

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION**

Turkey is not a country that officially declares itself as an Islamic State, even though the majority of its society are Muslims. Since Erdogan was elected as a Turkish president in 2009, he declared his ambition in resolving conflict especially when it comes to the Muslim world. There is a friction between the ideology that adapted by Kemal and Erdogan. In the era of Erdogan, the Turkish nation is defined by Islamic principles and identity. Despite the idea of Islamic political direction is a very controversial concept, yet Turkey has proven it wrong by becoming one of the most successful models for Islamic democracy.

AKP's Islamism has been demonstrated its image in the Turkish foreign policy as well as in its political direction. There is no easy way for Turkey to distinct Islam from their governance. Islamic values have created the critical identity redefining what it means to be a truly Turk. As a matter of fact, nowadays, Turkey has progressively changed their political direction from secularism to Islamic principles. This is a new face of Turkey under Erdogan's political management.

Other than its involvement on the resolutions and conflict, Erdogan also puts more concern to arrange Turkish multidimensional foreign policy. This foreign policy involves the concept of "zero problems with neighbors", includes better relations with China, Africa, Russia, and the Middle East countries. Indeed, Turkey keeps actively engaging in bilateral relations with China. The partnership between Turkey and China were remarkably elevating since 2006. China's existence has become really essential and prominent for Turkey's foreign policy.

The bilateral relations between Turkey and China have experienced some challenges right after the Urumqi riots

happened in Xinjiang in 2009. There was a significant rebellion did by Uyghurs toward the Chinese government. As a response towards the Chinese government's prosecution, Turkish people who share an extended historical sympathy for Uyghurs then conducted a big demonstration. Erdogan also expressed his support for an anti-Chinese demonstration in front of Chinese Embassy in Ankara at that time.

However, the heated situation between Turkey and China did not last long. Turkey currently remains committed to having good relations with China. It was proven by Erdogan's action in maintaining a good relation with China. Erdogan even stressed that Uyghurs are actually in good condition and living happily in Xinjiang. He also stated that his government would not let any of this issue spoil Turkey's partnership with China. Of course, this statement received many critics from the Muslim countries regarding the Turkish ambition in resolving conflict especially when it comes to the Muslim world. Erdogan and its government are considered being inconsistent in dealing with Uyghur issue.

To examine the factors behind Turkey's inconsistency, the writer is using the foreign policy theory by William D. Coplin as an analysis tool. In the theory of foreign decision making, there are 3 considerations that influence the decision-maker in arranging the foreign policy framework, namely; domestic politics, economic and military conditions, and international context.

In Turkish domestic politics, AKP sees China as one of the essential foreign policy issues. AKP as the partisan influencer has a massive role in arranging the Turkish foreign policy. To be known, AKP has full power in the executive and legislative branch of government to embrace. Engaging a good partnership with China is actually a part of the "Turkey Dream" that is also initiated by AKP. Under the leadership of Erdogan, AKP remains emphasizing that Turkey needs assistance from

China. This is actually also the realization of development strategies in the “Turkey Dream”.

In the economic capacity aspect, the Turkish economy is facing a turbulence; the lira depreciates quickly, severe inflation, and a tendency of economic crisis. This has become Erdogan’s urgent concern to look for new opportunities in China. Turkey has many potential benefits from its partnership with China such as bilateral trade, financial assistance, and the possibility of SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization). As a matter of fact, China has also become the second military partner for Turkey after Russia. By strengthening the military and economic cooperation with China, Erdogan believes that Turkey’s development and economic stability will be further guaranteed.

Furthermore, in the international context, Turkey sees China as a long-term goal rather than just a tool. In today’s globalized world of interdependence, Turkey’s big project like OBOR (One Belt One Road) will boost Turkey’s economic development in a more significant scope. Additionally, both Turkey and China will also actively expand their cooperation in various aspects such as renewable energy, finance, mining, high technology, and other practical cooperation. This means that China’s presence is really essential for Turkey’s multidimensional foreign policy.

All of these considerations have eventually influenced the decision-maker, Erdogan, to prioritize its Turkish partnership with China rather than the Uyghurs. Erdogan clearly stated that Turkey would not let any of this Uyghur issue to spoil the relations with China. It is really prominent for Turkey to strengthen the cooperation with China in many aspects such as bilateral trade, OBOR initiative, military, and SCO framework. Therefore, despite the Uyghur issue that happens in Xinjiang, Erdogan stressed that Turkey remains committed a great position in its relation with China and is willing to strengthen the cooperation in various fields.