyprus, Greece, Turkey. Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State. 7 August 1961.

⁵⁸ FRUS, 1961–1963, v. XVI, Eastern Europe, Cyprus, Greece, Turkey. Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State. 15 September 1961.

⁵⁹ FRUS, 1961–1963, v. XVI, Eastern Europe, Cyprus, Greece, Turkey. Telegram from the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (Norstad) to Secretary of Defence McNamara. 25 April 1961.

Turkey wanted to stop the project. Sarper replied that he could not comment on the military value of the missiles but that it was a political and psychological matter for Turkey.⁶⁰

In Sarper's conversation with Norstad, the latter stated that 'it was not question of whether Polaris [submarine-launched ballistic missiles] [was] superior to Jupiter, but of whether both systems together would not give greater strength than Polaris alone'. Sarper added that an increase in military aid to Turkey was necessary to implement the new military programme. Norstad replied that an increase in military aid to Turkey was not possible and that it was unrealistic for Turkey to receive the same amount in 1962. Sarper also asked about the replacement of the G-91 fighters due to the Turkish Chief of Staff's complaints about the F-104s, but Norstad replied that Turkey was not forced to acquire G-91s in 1958 and that funding for the project would soon run out.

Finally, Sarper asked about NATO's stance on any possible Soviet attacks on Turkey. Norstad replied that NATO's commitment was clear and it would fulfil its commitments. Sarper ended the conversation saying that he was 'reassured by Norstad's statements'.⁶¹ As Seydi argues, Sarper and other Turkish officials tried to use the Soviet threat and Turkey's strategic location as leverage to maximise economic and military support for Turkey.⁶² The deployment of IRBMs began earlier and became a matter of long-term negotiation between Turkey and the US for a long time. Fifteen IRBMs were deployed in Turkey, and the US administration decided to continue further deployment. However, the Cuban Missile Crisis erupted between the US and the Soviet Union in 1962 after the Soviet Union sent missiles to Cuba. This crisis was resolved by removing Soviet missiles from Cuba and IRBMs from Turkey.⁶³

After the military intervention, the first elections were held on 15 October 1961. Following the elections, the first coalition government in Turkey's

⁶⁰ FRUS, 1961–1963, v. XVI, Eastern Europe, Cyprus, Greece, Turkey. Telegram from the Embassy in France to the Department of State. 14 May 1961.

⁶¹ FRUS, 1961–1963, v. XVI, Eastern Europe, Cyprus, Greece, Turkey. Telegram from the Embassy in France to the Department of State. 14 May 1961.

⁶² Süleyman Seydi, "Turkish-American Relations and the Cuban Missile Crisis 1957–63", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Volume XXXIV, Issue 3, 2010, pp. 435–437.

⁶³ For details about the deployment and the impact of Jupiter missiles in Turkey see Nur Bilge Criss, "Strategic Nuclear Missiles in Turkey: The Jupiter Affair 1959–1963", *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Volume XX, Issue 3, 1997, pp. 95–122; Barnton J. Bernstein, "The Cuban Missile Crisis: Trading the Jupiters in Turkey?", *Political Science Quarterly*, Volume XCV, Issue 1, 1980, pp. 97–125.

Republican history was formed between the RPP and Justice Party (JP) under İnönü's prime ministry. Sarper was elected as deputy of the RPP from Istanbul and was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs in the coalition government. It can be argued that İnönü wanted to keep close relations with the West due to Turkey's economic and military concerns and preferred Sarper as the actor to continue Turkey's US-centric foreign policy.

During this period, Sarper searched for economic and military support from the USA. In his conversation with the US Secretary of State Dean Rusk at the NATO ministerial meeting in Paris in December 1961, he explained the problems that the İnönü government was facing: 'putting the Turkish Army back in the position where it rightly belongs, healing the wounds of the recent past such as the trials and hangings, instituting a regime of economic austerity in order to strengthen the economy'. More importantly, he argued that the new Turkish government's success depended on its economic success. Therefore, the USA should support Turkey economically and militarily. He added that the military aid offered was inadequate because Turkey required \$100 million in additional aid for the military and \$200 million for the economy. Rusk replied that US economic and military support for Turkey was limited and that there was pressure against direct budget support from Washington. Therefore, increasing military or economic aid for Turkey would be difficult. The US government also wanted to determine whether other international organisations, such as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), would help Turkey. Sarper replied that he heard a rumour that the US planned to allocate \$90 million to Egypt while allocating only \$70 million to Turkey. He argued that the US was rewarding 'nasty' Nasser. Rusk concluded that his government would try its best and that Hare would play a key role in solving the aid problem in Turkey. Sarper reported this to his government.⁶⁴

In 1962, the İnönü coalition witnessed a coup attempt by Colonel Talat Aydemir, one of the radicals in the army who were unhappy with the existing situation in the country, but was able to suppress this coup attempt. Before Aydemir's coup attempt, there were rumours about military intervention. More importantly, there was a belief that the US was sympathetic to the new military intervention. Sarper asked the US Ambassador about these rumours but added that although he knew the position of the US, İnönü was wondering how such stories started and whether it might be 'Soviet-inspired or propagated

⁶⁴ FRUS, 1961-1963, V. XVI, Eastern Europe, Cyprus, Greece, Turkey. Memorandum of Conversation. 15 December 1961.

speculation'. Hare replied that the US completely supported the civilian government, which could be confirmed to İnönü. Hare added that the US 'naturally' had contacts in the Turkish military, which might be exploited by some officers who were inclined to organise a coup.⁶⁵ After the coup attempt, İnönü forced Sarper to resign because there were claims that Sarper was in close contact with the soldiers who attempted the military intervention. On 15 March 1962, Sarper resigned and was replaced by Erkin. Thus, Sarper's diplomatic and political career ended.⁶⁶

As Minister of Foreign Affairs during the NUC and İnönü coalition governments between 1960 and 1962, Sarper was an important player in Turkish foreign policy, especially in Turkish-American relations. The US saw him as reliable and he had close contacts with American diplomats, officers, and political actors. During this time, he endeavoured to obtain political, economic and military support from the US for Turkey and sometimes passed on secret information about Turkey to the US. His US-centred stance was in line with the government between the mid-1940s and the early 1960s. He was critical of Turkey's strong alignment with the US during the Cold War.

Conclusion

Selim Sarper played a critical role in Turkish foreign policy as an Ambassador, particularly in Moscow, and as Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs between 1960 and 1962. He sought to develop Turkey's political, economic, and military relations with the US as a counterbalance to the Soviet Union, in accordance with the policies of the Turkish government after the beginning of the Cold War. Sarper's first critical role in Turkish foreign policy was as Ambassador in Moscow during the post-war reconstruction of world politics following WWII. He dealt with the negotiation of the Turkish-Soviet Friendship Treaty and the Soviet demands on territorial issues, the Straits, and the Montreux Convention. After the Molotov-Sarper meeting in 1945, Turkish-Soviet relations began to decline, pushing Turkey to a Western alliance under US leadership. This critical moment shaped Turkey's US-centric foreign policy when the Soviet proposals were considered a threat, and when successive Turkish governments joined the Western alliance led by the US to maximise Turkey's political, economic, and military interests.

⁶⁵ FRUS, 1961-1963, V. XVI, Eastern Europe, Cyprus, Greece, Turkey. Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State. 29 January 1962.

⁶⁶ Akalın, op.cit., p.60. See also Melek Fırat, *1960-71 Arası Türk Dış Politikası ve Kıbrıs Sorunu*, Siyasal Kitabevi, Ankara, 1997, p.107; Cüneyt Akalın, *Uluslararası İlişkiler Ortamında 27 Mayıs Müdahalesi*, Galatasaray Üniversitesi Yayınları, İstanbul, 1999, p.183.

After his years in Moscow, Sarper represented Turkey at the UN for a decade, and his major agenda was Turkey's temporary seat in the UN's SC. He worked tirelessly to gain a place in the SC for Turkey and was successful because of his reputation in the West, particularly in the USA. Following his position in the UN, he was appointed Turkey's permanent representative in NATO and served as the Secretary General of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs for short periods.

Following the military intervention in 1960, the NUC appointed Sarper as Minister of Foreign Affairs because of his prestige and reputation in the West. The NUC declared that it was loyal to the NATO and CENTO alliance and other international commitments, and the committee considered Sarper the most suitable man for the post. During his time in the ministry, he tried to maintain closer relations with the US and develop Turkey's economic and military relations, ensuring military rule's success. He had close contact with the US Ambassador in Ankara and diplomatic circles in the US. He believed that Turkey had to establish close relations with the US and NATO to stabilise its political structure, develop its economy, and modernise its military. Similarly, he did not approve the removal of Jupiter missiles from Turkey and tried to persuade US and NATO officials accordingly. Following the 1961 elections, he was appointed the Minister of Foreign Affairs and continued his efforts.

In summary, Sarper was a critical and controversial figure in Turkish diplomacy, given his position and relations with the Western powers, particularly the US. He was a defender of the Turkish government's US-centric policy and Turkey's political, economic and military alliance with the US for survival and development.

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