

## **THE CHANGING FACET OF THE TURKISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS DURING THE SYRIAN CONFLICT**

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### **Abstract**

This paper aims to analyze the Turkish-American relations during the Syrian conflict. The Middle East, in the wake of the Arab uprisings, has entered one of its most problematic periods, as the region has witnessed a situation in Syria in similar to that of Iraq in the wake of the Persian Gulf Conflict of 1991 since Syria has been torn apart with a civil war and since Turkey and the United States have looked into new venues for cooperation in the region. Therefore, the paper examines the new directions in the parameters of Turkish-American relations starting from the bombing of the Syrian regions by the coalition forces led by the United States down to the point when Turkey has finally joined the coalition forces to combat the ISIL, the Islamic state in Iraq and the Levant. While shedding some light on the transformative period of the Turkish American relations during the Syrian conflict, the paper will also dwell on certain critical events that well paved the way such as the maintaining Syrian refugees in Turkey, coup'd'etat in Egypt, and the recent Turkish military operations in northern Iraq and Syria. The paper will conclude that although the period harbors challenges for the bilateral relations, it even more contains opportunities and new venues for Turkey and the United States to better cooperate in the region in general, and in the Syrian conflict at particular as well while joining the air coalition forces to fight the ISIL at a belated stage may seem as a face saving for Turkey, it may well play a role in the establishment of a zone akin to a safe haven in northern Syria primarily to better locate the future refugees while rendering challenges as well as opportunities for the Middle East at large.

**Keywords:** Turkey, United States, Syrian conflict, ISIL