

THE CHRONICLE OF A PRE-ANNOUNCED GREEK-TURKISH DIALOGUE

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Abstract: Undisputedly, the 61st round of Greek-Turkish exploratory talks has not come as something totally unexpected. Several signs at the level either of Greece's internal policy-making processes or the one of international alliances have indicated that Ankara sought persistently for a lifeline and finally, this was given by Athens. The current paper describes analytically the evolutions before the "Greek-Turkish dialogue", makes an extensive analysis of the content of recent agreements of EEZ delineation and proceeds into policy proposals with regard to how Greek geostrategy has to be formed while it stands critical against current strategic decisions. For this reason and on the eve of the "dialogue", relevant questions are posed: Under what conditions will it take place? With what correlations of power at operational level? How far does Turkey intend to go in order to shape these correlations to its benefit and to what extent does Greece intend to continue to back down, given that making concessions all the time gives rise to new demands? Citing maps and law texts, this paper gives emphasis on the pathogenies of Greek foreign policy and how these are reflected onto current policies.

Keywords: Ioannis Th. Mazis, UNCLOS 1982, Aegean Sea, Greek-Turkish dispute, Cartography, French Grand Strategy, Exclusive Economic Zone, Cyprus, Libya, Megisti Complex

A. «The chronicle of a pre-announced Greek-Turkish dialogue»

Brief timeline

- **December 17, 2019:** Speech by Deputy Foreign Minister Miltiadis Varvitsiotis in

the Greek Parliament: *«It is our strategic decision not to ask for sanctions against Turkey.»*

- **February 20, 2020:** Statement by the US Ambassador Mr. Jeffrey Payat: *«All Greek islands, regardless of size, are entitled to delimit the EEZ and the continental shelf.»*
- **June 14, 2020:** Statement by the Ambassador of Russia Mr. Andrei Maslov: *«The only beacon for us here is International Law. The coastal zone, the continental shelf, the EEZ of the islands, the prohibition of the threat or use of force are self-evident things. It suffices for anyone interested in the relevant legal framework to read the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982, e.g. Article 121 on the islands.»*
- **July 13, 2020:** «First» Protocol of Berlin, which stipulated that resumption of exploratory talks will be carried out on the issue of delimitation of the continental shelf and Exclusive Economic Zones in the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean. Turkey is thwarting efforts succeed.
- **July 14, 2020:** Speech by EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell at the European Parliament: *«Turkey must respect international law, including the Law of the Sea, and in particular the sovereignty of all EU Member States in their territorial waters, as well as all their sovereign rights in their maritime zones, including the rights created by the islands.»*
- **July 30, 2020:** Excerpt from an interview with Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias: *«The Republic of Cyprus is an independent state. Greece is not entitled to and should not - and here lies a huge trap - substitute the Republic of Cyprus for the exercise of its sovereign rights and the sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus.»*
- **August 26, 2020:** Statement by US Secretary of State Philip Reeker: *«We have conveyed to Turkey repeatedly that its overflights of Greek territory, its drilling activities in the waters off Cyprus, its signing of a maritime delimitation MOU with Libya, and its stated intent to explore for hydrocarbons on the basis of that MOU are provocative, unhelpful, and raise tensions in the region.»*
- **August 26, 2020:** Ratification by the Greek Parliament of Greece's EEZ delimitation agreements with Italy and Egypt.
- **August 27, 2020:** Statement by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg: *«I am considering the possibility of NATO developing mechanisms to prevent incidents and accidents, a network of deconfliction mechanisms.»*
- **August 28, 2020:** Statement by the President of France, Emmanuel Macron: *«When it comes to Mediterranean sovereignty, I have to be consistent in deeds and words. I can tell you that the Turks only consider and respect that. If you say words that are not followed by acts. What France did this summer was important. It is a red line policy. I did it in Syria.»*
- **September 3, 2020:** NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg posts on social media: *«So, following my discussions with both Greek and Turkish leaders, the two*

Allies have met already for technical talks here at NATO. The aim of these talks is to establish mechanisms for military deconfliction, to reduce the risk of incidents and accidents in the eastern Mediterranean « and refutation by Greek diplomatic sources: «In no way does unilateral submission of a document requesting for comments within a week constitute the beginning of dialogue.»

- **September 9, 2020:** Excerpt from the letter of the Greek Prime Minister in three European newspapers: *«Throughout all this I have kept an open mind about dialogue. When Berlin offered to broker talks, we sat down in good faith to try to find common ground. We even managed to get to a «written understanding». Only for Turkey to walk away, disclosing as it went what were informal but private discussions.»*
- **September 10, 2020:** MED-7 Summit and Declaration of Ajaccio, followed by a press conference with French President Emmanuel Macron emphasizing: *«Turkey has signed unacceptable agreements with the Libyan Government of National Accord, denying Greece its legal rights. [...] We must note that today Turkey is no longer a partner in this region [...] we want to avoid escalation of tensions, but Turkey needs to clarify its intentions in some areas. As Europeans, we must stand firm and strong towards Erdogan.»*
- **September 14, 2020:** Excerpt from a press conference of the Prime Minister Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis within the framework of the 83rd TIF: *«I have said many times that our desire is not to impose sanctions, because if we get to the point of imposing sanctions then we will not have achieved the necessary de-escalation.»*
- **September 17, 2020:** Speech by the German Ambassador to the Greek Parliament: *«Foreign Ministers met in Berlin and stated that there should be a document with options to be submitted next week [author's note: at the canceled Summit]. It will list all alternatives and the possibility of sanctions against Turkey [...] Germany has taken on a restrictive role. «We cannot address Turkey with the utmost harshness because we will ruin our ability to mediate.»*
- **September 18, 2020:** «Second» Berlin Protocol, which provided for the parties' commitment to peaceful settlement of their disputes under international law, while Greece and Turkey were committed to creating a favorable climate, which at a later time would lead to a Confidence Building Measures (CBM) agreement by the end of 2020.
- **September 19, 2020:** Excerpt from an interview with US Ambassador Jeffrey Payat: *«I have no doubt that the Greek government and Kyriakos Mitsotakis are committed to a 100% diplomatic solution, as well as to the hard work and compromises that will be needed to solve these problems.»*
- **September 23, 2020:** Statement by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus, Mr. Nikos Christodoulidis: *«Should we just accept these illegal actions because the Greek-Turkish dialogue has been achieved?»*
- **September 28-29, 2020:** Visit of the US Secretary of State Mr. Mike Pompeo to Greece.

- **October 1, 2020:** Announcement on the establishment of a «deconfliction mechanism» between Greece and Turkey in the context of the EU Summit.
- **October 2, 2020:** Statement by the Greek Prime Minister after the end of the EU Summit in Brussels: «*The European Union sent yesterday a clear message of unity, solidarity and decisiveness [...] Greece is absolutely satisfied with the Summit conclusions and we look forward to the start of exploratory contacts as soon as possible.*»
- **October 8, 2020:** «Opening» of Varosha coast despite repeated resolutions of the UN Security Council, which define Turkey's policy as illegal.
- **October 10, 2020:** Statement by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Cyprus and Head of UNFICYP, Ms. Elizabeth Spehar: «*The goal of the United Nations is the return of Famagusta, which is ensured by binding Security Council resolutions.*»
- **October 16, 2020:** EU Summit with announcements being limited again to «wishful thinking» and «calls» to Turkey for «self-restraint» and «return to the table of dialogue and peaceful settlement of disputes».
- **October 16, 2020:** Issuance of three NAVTEX by the Hydrographic Service of Turkey on the conduct of military exercises, for the Aegean Sea on October 19-20 and October 19-21, as well as for the Eastern Mediterranean on October 22-23.
- **October 18, 2020:** Publication of a Turkey's decision to extend their Search and Rescue responsibility area, which covers half of the Aegean area and adds to its past claims an extensive sea area of the Eastern Mediterranean up to 6 nm off Crete.

B. Early warnings

In quite a few cases, we have pointed out the weaknesses in Greece's strategy-making system. We have repeatedly stressed the need to set up a National Security Council,¹ which will be the pinnacle of statutorily organizing the country's bureaucracy in the direction of defending national interests. We have mentioned in several occasions the need to avoid the post-Cold War fate of «micro-Hellenism» and «neo-Ottomanism»,² this being a «suicidal» policy proposal. This rationale becomes apparent if one assesses how the established function of National Security Adviser in Greece is run, a single-person body with no administrative structure and operational feedback. Statements (twice) by the current Advisor and former Deputy Advisor on «co-exploitation of the Aegean» and mistakenly supporting

1. See: Mazis, I. Th. (2019) «The structure of a National Security Council». *Strategies & politics*, Article dated Friday March 22, 2019. P. 42-43.

2. Mazis, I. Th. (2018) Micro-Hellas and neo-Ottomanism or Western thought and geopolitical rationalism? A parallel reading of Veremis-Giannaras. In: *Geopolitical issues in the Wider Middle East and the Mediterranean - II*. Athens: Leimon, p. 926-954. P. 954.

Khalifa Haftar's side in the case of Libya reveal the very undermining of this institution since its birth. Another typical example was the «excessive courtesy» reserved by the same person when describing the Turkish stance on the Cyprus issue as «reluctant to talk».³

Now, the above-described general overview of the Greek reality seems to be eloquently reflected in current developments, having been nurtured by all parties, over the years and uninterruptedly. The Imia fiasco (Government of Konstantinos Simitis, January 1996) and the indirect acceptance of Turkish allegations of «gray zones», the «Joint Communiqué on the occasion of the NATO Summit in Madrid» (Government of Konstantinos Simitis, July 1997), the «Helsinki Conclusions» (Government of Konstantinos Simitis, December 1999), the lack of security culture and the refusal to defend national space through the abolition of the Greece-Cyprus «Single Defense Space» (Government of Konstantinos Simitis) and the mockery of the S-300 anti-aircraft missile system, the beginning of Turkey's accession negotiations with the EU in exchange for nothing, the tacit or explicit support of Greek political class to the «Annan Plan», persistent refusal to invoke the provisions of international law in our favor (exercise of unilateral right to extend territorial waters to 12 nm and border zone at 24 n.m.) and the well-proven mithridatism led us to the current situation and the dangers that lurk in it.⁴

Throughout this course of almost thirty years, suggestions in favor of extending our territorial sea to 12 n.m. have never been listened to.⁵ On the contrary, Athens' insistence on the fear of *casus belli* now leads to the -already foreseen- escalation and in any case in an appeasement-sponsored war. Moreover, as it has been noted: «*Turkey takes for granted that Hellenism's policy of appeasement in the last forty-six years, after the illegal invasion and occupation of 32% of Cypriot territory, the growing presence of Turkish occupation troops and the recent activation of occupied air infrastructure (Lefkoniko) acted as the best «strategic ally» for the implementation of Mr. Davutoglu and Nihat Erim's dictates. It will obviously lead to a 'hot incident', but this is already known and anticipated by the Greek Armed Forces and the government of Athens.*».⁶ In fact, this fear is accompanied by

3. Mazis, I. Th. (2020) «On Sun Tzu, «way-outs», «dead-ends «and other... demons». *Newspaper «Ta Nea»*, June 11, 2020.

4. See: Mazis, I. Th. And Troulis, M. (2019) «The Aegean policy of Greece during the post-Cold War period». *Civitas gentium*, 7 (2), p. 29–39.

5. On the necessity for Greece to extend its territorial waters to 12 n.m., see, for example: Interview of the Professor of Economic Geography and Geopolitical Theory of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Ioannis Th. Mazis, on «SKAI» TV station, September 29, 2019. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cgJcwUr26vs&ab_channel=B%CE%A5%CE%A3%CE%9C%CE%91 [20/10/2020].

6. Interview of the Professor of Economic Geography and Geopolitical Theory of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens Ioannis Th. Mazis on the website «Philenews». Available at: <https://www.philenews.com/eidiseis/politiki/article/943778/i->

suicidal analyzes in the likes of «the Aegean will be turned into a Greek lake and no side would like that to happen.» Such an approach is completely wrong, given that the process of extending one's territorial waters will obviously provide - in accordance with international law - for the right of safe passage, which has been repeatedly emphasized in public; besides,⁷ this approach has been, in fact, refuted by a major stakeholder, the Russian Federation.⁸

On a planet where international politics is conducted under conditions of zero sum because of finite nature of resources and, thus, of factors of power, that is, the means of ensuring ethnocratic survival, Greece continues to be guided by fear, ideological fixations about a primrose international system and the utopias of aid coming from some «Deus ex machina». The path to «dialogue» has already begun and the question is now clear and distinct: Under what conditions will it take place? With what correlations of power at operational level? How far does Turkey intend to go in order to shape these correlations to its benefit and to what extent does Greece intend to continue to back down, given that making concessions all the time gives rise to new demands?

C. The path to «dialogue»

We are at the start of a dangerous - in all respects - dialogue, which may lead to correspondingly painful concessions on all maritime zones and not exclusively on the continental shelf and the Exclusive Economic Zone, as the Greek Government and incumbent Prime Minister Mitsotakis have avoided to clarify. The main hope to avoid compromises on national sovereignty lies henceforth with neo-Ottoman Turkey's maximalist and provocatively expansionist claims, which even the most «phobic» Greek political ranks will not be able to accept. No matter how harsh it may sound, it seems we currently rely on Recep Tayyip Erdoğan potentially following this fixated «neo-sultan» behavior and policy instead of that of a rationale and prudent -Bismarckian- leader, who makes gains all the time without causing regional counter-clustering.

All the necessary conditions for the establishment of such anti-Turkish balancing mechanisms have been presented and still exist. However, the appropriate driving force is absent,

mazis-i-toyrkia-borei-na-ftasei-se-thermo-epeisodio [10/10/2020].

7. Interview of the Professor of Economic Geography and Geopolitical Theory of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens Ioannis Th. Mazis on “Kontra” TV station on October 19, 2020. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qPvvGsL57-c&ab_channel=KontraChannel [20/10/2020].

8. Skai (2020) “Russian intervention for Greece: All states have a sovereign right to [territorial waters of] 12 nautical miles”. Available at: <https://www.skai.gr/news/world/paremvasi-rosias-gia-ellada-kyriarxiko-dikaionoma-ton-kraton-ta-12-naytika-milia> [19/10/2020].

namely the engagement of the power directly affected, i.e. Greece; affected by the attempts of instrumentalised immigrants to invade Evros, Turkish violations of international law on the occasion of the «opening» of Famagusta, constant posting of illegal NAVTEX in the Aegean Sea and Eastern Mediterranean, but also by means of Turkish power projection and conduct of seismic surveys within the boundaries of the Greek continental shelf south of the Megisti Complex. These conditions were met as a result of a unique «geostrategic planetary alignment» for Greek national interests. In addition to the events in Evros and applied Turkish practice, which was explicitly condemned at international level, major geostrategic actors rushed to strategically legitimize our national rights.

Indicatively speaking, it was on February 20, 2020, when US Ambassador in Greece, Mr. Jeffrey Payat, stated that «All Greek islands, regardless of size, are entitled to delimit the EEZ and continental shelf.»⁹ Just a few months later, in June 2020, Russian Ambassador in Greece, Mr. Andrei Maslov, stressed that «the only beacon for us here is International Law. *The coastal zone, the continental shelf, the EEZ of the islands, the prohibition of the threat or use of force are self-evident things. It suffices for anyone interested in the relevant legal framework to read the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982, e.g. Article 121 on the islands*».¹⁰ Even EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell pointed out before the European Parliament, in July 2020, that «*Turkey must respect international law, including the Law of the Sea, and in particular the sovereignty of all EU Member States in their territorial waters, as well as all their sovereign rights in their maritime zones, including the rights created by the islands*».¹¹ A statement by US Secretary of State Philip Reeker followed in August 2020, who said that «*We have conveyed to Turkey repeatedly that its overflights of Greek territory, its drilling activities in the waters off Cyprus, its signing of a maritime delimitation MOU with Libya, and its stated intent to explore for hydrocarbons on the basis of that MOU are provocative, unhelpful, and raise tensions in the*

9. Interview of US Ambassador to Greece Jeffrey Payat in February 2020. See: Athenian News Agency (2020) «Jeffrey Payat: All Greek islands have a continental shelf». Available at: <https://www.amna.gr/home/article/432357/Tzefri-Paiat-Ola-ta-ellinika-nisia-echoun-ufalokripida> [23/9/2020].

10. Interview of Russian Ambassador to Greece Andrei Maslov in June 2020. See: Athenian News Agency (2020) «Russian Ambassador: The islands have a continental shelf and an EEZ». Available at: <https://www.amna.gr/home/article/465674/Rosos-presbis-Ta-nisia-echoun-ufalokripida-kai-AOZ> [23/9/2020].

11. Answer of the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borel to a relevant question by MEP Manolis Kefalogiannis in July 2020. See: Ta Nea (2020) «Borrell: Turkey must respect the rights of the islands». Available at: <https://www.tanea.gr/2020/07/14/world/mporel-i-tourkia-prepei-na-sevastei-ta-dikaionomata-ton-nision/> [23/9/2020].

region.»¹² Last, the French stance has been clear and openly stated, and may be epitomized in the following statement by the President of France, Emmanuel Macron: «*When it comes to Mediterranean sovereignty, I have to be consistent in deeds and words. I can tell you that the Turks only consider and respect that. If you say words that are not followed by acts. What France did this summer was important. It is a red line policy. I did it in Syria.*»¹³

What do the above mean? That there was a legitimizing strategic framework for mobilizing alliances and immediately balancing Turkish maximalism by all means, while showing solidity in adhering to the so-called «red lines»: Greece respects and operates on the basis of international law, and acknowledges the only Greek-Turkish dispute to be discussed relates to the issue of the continental shelf delimitation. The issues raised by Turkey have been resolved within the existing international treaties, including the militarization of the islands (Lausanne Convention on the Straits of 1923, Treaty of Montreux in 1936, Treaty of Paris of 1947 to which Turkey is not a party and, therefore, a «*res inter alios acta*» for the aforementioned Treaty). The factors of power, international footings, as well as the fact that Turkey has been led to an unprecedented over-expansion and multiple strategic commitments in Syria, Iraq and Libya, made up the aforementioned «geostrategic planetary alignment» that would prevent Turkey to acquire any benefit to the detriment of Greek sovereignty.

Instead, what have we chosen to do? We opted to present the EEZ delimitation agreements with Italy and Egypt as major diplomatic successes, which were concluded after major Greek concessions and acceptance of claims on reduced - or even zero - effect of the islands; to abandon - once again in recent decades - Cyprus, whose stance teaches us, yet fails to awake us, unless we reckon that it is only the Greek state, and not Cyprus, suffering in the neo-ottoman clutches¹⁴; to appear as those in a hurry to kick-off a dialogue, which is about sharing our sovereign rights, and having suffered no military defeat before! It was quite telling the letter sent, early September, by the Greek Prime Minister to three European newspapers, where the following excerpt may be found: «*Throughout all this I have kept an open mind about dia-*

12. Statement by US Secretary of State Philip Reeker in August 2020. See: SKAI (2020) “Clear position in favor of Greece from the USA: Turkey increases tensions with overflights and drilling”. Available at: <https://www.skai.gr/news/world/stiriksi-ipa-se-ellada-oi-tourkikes-yperptiseis-kai-geotriseis-ayksanoun-tis-entaseis> [23/9/2020].

13. Statement by French President Emmanuel Macron in August 2020. See: Kathimerini (2020) “Macron’s tough statement on Ankara: Turkey understands only actions”. Available at: <https://www.kathimerini.gr/world/1093738/skliri-dilosi-makron-gia-ag-kyra-i-toyrkia-katalavainei-mono-apo-praxeis/> [23/9/2020].

14. Should we just accept all these illegal actions for the sake of the a success in the Greek-Turkish dialogue?». Tribune (2020) “A statement by Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus Mr. Christodoulides”. Available at: <https://www.tribune.gr/politics/news/article/692951/christodoilidis-na-anechthoyme-tin-toyrkiki-paranomias-epeidi-ellada-toyrkia-tha-synomilisoy.html>.

logue. When Berlin offered to broker talks, we sat down in good faith to try to find common ground. We even managed to get to a 'written understanding'. Only for Turkey to walk away, disclosing as it went what were informal but private discussions».¹⁵

Mr. Mitsotakis' mention was mainly related to the so-called «Berlin Protocols», i.e. those secret meetings and negotiations with Turkey under the mediation of a pro-Turkish actor, such as Germany. Turkey's «torpedoing» of these talks came only to confirm its maximalistic strategy, but leaves no room for the Greek side's mistakes not be revealed, which lie in the selection of the mediating actor and the timing of launching this effort, i.e. at the peak of Turkish aggressiveness. The «first protocol» on July 13, 2020, provided for the resumption of exploratory talks on the delimitation of the continental shelf and Exclusive Economic Zones in the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean. However, Turkey has thwarted efforts. The «second protocol» on 18 September 2020 consisted, through the Sourani-Kalin secret meetings in Berlin, in the commitment of the parties to peaceful settlement of their disputes under international law, while at the same time Greece and Turkey would agree to create a favorable climate, which would later lead to the agreement on Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) by the end of 2020.¹⁶

In the meantime, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has issued a statement on «NATO-brokered conflict prevention mechanisms»: «*I am considering the possibility of NATO developing mechanisms to prevent incidents and accidents, a network of deconfliction mechanisms.*»¹⁷ As early as in 1997, the alarm was raised after diagnosing this geostrategic tendency on the basis of decoding the US foreign policy in the wider Middle East and, in general, along the North-South geopolitical axis.¹⁸ In essence, it is about the «sovereign neutralization» of the Dardanelles-Aegean trade channel and the integration of this area into a single security and strategic surveillance system. This geostrategic

15. Article by Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis in the European press on September 9, 2020. See: The Times (2020) «Turkey must stop its aggression or face EU sanctions». Available at: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/turkey-must-stop-its-aggression-or-face-eu-sanctions-says-kyriakos-mitsotakis-n8jjkldhd> [23/9/2020].

16. Skai (2020) «Berlin Protocols: The Reasons Ankara Blew the Agreement Up». Available at: <https://www.skai.gr/news/politics/nees-prokliseis-erntogan-athina-olo-kai-pio-konta-stis-kyroseis-i-tourkia> [17/10/2020].

17. Statement by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg. See: Capital (2020) «Stoltenberg: NATO considers a Conflict Prevention Mechanism in the East. Mediterranean». Available at: <https://www.capital.gr/epikairota/3476927/stoltenmpergk-mixanismo-apot-ropis-sugkrousis-stin-anat-mesogeio-meleta-to-nato> [23/9/2020].

18. Mazis, I. Th. (1997) «Geopolitical analysis of the Dardanelles-Aegean sea trade channel». Contribution at the international conference on «International Collective Security Systems and their role in the N / A Mediterranean». Corfu, June 27, 28, 29, Ionian Conference Center.

route is secured through the sought validation -by NATO- of a state of imbalance in the Aegean, which will increase Greece's strategic dependence and de-energize it, for the sake of accepting Turkey as the regional *locum tenens* with duly enhanced responsibilities.¹⁹

The «signed document» or the Stoltenberg «minutes» confirm -indirectly, yet clearly- this perspective. Therein, the NATO Secretary General revealed that «*Following my discussions with Greek and Turkish leaders, the two Allies have agreed to enter into technical talks at NATO to establish mechanisms for military de-confliction to reduce the risk of incidents and accidents in the Eastern Mediterranean*», which was refuted by Greek diplomatic sources in the following announcement: «*In no way does the unilateral submission of a document with a request for comments within a week constitute the start of dialogue.*»²⁰ Regardless of the content, it is a fact that the Greek side has resorted to the practice of secret diplomacy and actually at the highest possible level, with the scope and substantial stake of this discussion -an unacceptable move in all respects- being our proclaimed and established national lines.

Then took place the MED7 Summit, i.e. the Summit of the Mediterranean States, in Ajaccio, Corsica. The joint resolution issued by all seven states was clear in paragraph 6: «*We reiterate our full support and solidarity with Cyprus and Greece in the face of the repeated infringements on their sovereignty and sovereign rights, as well as confrontational actions by Turkey. We call upon all the countries in the region to abide by international law, in particular international law of the sea, and encourage all parties to resolve their disputes through dialogue and negotiation. In this respect, we welcome the mediation efforts of the High Representative / Vice-President (of the European Commission) and Germany in order to achieve a resumption of the dialogue between Greece and Turkey on the maritime zone issue. In addition, we welcome the invitation by the Government of Cyprus to negotiate with Turkey, noting that delimitation of exclusive economic zones and continental shelf should be addressed through dialogue and negotiation in good faith, in full respect of international law and in accordance with the principle of good neighborly relations. In line with recent European Council and EU Council conclusions, we regret that Turkey has not responded to the repeated calls by the European Union to end its unilateral and illegal activities in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea. We reaffirm our determination to use all adequate means at the disposal of the European Union in response to these confrontational actions. In line with the latest Informal Meet-*

19. See: Troulis, M. (2019) *American-Turkish relations: Theory of alliances and geopolitical consideration*. Athens: Leimon.

20. Posting of NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on social networks and refutation by Greek diplomatic sources. See: Liberal (2020) «Athens denies technical talks with Ankara - The response to the NATO Secretary General». Available at: <https://www.liberal.gr/world/diapseudei-i-athina-tis-technikes-sunomilies-me-tin-agkura-i-apantisi-ston-gg-tou-nato/321252> [23/9 / 2020].

ing of EU Foreign Ministers (Gymnich), we agree to speed up work on the additional listings based on the proposals tabled so far, with a view to its rapid adoption. We maintain that in absence of progress in engaging Turkey into a dialogue and unless it ends its unilateral activities, the EU is ready to develop a list of further restrictive measures that could be discussed at the European Council on 24-25 September 2020 [author's note: the meeting was finally postponed]».²¹

French President Emmanuel Macron, after the end of the Summit, seemed to disregard “keeping the balance» and «careful wording» of Paragraph 6 of the Ajaccio Declaration, stating more clearly: «*Turkey has signed unacceptable agreements with the Libyan Government of National Accord, denying Greece its legal rights [...] We must note that today Turkey is no longer a partner in this region [...] We want to avoid escalation of tensions, but Turkey needs to clarify its intentions in some areas. As Europeans, we must stand firm and strong towards Erdogan.*»²² In response to these statements, the Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis preferred to declare –acting with defeatism and irrationality- that “*he does not want sanctions against Turkey*». In particular, during his press conference at the Thessaloniki International Fair 2020, he expressed the following unreasonable opinion: «*I have said many times that our desire is not to impose sanctions, because if we get to the point of enforcing them, then we will not have achieved the necessary de-escalation*».²³ It was the first time this view –unacceptable on grounds of national interests- was articulated at this very high level, but, all in all, it is far from new. In December 2019, Deputy Foreign Minister Miltiadis Varvitsiotis has already pointed out while addressing the Greek Parliament: «*It is our strategic decision not to ask for sanctions against Turkey.*»²⁴

21. Paragraph 6 of the Declaration of Ajaccio on 10 September 2020. See: Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs (2020) “Ajaccio declaration after the 7th Summit of the Southern EU countries (MED7)”. Available at: <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article9876> [23/9/2020].

22. Press conference of the President of France Emmanuel Macron after the end of the Euro-Mediterranean Conference (MED7). See: Euronews (2020) “Macron message from Corsica: Turkey is no longer a partner in East. Mediterranean”. Available at: <https://gr.euronews.com/2020/09/10/synantisi-mitsotaki-macron-stin-corsica> [23/9/2020].

23. Press conference of Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis in the 83rd TIF. See: To Vima (2020) “The full press conference of Kyriakos Mitsotakis at the TIF”. Available at: <https://www.tovima.gr/2020/09/14/politics/olokliri-synenteyksi-typou-tou-kyriakou-mitsotaki-sti-deth/> [23/9/2020].

24. Speech by Deputy Foreign Minister Miltiadis Varvitsiotis at the Standing Committee on European Affairs in December 2019. See: In (2019) “Varvitsiotis: It is our strategic decision not to ask for sanctions against Turkey”. Available at: <https://www.in.gr/2019/12/17/politics/vouli/varvitsiotis-stratigiki-apofasi-mas-na-min-zitisoume-kyroseis-eis-varostis-tourkias/> [23/9/2020].

Emitting erroneous messages - like Chamberlain - to the other side has contributed significantly to the exacerbation of the Turkish stance, especially since Ankara recognizes that Greece refuses to utilize those capabilities it has. In addition, it has offered diplomatic room to Turkish supporters to seek «windows» for crucial concessions on the part of Greece. The speech of the German Ambassador to Greece in the Greek Parliament is telling enough: *«Foreign Ministers met in Berlin and stated that there should be a document with options to be submitted next week [author's note: at the canceled Summit]. It will list all alternatives and the possibility of sanctions against Turkey [...] Germany has taken on a restrictive role. We cannot address Turkey with the utmost harshness because we will ruin our ability to mediate.»*²⁵ What «alternatives» does he refer to and which of them has the Greek side consented to? Isn't that a case of clear violation of an EU Member State's sovereign rights and sovereignty? Aren't we witnesses of a case of utter encroachment of international law by Turkey? What «alternatives» are there other than enforcement of severe sanctions until Ankara is brought into compliance in terms of its rhetoric and operations?

Instead of sanctions, it seems that we are being forced into an uneven compromise on the sharing of one party's vested rights, namely Greece. The «deconfliction mechanism» was announced at the EU summit on October 1, and allowed Germany to unfold its entire pro-Turkish agenda so as to refute allegations that Ankara was a destabilizing factor. Of course, it is quite puzzling why a document aimed at «peace and stability» (!) was kept secret («NATO secret»); besides, as we wondered in good time: *«Are we to cede national sovereign rights and national sovereignty, or not, through this «Mechanism» to Turkey with the blessings of Mr. Stoltenberg?»* Later on, Ioannis Th. Mazis added in his same interview: *«The term «deconfliction» is the one that mainly gives a meaning and determines by default the purpose and essence of the agreed «mechanism»; it is a term not used or rarely used in diplomacy or in international relations»,* while on the issue of establishing a «hotline» of direct communication, the following was pointed out: *«The already existing «deconfliction line» between Washington and Moscow was used to prevent a mutually unwanted critical situation related to current air operations of the two countries that used to take place concurrently in the wider region [...] It should be noted, however, that this case concerned the common need for voluntary coordination of two state actors, members of the UN Security Council (!), as they operate by use of military force on the territory of a third state, and not through air operations above areas that belong to the territory of one of them (US-Russia), i.e. the National Airspace or the international space under the national jurisdiction of one of these two (US-Russia), as in the case of an FIR of one of them, and in the case that concerns us, the Athens FIR! Therefore, any comparison with the case of a correspond-*

25. Speech by the Ambassador of Germany to Greece Ernst Reichel in the Greek Parliament. See: SKAI (2020) "German Ambassador: Carrot and stick to confront Turkey". Available at: <https://www.skai.gr/news/politics/germanos-presvis-karoto-kai-mastigio-gia-tin-antimetopisi-tis-tourkias> [23/9/2020].

ing «red telephone», in the text of the «deconfliction» mechanism agreed between Greece and Turkey within NATO, should inevitably take into account the Obligation of Turkey to submit flight plans when entry into the Athens FIR jurisdiction is intended! If the contrary is the case, this demonstrates that NATO secretly consents to undermining of the Athens FIR validity in favor of Turkey's illegal claims and that we -»confidentially»- accept this!»²⁶

The first messages of «readiness» of Athens for a major reduction of its strategic commitments have already been sent through the EEZ delimitation agreements with Italy and Egypt, and one wonders: «What kind of Turkish reactions, worse than the ones already unleashed, was Greece afraid of that kept Greeks away from delimiting an EEZ with Cyprus from the onset so as to attain a delimitation both ideal for national interests and totally lawful, and as well as an internationally legal protection?»²⁷ Avoiding a delimitation with the Republic of Cyprus, which would bind future negotiations with other actors, was intended precisely for this: to avoid being committed in the non-elimination (!) of the possibility to make large concessions without specific legal guarantees or conditionalities of a reliable and valid strategy towards Cyprus. Thus, Greece agreed not to grant rights of full effect to large islands, such as Crete, Rhodes, Karpathos and Kasos, to grant zero effect to small islands with economic activity, such as Chrysi, and to «split» Rhodes at the 28th meridian and beyond until the 32nd meridian as if Greece had no rights and no interest in developments in the area.

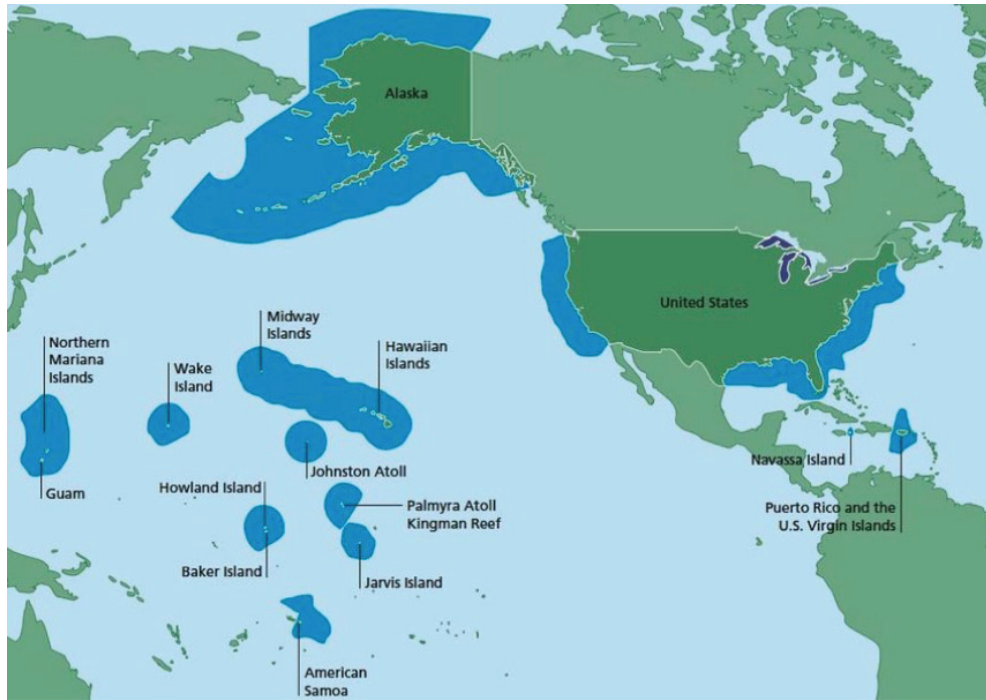
Following this, reaction by the Turkish Foreign Minister Mr. Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu was reasonable and well expected: «As it seems, there have been concessions in terms of sovereign rights of the islands and Crete and this essentially strengthens our positions. This agreement is in our interest, because no one can tell us that we cause tensions. No one can tell us not to go to these areas. No one can do anything about the research and drilling that Turkey is carrying out in the Eastern Mediterranean.»²⁸ Insistence by the Greek Government on relinquishing its sovereign rights and refusing to embrace the provisions of international law is highly irrational and nationally detrimental, especially if one considers international practice as, for example, in the case of the United States of America, which has granted full effect to rocks and semi-active submarine volcanoes of the Pacific (e.g. Wake Island). This is clearly shown in the map below:

26. Interview of the Professor of Economic Geography and Geopolitical Theory of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens Ioannis Th. Mazis on the website Militaire. Available at: <https://www.militaire.gr/mazis-michanismos-aposympiesis-i-michanismos-ekchorisis-kyriarchikon-dikaionaton/> [19/10/2020].

27. Mazis, I. Th. (2020) «Ioannis Mazis on the agreement with Egypt: Its potential consequences for Greece». *Xiaka Nea*. Available at: <https://xiakanea.gr/o-ioannis-mazis-gia-ti-symfonia-me-tin-egypto-i-dynitikes-synepies-tis-gia-tin-ellada/> [18/10/2020].

28. Mazis, I. Th. (2020) «Ioannis Mazis on the agreement with Egypt: Its potential consequences for Greece». *Xiaka Nea*. Available at: <https://xiakanea.gr/o-ioannis-mazis-gia-ti-symfonia-me-tin-egypto-i-dynitikes-synepies-tis-gia-tin-ellada/> [18/10/2020].

Map of demarcated EEZ areas in the Pacific by the United States



Source: Laws, K., Vesecky, JF and Paduan, JD (2011) "Predicting the capabilities of ship monitoring by HF radar in coastal regions". *Oceans 2011*. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315916331_Predicting_the_capabilities_of_ship_monitoring_by_HF_radar_in_coastal_regions [14/10/2020].

The «pro-Turkish» bloc is already in a frenzy. The problem would be if the «pro-Greek» bloc adjusts its own policy after watching Athens' political elites behaving in a somewhat irrational and indecisive -to the point of suicidal- manner. Statements by «all-weather» and cross-party advisers of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs are indicative, according to which «*the law of treaties*» does not facilitate our efforts to annul the Turkish-Libyan agreement. First of all, «*the process of annulment of an agreement must be triggered by the parties. A third party may not ask to «cancel it» because, if so, then the integrity of conventions will be shuttered*».²⁹ In simple words, the same way one might say «Cyprus is none of your business», then we have «no business» with Crete, Rhodes, Karpathos and Kasos when these islands - through the Turkish-Libyan pseudo-pact- are left with zero effect. According to such a type of reasoning, the specific islands of the Aegean are now «lying far away», let alone Cyprus.

29. Speech by Professor of International Law, University of Piraeus, Petros Liakouras, within the framework of an event in Kastelorizo on September 19, 2020. Available at: <https://rb.gy/jkr8pd> [23/9/2020].

France has already clearly lowered its tones, despite the fact that Turkish aggression continues as usual with the release of NAVTEX for live-fire gunnery exercises between Kastelorizo and Rhodes,³⁰ the stay of the Barbaros research vessel in the Cypriot continental shelf and the naval tricks of their other vessel, Oruç Reis, which moves around the port of Antalya in the Eastern Mediterranean. In the case of the Greek-French strategic alignment, we currently experience the... collapse of the theory (!), in which «two states align and ally, when their interests converge, have common understanding of a threat and share common strategic insights». In the case of Athens-Paris, all three occur, but lacks the necessary conventional precondition: The parties of this case study must both be rational. Let us assume which of the two behaves irrationally...

Apart from being irrational, it is also myopic, since the Greek political elite came to the point of acknowledging as «positive» and «beneficial» for national interests the visit to Greece of the American Secretary of State Mr. Mike Pompeo, just a few weeks before the Presidential elections in the US, where a large community of Greek and Greek Cypriot expatriates lives. Undoubtedly, *Greece got “no kind of deterrence” in return to Mr. Pompeo’s visit to Thessaloniki and Souda. This phrase may only be considered a witticism that becomes apparent if ones examines this term: «the ‘deterrent’ discourages or forces the opponent away from taking dangerous and undesirable actions against the former».*³¹ As timely emphasized in the same interview of Ioannis Th. Mazis, since the consent on critical requests of the American side was secured through reciprocity and rationally handled patronage, then:

- Why didn't Washington contribute to avoid or correct the Greek mistake regarding the completion of NATO's text «Greece-Turkey Agreement on a Deconfliction Mechanism»?
- Why was the US indifferent in view of the UN registering the Turkish-Libyan Government pseudo-memorandum and why did they fail to act to prevent that development?
- Why are these continual diplomatic defeats of Greece «allowed» and especially the failure to setup a mechanism for imposing sanctions on Turkey?
- Why was there no reference to the «re-establishment» of European treaties un-

30. Release of a NAVTEX for a live-fire exercise of Turkey between Kastelorizo and Rhodes from the Smyrna Station of Turkey's Office of Navigation, Hydrography and Oceanography. Available at: <https://www.skai.gr/news/world/nea-tourkiki-navtex-gia-askisi-me-pragmatika-pyra-metaksy-rodou-kai-kastelizou> [27/9/2020].

31. Interview of the Professor of Economic Geography and Geopolitical Theory of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens Ioannis Th. Mazis on the website Militaire. Available at: <https://www.militaire.gr/ioannis-mazis-giati-chairetai-o-kosmos-kai-chamogela-patera-arthro-gia-tis-pseydaisthiseis-mas-sta-ellinotoyrkika/> [19/10 / 2020].

- der Article 47.2 on «mutual assistance between European states» and which the Greek Prime Minister recently made mention of in the Thessaloniki International Non-Fair? In conjuncture with Greece's failure to sign a Defense Agreement with France, this also constitutes a major diplomatic and strategic mistake of Greece, since it irrationally compromised the development of its high potential to ensure national integrity in the midst of a chaotic international environment
- Why does the Greek side insist on «resting» on the bliss of appeasement by supporting the provisions of Article 29 TEU and Article 215 TFEU on «military assistance»?
 - What preparatory actions has Greece taken ahead of the forthcoming — as it is leaked — «Multilateral Conference on the Eastern Mediterranean»? What «red lines» does Greece set in view of such a prospect?

Following this, the interview of the American Ambassador to Greece was just the capstone: *«I have no doubt that the Greek government and Kyriakos Mitsotakis are committed to a 100% diplomatic solution, as well as to the hard work and compromises that will be needed to solve these problems.»*³² When the public debate reaches the point of considering possible «necessary compromises», then someone has allowed space for such concessions apparently. Most obviously, the US understand that the wider region is under their indivisible control through NATO security structures. Unless the geostrategic costs to be incurred by them in the event of a violation of Greek sovereign rights become clear, they will continue to handle these issues as if it were a request of the Argolis Regional Authorities to include the islands of Spetses, Hydra, Trizina, Methana and Poros in their jurisdiction.

D. Theory and practice: Proposals for Reorganization

Using open sources as the sole source of information, we estimate that the need to analyze the behaviors of actors in the geopolitical complex of Greece calls for creating an observatory of systemic geopolitical indicators and indexing.³³ It is the first and basic stage for the quantification of seemingly qualitative features with the use of mathematical models. In this case, it is a *sine qua non* for the mathematical cor-

32. Interview of US Ambassador to Greece Jeffrey Payat on September 19, 2020. See: Open (2020) «Jeffrey Payat Statements on De-escalation». Available at: <https://www.tvopen.gr/watch/39603/apokleistikoopendhloseistoytzefripaiatgiathnapoklimakosh> [23/9/2020].

33. Mazis, I. Th. And Digas, A. (2019) «Integrated methodology for the construction of complex indicators in modern Systemic Geopolitical Analysis». *Civitas Gentium*, 7 (1), p. 159–204.

relation and the ontological interconnection of the characteristics of the four Pillars of geopolitical power that affect its redistribution, within the geopolitical complex of Greece - Turkey - Cyprus - Egypt - Israel - Lebanon and Libya, and under the influence of the Geopolitical Hyper-system containing the following Poles of International Power: i) France ii) USA, iii) Russia iv) EU and v) NATO.

The case of French defense aid has been repeatedly supported in the context of public statements. As mentioned above, the high degree of convergence of interests in how power and influence correlations are perceived in the wider Middle East has led France and Greece to commonly realize that Turkey constitutes the major threat to their interests and stability in the region. This conclusion is the only safe guarantee for building and strengthening an allied relationship with the highest degree of commitment of the Great Power in order to ensure integrity of the lesser power, in this case Greece.

In time (summer of 2019), it was pointed out that Greece must focus on acquiring ships «1) of enhanced stealth characteristics, so that they are difficult to target, armed with long-range surface-to-air missiles, 2) of high aerodynamic performance, so as to be able to attack both aircrafts and cruise and ballistic missiles, and 3) equipped with very long-range surface-to-surface and surface-to-ground missiles in order to be able to project power from a safe distance».³⁴ In this direction, the Greek-French cooperation is a «one way street», given that Turkey already moves to acquire such technologies or develop them using its own resources and means, at least in part. Under the guidance of France and in the context of European co-production and co-development programs, Greece will be able to join them and escape from its fate -so far- of a «passive buyer». Besides, the Greek-French armament cooperation has produced significant positive results for Athens in the past with the acquisition of the Mirage 2000-5 aircrafts or Scalp missiles, and even today it may help respond to critical issues at stake such as the coverage of the open sea area of the Eastern Mediterranean.

As already stressed in 2019, given that «we are currently facing a new phase in Greek-Turkish relations, probably more dangerous than in the past, and we need immediate and urgent strengthening of Greek deterrent capabilities, in order to secure an advantage over Turkey and thus neutralize Turkish expansionism. And it is France once again to offer solutions to Greece. For example, French frigates equipped with Aster 30 air defense missiles and Scalp Naval cruise missiles with a range of more than 1000 km will provide our Navy with strategic deep-impact capabilities».³⁵ Undoubtedly, the «French choice» regarding the Greek Armed Forces'

34. Mazis, I. Th. (2019) «The strategic dimension of military cooperation between Greece and France». *In.gr*. Available at: <https://www.in.gr/2019/08/26/politics/stratigiki-diastasi-tis-stratiotikis-synergasias-elladas-gallias/> [20/10/2020].

35. Mazis, I. Th. (2019) «Greek-French friendship and Greek armaments». *In.gr*.

armament programs is favored due to specific critical factors. Indicatively, certain factors are listed below:

- ▶ Strong familiarity of Greek Armed Forces officers with French defense systems since they have been part of the Greek arsenal for many years. This has a direct impact on the time it takes to integrate components and train staff.
- ▶ Harmonization of French weapons systems (see Mirage 2000-5 platform) with realities in the Mediterranean area.
- ▶ State-of-the-art technology that can be tuned into space technology (see CSO (Composante Spatiale Optique) satellite recognition system, the SIGINT satellite network under the name CERES.³⁶
- ▶ Convergence of strategic insights in the wider Middle East. The identification of geostrategic priorities ensures high mutual commitment, while at the same time guarantees adequate and timely refueling of the Greek Armed Forces in case of escalation.

Furthermore, a legal approach to Greek-Turkish disputes, both in general and from a theoretical point of view, should be also understood -apart from a strictu sensu legal approach of international law- as a critical geopolitical tool for risk configuration. International law, i.e. its conventional framework (international treaties – conventions – agreements, etc.), with its general rules, customary international law, as well as the existing national and international case law (i.e. the decisions of national and international Courts or other international tribunals in related cases) constitute a very broad regulatory framework, which may allow or be subject to a number of interpretations depending on the scientific and ideological position of each analyst / examiner, as well as the respective geopolitical risk / question to be analyzed. In this view, geopolitics anything but contradicts International Law, but rather «drives» an interpretation of it and consequently geostrategy, which in turn urges for establishing new rules of law (i.e. new agreements, or international bilateral or multilateral conventions between states - International Organizations, whose very content is formulated to serve the interests of the states that conclude them, i.e. their geostrategic priorities. As it is clear, the «Geopolitics - Geostrategy - International Law» scheme is absolutely interlinked and permanently interdependent, since it is nothing but static and runs on the basis of the «feedback loop»; an essential element, which makes it extremely dynamic and interactive in its function.³⁷

Available at: <https://www.in.gr/2019/08/15/politics/diplomatia/mazis-ellinogalliki-filia-kai-ellinikoi-eksoplismoi/> [19/10/2020].

36. Mazis, I. Th. (2019) «The French space program and the participation of Greece». *In.gr*. Available at: <https://www.in.gr/2019/08/30/apopsi/galliko-diastimiko-programma-kai-symmetoxi-tis-elladas/> [20/10/2020].

37. Mazis, I. Th. And Domatioti, X. (2019) «The interdisciplinary nature of Systemic

Systemic Geopolitical Analysis, a scientific tool introduced in the appropriate public debate by Professor of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens Ioannis Th. Mazis, is governed by rules of geography and according to its definition, the solution of an international (legal) dispute as suggested by International Law and the limits set by it, bear a substantial effect on the «dynamic» process of redistribution of power between the actors in an area, despite «static» requirements of the balance of power. Consequently, combined weighting of elements (as resulting from the Pillars) of geopolitical analysis, with corresponding ones from International Law (since the latter is included as an essential component in the First and Fourth Pillar of Systemic Geopolitical Analysis - SGA), contributes in producing accurate evaluations of the system under examination and ultimately reinforces clearly the validity of the geopolitical model of power redistribution trends.³⁸

Ignorance of Systemic Geopolitics by scholars of International Theory, but in this case by the Greek political rank and the statutory framework of decision-making, certainly does not help in the scientific and quantitative analysis of entities such as those of (re)distribution of power and balance of power; therefore, it does not render realistic the conclusions drawn in the geopolitical field realistic, nor does it contribute to the development of a rational national policy. On the contrary, these analysts, bound by what they airily consider «power», unintentionally serve the geostrategic pursuits of the neighboring country, by irrationally and suicidally judging and sentencing themselves a priori. Any geostrategic approach that does not take into account the result of the (necessarily) preceding Geopolitical Analysis, is deficient and thus fails inevitably to serve the National Interest (raison d'état).

The geopolitical concept is based on systematic thematic mapping of stakeholders / actors, in-depth analysis of existing geopolitical parameters of competition and differences at the i) defense ii) political, iii) economic (including energy-related activities) iv) cultural, / information level in order to create the geopolitical image of state actors in the SE Mediterranean, including: 1) regional protagonists / poles of power at the hyper-systemic level, 2) description of competitive phenomena, 3) network of interactions and individual sub-systems of spheres of influence for an in-depth assessment of any form of regional cooperation.³⁹ Within these theoretical frameworks,

Geopolitical Analysis: Definition, processing and use of geopolitical indicators of legal content. The case of the Arctic Ocean and the maritime redistribution of power (delimitation of continental shelf)». *Civitas Gentium*, 7 (1), p. 328–354.

38. Mazis, I. Th. And Domatioti, X. (2019) *ibid.*, P. 328–354.

39. See: Mazis, I. Th. (2012) *Post-theoretical Critique of International Relations and Geopolitics: The neo-positivist framework*. Athens: Papazisis. Mazis, I. Th. (2015) *Analyse Méthathéorique des Relations Internationales et de la Géopolitique. Le cadre du Neopositivisme*. Athens: Papazisis Publications. Domatioti, X. (2018) *Systemic Geopolitical Analysis. Interdisciplinarity and Multimethodological Approach* (introduction: I. Th.

the algorithmic approach of Systemic Geopolitical Analysis allows to identify state and non-state actors of power in the Eastern Mediterranean region, such as:

- ▶ Main interests and strategies
- ▶ Understanding of internal geopolitical reality and the way it is perceived by external actors
- ▶ Sub-systemic rivalries based on the 4 pillars of Systemic Geopolitical Analysis
- ▶ Mapping the network of correlations with other actors by index or combination, where required
- ▶ Targeted analysis of hidden rivalries and friction based on the existing geopolitical reality (e.g. migration flows, Turkish revisionism, effects of the pandemic, energy security, environmental challenges, refugee flows and illegal immigration in relation to internal security, etc.)
- ▶ Determining the possibility of (lack of) interconnection of geopolitical factors between them
- ▶ Identification and investigation of the most important factors that affect state actors in the Geographical Complex of the Eastern Mediterranean
- ▶ Mapping interactions with external actors and Hyper-systemic actors
- ▶ Identification and analysis of how interaction of these factors unfolds
- ▶ Positive and negative impact that may affect interregional cooperation between actors in the South-Eastern Mediterranean
- ▶ Evaluation of the situation and risks arising from the drafted strategy and formulation of proposals for interregional cooperation, including risk mitigation measures in case of failure of the strategy under the proposed model.

E. The appeal to The Hague (The International Court of Justice) - How, when and why

The public debate on the appeal in The Hague has major implications for Greek positions and their confrontation with Turkish expansionism. The previously analyzed view may contribute to the deeper consideration of risks for Greece, the EU and regional stability in general, which arise from the questioning of our territorial sovereignty and the corresponding resulting Greek sovereign rights with respect to the Megisti Complex and Turkey. In addition, it helps decipher the reason why any thought of appealing to The Hague at this time period and in the current geopolitical circumstances is probably not a realistic prospect, and in this regard, its consideration may need to be referred to at a later time and only when the following conditions allow such a discussion on a logical and pragmatic basis. A necessary condition is, of course, the degree of feasibility of such a judicial settlement (i.e., in

particular, the drawing up of a joint agreement between the two plaintiffs, which will also include a covenant on the legal framework under which the International Court of Justice will examine the facts and adjudicate the case before it).

Kastelorizo is a small complex of islands, of special geopolitical importance and disproportionate to its size. The largest island of the complex is Megisti (official name of Kastelorizo, which is why the complex is formally called the Megisti Complex as well), which includes Ro and Stroggili. Pursuant to Article 121 (Law of the Sea), it is entitled to an Exclusive Economic Zone, as it is the case with mainland territories. This inalienable right, as well as the right to the Continental Shelf, is confirmed not only by the applicable International Law, but also by all the Hyper-systemic actors with an impact on the interaction between the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean. We recall the statements of the US Ambassador to Greece, as well as that of the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, which we have already quoted in a previous subsection herein.

On the fact that the Megisti Complex is the focal point of Turkish provocations and Ankara's demands, an early warning had been shared although it was not taken sufficiently into account. Indicatively, on January 25, 2015, this projection was concluded as the «juice» of Ioannis Mazis' geopolitical analysis with the phrase - among many others: *«Ankara's goal is to turn Turkey into an international hub for natural gas coming from the Levantine Basin, the Arab-Persian Gulf, Iran and the Black Sea»*.⁴⁰ This warning was repeated in an interview on February 28, 2017.⁴¹ It is not exclusively the verification of these predictions that evidences their high importance, but also by the context of this period. It is recalled that the public debate was overwhelmed by the fear of a hot incident either on Panagia Island or later (2018-2019), due also to the ramming incident of the Greek Coast Guard's boat «Gavdos» in Imia. Consequently, the prediction by Mazis was somewhat contrary to the general atmosphere, but the political system's failure to understand it led to reluctance for a more effective projection of power at the Megisti Complex and the apparent surprise by Turkey's operational strategy.

The questioning of Kastelorizo's EEZ and continental shelf in the international

40. Interview of the Professor of Economic Geography and Geopolitical Theory of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens Ioannis Th. Mazis to journalist Costas Venizelos and the «Phileleftheros» newspaper. Available at: <https://energypress.gr/news/i-mazis-i-toyrkia-thelei-na-metatrapei-se-diethni-komvo-fysikoy-aerioy> [20/10/2020].

41. Interview of the Professor of Economic Geography and Geopolitical Theory of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens Ioannou Th. Mazis to the journalist Nikos Stravelakis and «Real FM» radio station. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYgwpJkN9rs&index=964&list=LLQOIRG61nbihT2ZDViGmEpw&ab_channel=%CE%9A%CE%B1%CE%B8%CE%B1%CF%81%CEA%94%CF%8D%CE%BD%CE%B1%CE%BC%CE%B7 [20/10/2020].

political reality comes only from Turkey, obviously due to the maximalistic drive and the policy of Ottoman expansionism. Presence of a research vessel and potential collection of seismic data near the Complex does not favor the conditions for dialogue but raises reasonable questions: Why does Turkey collect (or pretend to be collecting) seismic data, if it (in fact) does collect them?⁴² If it is in the context of geophysical surveys, with a view to increase planned drillings and evaluations in an area that has not been demarcated, then it acquires -from the Turkish point of view- an exceptional bargaining value at the negotiating table. If it also serves the need to create '*faits accomplis*' and launch extortions vested in unfounded international court cases, this constitutes an unlawful Turkish intervention in any bilateral dialogue,⁴³ (possible or not) drafting of a corresponding agreement and recourse to court.⁴⁴

Turkey's real intentions are aimed at a bilateral political dialogue on a large number of illegitimate claims against Greece, as imposed only by the illegal threat of war (*casus belli*) and therefore by the use of force, which has peaked in intensity during the previous summer months, or since 1974 with the invasion and occupation of 38% of the area of Cyprus, and subsequent violations, breaches, overflights, «mini-collisions», NOTAM, NAVTEX in the Aegean, illegal MOU with Libya, etc. If we are to be realistic, it is clear that Turkey does not want any appeal to the Hague to discuss a possible demarcation between the 28th and the 32nd 18o meridian, because this way it shall recognize the Republic of Cyprus as a state entity, and also run the risk of the Court rejecting all other unrealistic and evidently unfounded claims in the region (Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean), that pertain to its utterly absurd in legal terms claim that the islands, in general and regardless of size (!), have no rights to EEZ and continental shelf.

Let us emphasize, however, that after signing of the Greece-Egypt pact and its ratification by the Parliament last August, Greece made the mistake of accepting and ratifying a reduced effect even of the large island of Crete, as well as Rhodes, Karpathos and Kassos, and therefore creating a negative case law against the maritime zones of the Kastelorizo Complex. However, there will also be no discussion about the demarcated area between the 26th and 28th meridian because the effect of islands in delimiting both continental shelf and Exclusive Economic Zone is recognized. Therefore, with regard to the geographical area between Rhodes and Cyprus, any

42. See: «Ioannis Mazis on the agreement with Egypt: Its potential consequences for Greece». Available at: <https://infognomonpolitics.gr/2020/08/o-ioannis-mazis-gia-ti-symfonia-me-tin-aigipto-oi-dynitikes-synepeies-tis-gia-tin-ellada/> [29 / 9/2020].

43. See: Mazis, I. Th. (2020) «Mr. Erdogan's fantasies and the dialogue». Available at: https://www.real.gr/real_editors_guest_editor/arthro/oi-oneirokseis-tou-erntogan-kai-o-dialogos-667756/ [29/9/2020].

44. The reasons why this region is of particular importance to Turkey are analyzed on the basis of economic and technical data and forecasts about the announced Black Sea deposit.

discussion leading to a joint agreement and future appeal to a court presupposes on the one hand a formal recognition of the Republic of Cyprus by Turkey and on the other a recognition of the effect of Kastelorizo on any future continental shelf and EEZ delimitation.

Turkey operates illegally to the detriment of sovereign rights (EEZ and continental shelf) and sovereignty (territorial waters) in the Aegean. Regarding the continental shelf from a geological-geomorphological point of view, let us recall here to the other party that in the Aegean region there is no oceanic crust and that the Aegean Sea lies on a continental crust as a result of successive tectonic faults and orogenesis; it must also be recalled that sedimentogenesis, mainly, comes from the Greek mainland, while the sedimentogenesis from Asia Minor is limited to the coastal zone of Smyrna, Adramiti and Naples Ephesus. There is a huge volume of literature that justifies the above scientific views and no doubt is allowed.

Beyond that, however, under the view of international law, in accordance with the Law of the Sea (as formulated by fundamental international multilateral Conventions of 1958 and especially by the more recent Convention of 1982, Montego Bay, which is sometimes invoked by Turkey but only «selectively», in accordance with its case-by-case interests, since Turkey is not included even to date among the signatory states), islands have a continental shelf *ipso facto et ab initio*, but most importantly, an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Therefore, Ankara's legal arguments on the continental shelf (especially in the Aegean) and the corresponding Turkish interpretative view that the Greek Aegean islands «*lie on the extension of the Asia Minor continental plate and therefore lack their own independent continental shelf (and its related EEZ)*» are confuted by all interpretive schools of International Law. This is, moreover, confirmed by the entire international case law, which, regardless of special circumstances, generally accepts as an interpretative starting point the provisions of Article 121 of UNCLOS (1982),⁴⁵ that those identified as «islands» possess all the maritime zones that mainland coasts also have, namely the Territorial Waters and the Continental Shelf (which exists *ipso facto* and *ab initio* for the coastal state), as well as the Contiguous Zone and the EEZ (provided of course that the coastal state chooses to declare them).

In conclusion, Turkey has no sovereign rights in the Aegean, except in the areas concerning its own territorial waters and their corresponding continental shelf. With

45. Article 121 (Regime of islands): “1. *An island is a naturally formed area of land, surrounded by water, which is above water at high tide*; 2. *Except as provided for in paragraph 3, the territorial sea, the contiguous zone, the exclusive economic zone, and the continental shelf of an island are determined in accordance with the provisions of this Convention applicable to other land territory*; 3. *Rocks which cannot sustain human habitation or economic life of their own shall have no exclusive economic zone or continental shelf*”. UNCLOS (1982).

regard to matters of full sovereignty, any debate presupposes and requires lift of the *casus belli*, whose use -in any case according to the high principles of international law- is, from a legal point of view, the worst international crime as a violation of fundamental Article 2, par. 4, of the UN Charter that prohibits the use of force, but also the threat of use of force between states. A point that Greece has not sufficiently stressed, for a number of years, in its international diplomatic dialogue with institutions and actors of the so-called «international» community, and especially within the EU (especially in view of the sudden shift in its stance towards the support to Turkey's accession process from the 1990s onwards). The extension of one's territorial sea to the maximum permissible limit of 12 n.m., as per the Law of the Sea of 1982, is a sovereign right of Greece, a unilateral legitimate act of the coastal state that fully arises - and most importantly is legitimized - from international law and may not be challenged despite Ankara's controversial and biased interpretations.

Therefore, militarization of the Aegean islands was a defensive act of the Greek State, dictated by Turkey's formation of the Aegean Army and by the revisionistic on the whole and increasingly aggressive behavior of Turkey after illegally invading and occupying -to date- 38% of the area of the Republic of Cyprus. It was also performed due to the Turkish unlawful behavior in the wider Aegean area (at sea and mainly in the air), Thrace / Evros and the Eastern Mediterranean, in general, which may not be operationally justified between allied countries since 1952 within NATO. Any thought of demilitarizing the Aegean islands necessarily presupposes disbanding the Turkish Aegean Army, which nevertheless is not sufficient because its re-establishment or concealment in pseudo-operational military formations to the same end, is totally feasible in operational terms within a few hours, whereas Greece's respective re-fortification of the Greek islands requires painstaking and time-consuming efforts (of many months and years). Of course, it also calls for an institutionally guaranteed permanent abolition of Turkey's offensive-minded military apparatus in the region's operational area. Will Turkish political leaders discuss such an issue? If so, it would be both useful and... equally difficult! Similarly, Greece reserves the right to defend itself, and in fact in all three elements of its territory, in the Air, at Sea and on Land (mainland or islands). A look at the comparative statistics of overflights (overhead flights) of the Hellenic National Defense General Staff⁴⁶ in recent years is telling of escalating Turkish aggressiveness in the region. Indicatively, the total of 51 overflights counted in 2009 has reached 364, just for the first half of 2020.

All of the above will hardly be accepted by the Turkish leadership and therefore any thought of dialogue prejudices the intervention of Hyper-systemic actors at the level of diplomacy, but also the projection of power of France in the context of which

46. Statistics on infringements and violations of national airspace. Available at: <https://geetha.mil.gr/paravaseis-paraviaseis/enaerios-choros-archeio-paravaseon-paraviaseon/> [29/9/2020].

the Greek-Cypriot defense doctrine may be activated. Any objections to the withdrawal of research vessels are intended to keep up appearances in terms of communication and satisfy Turkey's national public opinion in Turkey, in a period of social and domestic turmoil, amplified by the economic effects of the pandemic and the fall of Turkish lira. It is to be expected that, as a matter of Turkish practice, externalization of internal problems becomes an issue of national security and external threat to avoid thwarting Recep Tayyip Erdogan's many years attempting to impose Ottoman expansionism and related fantasies.⁴⁷

F. Challenges and possible limitations of the Greek-Egyptian Pact

Ratification of the Greek-Egyptian Pact by the Greek Parliament may not be commented, either positively or negatively, without a holistic consideration of the underlying risks for a future full demarcation with Cyprus in the context of geopolitical analysis. At scientific level, no meaningful comments may be made on the demarcated line between Greece and Egypt since there is no technical annex where reasoning and methodology of said demarcation are presented. Consequently, any interpretation on the issue of effect made and attempted in this paper is based on qualitative rather than quantitative characteristics.

Deviation from a hypothetical middle line, which Greece had to follow until a demarcation was finally reached, is obvious. As more specifically pointed out in paragraph 1 of article 156 of Law 4001/2011, it is stated that: *«failing delimitation agreement with neighboring states, whose coasts are adjacent or opposite to the Greek ones, the outer limit of the continental shelf and exclusive economic zone (following its declaration) is the median line every point of which is equidistant from the nearest points on the baselines (both continental and insular) from which the breadth of the territorial seas of each of the two States is measured»*.

According to the above law, in case of non-delimitation with neighboring states, Greece may «consider» that the principle of equidistance applies to the determination of the EEZ and its continental shelf. Based on the legislation in force until the ratification of the Greek-Egyptian demarcation pact, the signed demarcation with Egypt moves the continental shelf north of the «median line» provided by Law 2001/2011 (the «Maniatis Law»). However, it is necessary to consider whether there was a possible approach from Athens, which chose not to demarcate along the median line, for reasons of geomorphology of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Mediterranean Ridge,⁴⁸

47. See: Mazis, I. Th. (2020) «Mr. Erdogan's fantasies and the dialogue». Available at: https://www.real.gr/real_editors_guest_editor/arthro/oi_oneirokseis_tou_erntogan_kai_o_dialogos-667756/ [29/9/2020].

48. An extensive presentation of the Mediterranean Ridge's geomorphological features

but also as an incentive for potential future geostrategic synergies between Egypt and Greece, in the context of a broader cooperation / alliance that will include Cyprus, and potentially Israel against the immediate and clear threat of Erdogan's Ottoman expansion in cooperation with the Organization of the Muslim Brotherhood.

At the level of geopolitical analysis and consequently geostrategic synthesis, we have to distinguish the risk and hazard parameters lurking in this case of partial demarcation deferring definite and final effort to resolve delimitation at the section east of point E of the agreement in future time. Configuration of risk parameters depends on short-term actions that are scheduled to start in the fall of 2020, as well as medium-term ones. Short-term actions mainly concern the beginning of seismic surveys south of Crete in accordance with the autumn 2019 announcements by the Greek Government. We remind you that surveys were originally planned for winter 2020, but geopolitical upheavals caused by the Prime Minister's announcement in the fall of 2019 on seismic surveys helped speed up the current Greek-Turkish dispute.⁴⁹

Here, assumptions and conditions of cooperation are reinforced by a possible Israel-Cyprus-Egypt-Greece energy interconnection via gas pipeline such as the East Med or via the Cyprus-Greece-Cyprus-Greece-Egypt power interconnection, as designed by the EU, funded as a Project of Common Interest (PCI) and included in the strategic agenda of the MED – TSO cooperation program, with the involvement and contribution of all Mediterranean electricity distribution companies. Of course, with regard to East Med, construction of this huge project is budgeted in the order of 10 billion euros and covering this may not rely on gas supply from a single field or on ultimately less gas availability than double the volume estimated on paper to meet capacity. Viability of such a project depends on finding deposits in the Greek and Egyptian maritime space. If this happens on the demarcated line between Greece-Egypt, it may be the keystone for implementation of this construction project, based on Article 2 of this agreement and the tripartite agreement with Cyprus regarding the total delimitation between Greece-Egypt-Cyprus. Therefore, completing the delimitation process in the remaining part that potentially unites the Cypriot and Greek Exclusive Economic Zone is the prerequisite for any realization of energy interconnections. Ripening of conditions along with Turkey's blackmailing behavior lead to the creation of a strategic subsystem of France-Greece-Cyprus-Israel and consequently Egypt in the Mediterranean. Non-implementation of this strategic

and the Eastern Mediterranean geology is not considered in this paper. The authors have made extensive mention to this subject in the reference text below that follows herein under the title "Third point of critique: Geopolitical Analysis in the Energy Complex of Eastern Mediterranean", pp. 281-349. First publication: in.gr, TA NEA, <https://bit.ly/2Xd5ifJ>.

49. A forecast of current developments was analyzed extensively in the paper: Mazis, I. Th. and Sgouros, GA (2020) *Geopolitical Analysis in the Eastern Mediterranean Complex*. Athens: Leimon.

Sub-system is a deadly mistake by Athens and Nicosia and signals the beginning of geopolitical annihilation for the Dipole of Greek-Cypriot Hellenism.

G. Stronger together

As mentioned earlier, France is potentially the only European power to fill the gap left by the North Atlantic Alliance in the Mediterranean with the creation of a France-Greece-Cyprus-Israel-Egypt strategic subsystem. Specifically, as mentioned again in an earlier joint publication of Ioannis Mazis and Georgios Sgouros: *«It is proven that, within NATO, there is a need to seriously revisit issues of political and defense cooperation among its members, with serious penalty clauses when deviations are found. A collective security system loses at least half of its usefulness when it does not ensure security and peaceful coexistence between structural elements, which are also integral functional components of its internal apparatus. Inevitably, it will fail to respond to the kinds of external challenges it was created for. It will inescapably generate centrifugal forces, which will cause dissolving trends of entropy and systemic decline... France is a country that lends itself to a similar wake-up call and moral action, and its geographical nature with its projections of power in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, combined with its nuclear and aeronautical power, deterministically make it the right actor to take over the role of the «sub-systemic coordinator / organizer» in the geopolitical Complex of the Mediterranean. France's moral strength as a pole of democracy and a staunch champion of human rights in the European context contributes greatly to increasing its acceptance, as a hub providing sub-systemic security to its «close partners».*⁵⁰

In January 2020, joint condemnation of Turkish aggressiveness by France and Greece raised a glimmer of optimism to effectively deter Turkey.⁵¹ However, despite fervent statements by the French Presidency and tangibly supportive actions on the part of Emmanuel Macron, there has been no such follow-up with the blame put clearly on the Greek Government. The strategic alignment of Greece and France was seen as a «misfortune» for the Athens elite, which chose to remain loyal to the syndrome of fear and appeasement, and managed to even estrange France, possibly the most ardent supporter -in geopolitical reality- of Greek national interests in recent decades. Turkey's identification with specific Islamist networks in the Wider Middle East and its alignment with the Muslim Brotherhood is in direct contrast

50. Mazis, I. Th. And Sgouros, GA (2020) *Geopolitical Analysis in the Eastern Mediterranean Complex*. Athens: Leimon.

51. In (2020) «Mitsotakis-Macron: Joint condemnation of Turkish provocations, a new chapter in Greek-French relations». Available at: <https://www.in.gr/2020/01/29/politics/kyvernisi/oi-koines-diloseis-mitsotaki-makron/> [20/10/2020].

to France's geostrategic priorities, which are in line with fostering Paris' historical role in this geographical area. To this end and with the US partially absent, due to the need to shift the US operational focus to the Pacific to balance the rise of China, France and Turkey claim the position of regional locum tenens as they enter the same geopolitically sensitive areas where a power vacuum developed in the aftermath of the so-called «Arab Spring».⁵² Therefore, they both compete for the same geostrategic asset, which directly lays the foundations for France to strongly commit in favor of balancing forces that move - with determination and dynamism - against Turkish maximalism. Does the Hellenic Republic intend to be a critical link in the resulting «geostrategic chain»?

The immediate geopolitical issue of halting Turkish-Islamist revisionism, sponsored by the Muslim Brotherhood, has already been raised by France, Israel and Egypt, and therefore going into depth would be redundant in this paper. In this context, it is worth mentioning that based on data and scientific publications from Turkish universities, possible locations of Turkey's planned drillings for 2021,⁵³ or perhaps even earlier, all lie beyond the 28th meridian. The data are known since March 2020 and have been published as early as July 2020, shortly before the beginning of seismic surveys by Oruç Reis. They are completely in line with our remarks in a 2013 paper on Methane Hydrates.⁵⁴ It is unknown whether this information and our paper were taken into account or spotted by competent government agencies. The bottom line is that if a Greek strategy, as laid out by the Greek Foreign Minister regarding our EEZ delimitation with the Cypriot Government, represents a strategic goal of Greece, then the start of these drillings may raise tensions to the maximum west and south of Kastelorizo (see Map 1). Compare with Maps 2 and 3 of Ioannis T. Mazis and Georgios-Alexandros Sgouros, who - since 2011 - had identified and predicted this current Turkish claim as shown in Map 1 designed by Turkish scientists in 2020! Said Identification, Mapping and Geopolitical Forecasting have been carried out by Mazis and Sgouros back in 2011; of course, respective Greek government authorities took no account of them. It is clear that Turkey aims to appropriate all these deposits.

52. Indicatively, see: Mazis, I.Th. (2012) *Geography of the Islamist movement in the Middle East*. Athens: Papazisis. Mazis, I.Th. (2000) *Secret Islamic Orders and Political-Economic Islam in Modern Turkey*. 2nd ed. Athens: Proskinio. Nikolaou-Patragas, K.Th. (2017) *The «Arab Spring» from Mubarak to Sisi: Confidential and secret conversations and contacts of the leader of the Egyptian left, Professor Refaat Al-Saeed*. Athens: Leimon.

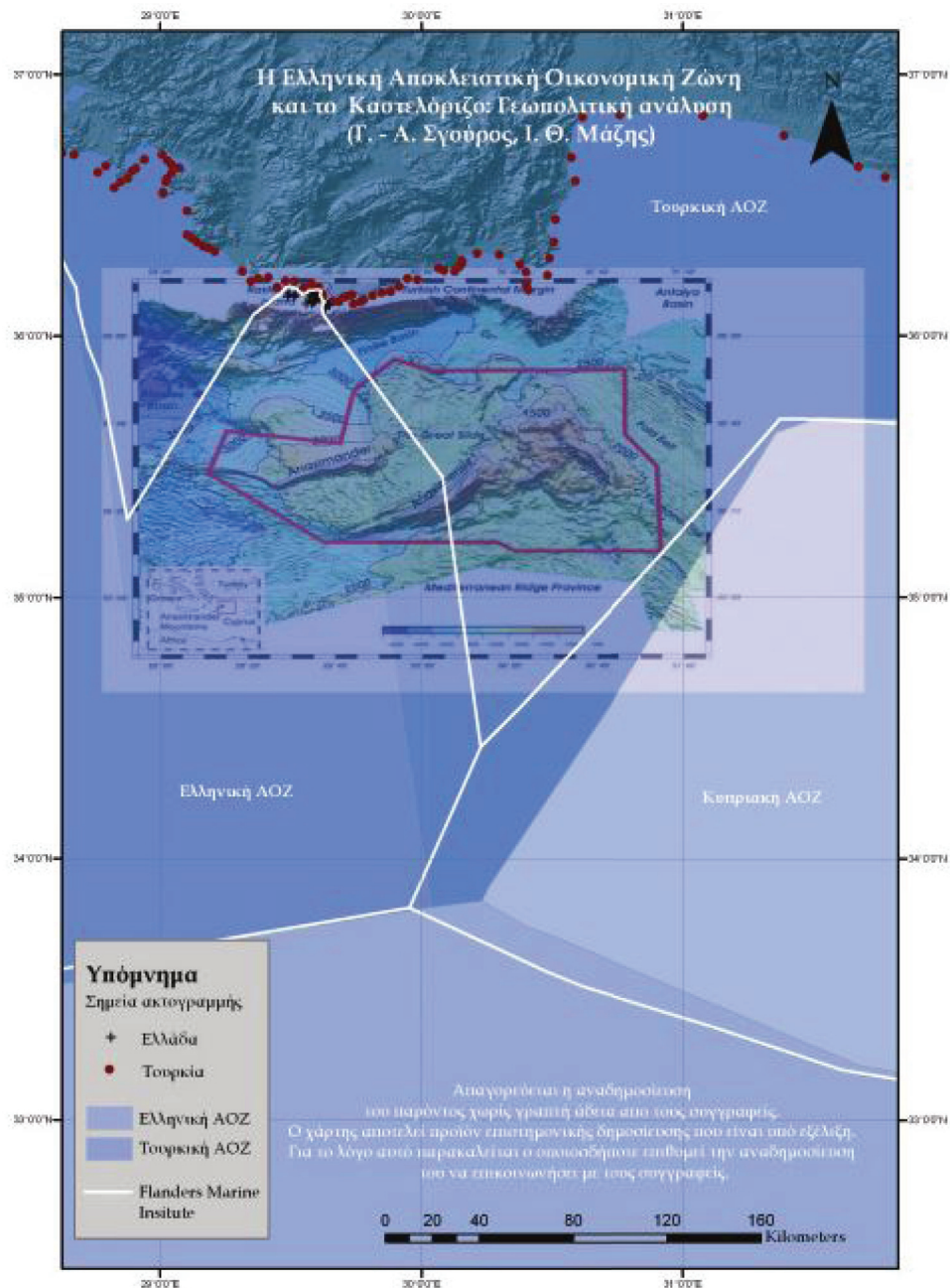
53. *OECD Studies Conference of Natural and Environmental Sciences*, 19–21 March 2020, Ankara, Turkey.

54. Mazis, I. Th. and Sgouros, G. A. (2013) "Geographical Distribution of Methane Hydrates and International Geopolitics of Energy: Resources in the Eastern Mediterranean", *Civitas Gentium*, 3 (1), pp. 101–108.

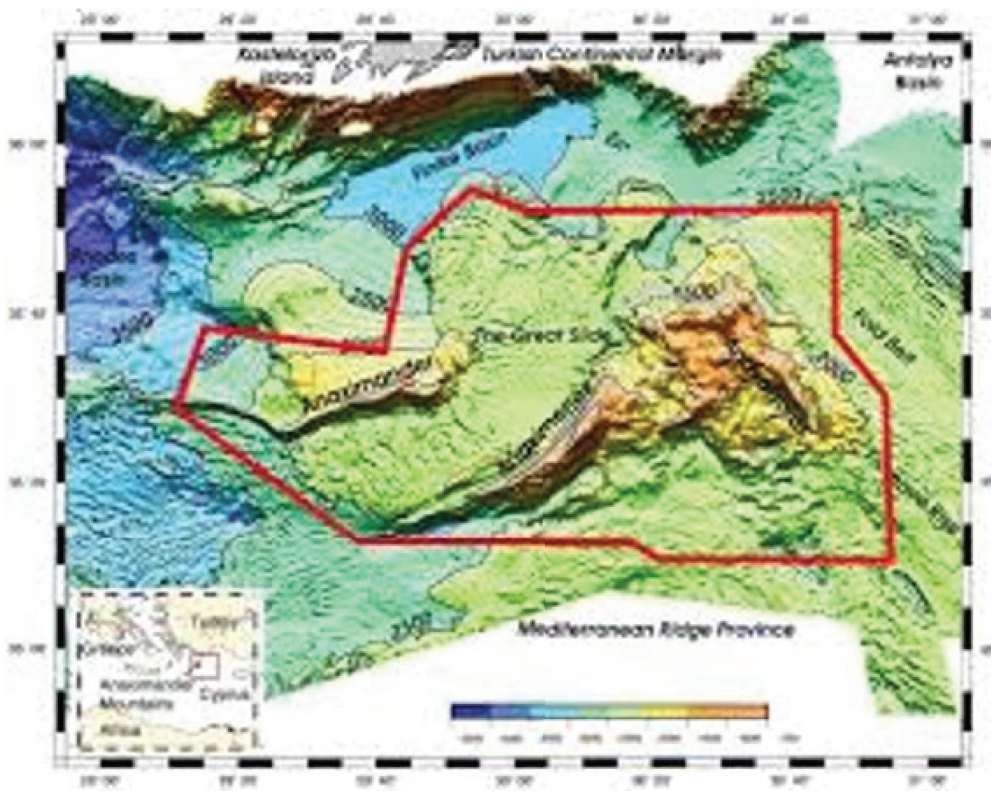


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Map 3: Submarine mountains in the EEZ of the Kastelorizo Complex, with Mud Volcanoes of Methane Hydrates (Mountains: Anaxagoras, Anaximander, Anaximenes) and their overlap by legal Greek and legal Turkish EEZ



Map 4: Anaxagoras, Anaximander and Anaximenes submarine mountains with reserves of Methane Hydrates



H. Critical questions of Ioannis Th. Mazis in lieu of Conclusions

Lots of questions pile up in view of the announced start of the «Greek-Turkish Dialogue» under the regime of threats, live fires in Lemnos (NAVTEX, TURNHOS N / W: 1185/20, 23-24 / 09) and abuse of the Cyprus EEZ by Ankara. I think that a good contribution to public debate would be to list some of them, thematically arranged. Here they are:

1) Is there, or not, a written decision taken within NATO that sets common premises of Greece and Turkey for the creation of a «technical de-escalation mechanism of tensions» between the two sides, and what is its content?

2) What was the content of the revealed «secret» «Berlin Tripartite Agreement» of July 12, 2020? What are the substantial effects of this Agreement? Is there an «agreed point of partial demilitarization» of the Greek Aegean islands?

3) Is Law 4001/2011 (Maniatis Law) still valid regarding the defined continental shelf south of Crete, or is it abandoned? What is the Government's position on this?

4) Does the Government consider that Turkish delinquency (Oruç Reis) consists in the fact that «unilateral actions are performed in a non-demarcated area» and thus waives our country's sovereign right not to allow «marine research» in the area of the continental shelf of Kastelorizo that exists de facto et ab initio? Does Minister of State Mr. Gerapetritis statement on «the red line at 6 n.m.» stand as a confirmation of the above?

5) Therefore, is the letter sent by the Permanent Representative of Greece Ms. Theophilis to the UN Secretary General (a / 74/988 – S / 2020/795, 12/08/2020) regarding the limits of the Greek continental shelf and the type of Turkey's illegal activities in the area, valid or not? The letter states that: «(i) *dispatch of the Oruç Reis to conduct seismic activities in an area falling within the Greek continental shelf constitutes in itself a clear violation of the Law of the Sea and Greece's sovereign rights, as enshrined in article 77 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, [...] ii) «... Greece has ab initio and ipso facto sovereign rights over its continental shelf» recalling «the [...] legislation defining the outer limits of the Greek continental shelf (see Law of the Sea Bulletin, vol. 79, p. 14) ».*

6) Does the term «maritime zones» (used by the Prime Minister and the German Presidency) as per the object of negotiations ALSO include the territorial waters of the Aegean islands?

7) Is Greece going to «close» its «bays» and draw baselines defining the territorial waters of 12 n.m. as well as a contiguous zone of 24 n.m. throughout its territory, before being led to a dialogue?

8) Will Greece support in one of the forthcoming EU Summits, the introduction of «an automatic mechanism to impose harsh sanctions» in order for EU to send the right message to Turkey? At the October 16 meeting, it again failed to even claim the establishment of such a mechanism.

9) Will Greece, as a «guarantor power», support the Republic of Cyprus in its legal demand for concurrent application of sanctions on both Belarus and Turkey? Because if Cyprus -and therefore one of the most geostrategically important places on the planet- is abandoned, then Greece shall commit a major strategic mistake in par with committing suicide.

10) Does Athens realize that non-signing of a defense pact with France including a «military assistance clause» harms national interests and creates a distance with Greece's only and truly supportive major European power? And if so, then for what «offsets» in return?

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