

The Armistice of Mudanya marks a defining moment in securing peace for the Near East region and an independent future for the Turkish state. Our victory in this war of independence is absolute, and we must take the next step and assume our deserved position in the world.<sup>1</sup> The Grand National Assembly will conclude the restoration of Turkish dignity: the Treaty of Sevres must take its rightful place in history as an inconsequential agreement, and we reaffirm our intention to complete the reunification and establishment of a sovereign Turkish homeland. The Turkish delegation will seek the invalidation of the Treaty's clauses, with a particular focus on the clauses regarding the ownership of our historic city of Istanbul, Eastern Thrace, the Straits, and economic, military, and social policy.<sup>2</sup> The sovereign state of Turkey condemns the inexcusable actions of the Greeks in Anatolia, and calls upon all parties of the Armistice to supervise the withdrawal of the Greek army from Eastern Thrace and ensure their pledge is upheld. Emphasizing our merited independence, The Grand National Assembly has earned the right to determine its own policy without foreign influence, and therefore resolves to terminate all capitulations that have been granted, and to define military policy and the status of minorities. Furthermore, recognizing our ties to the former Ottoman Empire, we are open to the negotiation of the empire's remaining debt. The sovereign state of Turkey is prepared to cooperate with all parties of the Conference that are motivated to secure a stable Near East with an independent Turkish state.

Our primary interests lie in the sovereignty of the Republic of Turkey<sup>3</sup> and securing an uncontested position as a sovereign state in the future. In order for our country to remain sovereign, it is imperative for our fellow delegates to concede to our proposed actions on the following issues: debt, land ownership, army size, and the removal of our Christian minority. The Republic of Turkey reminds the nations assembled of Turkey's current underdeveloped economic status at the end of the war<sup>4</sup>, and that the Republic is in no position to repay the Ottoman Public Debt owed by the Ottoman Empire, a debt which reaches as far back as the Crimean War.<sup>5</sup> We are concerned that if this debt is collected by European creditors, there will be no hope in re-establishing the strength of the Turkish people as it had been pre-war. We propose that the countries in concern absolve the debt owned by the Ottoman Empire, allowing our great nation to flourish.

The Grand National Assembly does not recognize the legitimacy of the Greek and English ownership of the lands that were gained through the Treaty of Sevres, which include Eastern Thrace, and the lands around Smyrna in Western Anatolia, and Mosul respectively. The Republic of Turkey considers the Treaty of Sevres an affront to the Republic and demands that the articles claiming Greek and English right to Turkish lands be abolished, as it is imperative for our national identity to retain the same lands our forefathers held, especially during such a turbulent time in our

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<sup>1</sup> Sina Aksin, *Turkey: From Empire to Revolutionary Republic*, trans. Dexter H. Mursaloglu (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 182.

<sup>2</sup> The National Archives Website: Discovery: Turkey: events in Constantinople; the Lausanne Conference, 1922, Administrative/biographical background available at <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C160023> (accessed October 18, 2015), 14.

<sup>3</sup> "1921 Constitution Law of Turkey, English Translation, Articles 2, 3" (n.d.). Retrieved October 19, 2015, from <http://genckaya.bilkent.edu.tr/1921C.html>, Article 1.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Dockrill, "Britain And The Lausanne Conference: 1922-1923," *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations* 23 (1993): 001-117.

<sup>5</sup> Dilek Barlas (2004). Friends Or Foes? Diplomatic Relations Between Italy And Turkey, 1923-36. *International Journal of Middle East Studies Int. J. Middle East Stud.*, (36), 231-252.

national history. The Republic of Turkey would further like to remind those assembled of the damages the Greeks have dealt to the Republic during the Greco-Turkish war. For these damages, we call upon financial compensation by the Greeks for the damages inflicted. In addition to our lands in Eastern Thrace and Western Anatolia, it is imperative that the assembly return the Straits into Turkish hands. We are concerned with the current presence of the British within Turkey, and would like to have a peaceful transition of our capital city Istanbul from British control to the control of the Government of Grand National Assembly<sup>6</sup>, indeed, we ask for the abolition of British capitulations to be recognized by the international community.<sup>7</sup> The Republic is concerned by demands to diminish our armies, which is unreasonable for a modern state to survive without any ability to regulate its own defences as it deems necessary. We thus request the right to keep the size of Turkish armies under Turkish authority. Finally, we would like to draw attention to Turkey's current Orthodox Christian residents, which Turkey recommends to be removed from the state.<sup>8</sup> The Grand National Assembly expresses its hope for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Turkey, and thus it is of national importance to share the same religious identity that is so intrinsically tied to our national identity.<sup>9</sup>

The Grand National Assembly's principal objective is to establish stability in a region that has experienced volatility since the turn of the century. The Turkish delegation acknowledges those parties in the Conference that share the same objective and expresses its appreciation. We encourage the remaining parties to recognize and support this call for peace. The Turkish state hereby proposes a resolution to ratify the borders of our new sovereign land, boundaries that will include all historic lands and those presently inhabited by all people of Turkish descent, Anatolia, Thrace, Mosul, the Straits, and Istanbul. Recognition of these borders and of an independent Turkey will bring political, economic, and social stability to this vital region of European relations. Regrettably, the Grand National Assembly anticipates difficulty with the Greek delegation despite their inexcusable behaviour in this conflict. Our delegation additionally foresees complexity regarding the question of the Straits<sup>10</sup>, but is committed to resolving the issue with conviction with all participating delegations. Further stability to the region can be instituted with the emergence of a strong Turkish economy, however this is only possible with the abolition of existing capitulations and supplementary discussions of the debt incurred by the former Ottoman Empire. It is imperative that the correct economic balance is established, our delegation emphasizes that with the correct policies all parties will enjoy economic stability and security. The Grand National Assembly expresses its hope that the present parties can come together at this significant point in history and construct an authoritative agreement that will assure peace for the state of Turkey and its neighbours.

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<sup>6</sup> "1921 Constitution Law of Turkey, English Translation, Articles 2, 3". (n.d.). Retrieved October 19, 2015, from <http://genckaya.bilkent.edu.tr/1921C.html>, Article 3

<sup>7</sup> William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy: 1774-2000* (London, Frank Cass, 2000), 55.

<sup>8</sup> Dockrill, "Britain and the Lausanne Conference: 1922-1923," 001-117

<sup>9</sup> Bruce Kuniholm, "Post-War World: The Lausanne Conference and the Post-Cold War Era," *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations* 23 (1993): 19-29.

<sup>10</sup> "The Marquess of Curzon of Kedleston to Sir R. Graham (Rome)," tels 394 & 395, 14 November 1922, no. 193, pp. 273-274. in W.N. Medlicott, Douglas Dakin, and M.E. Lambert, eds. *Documents on British Foreign Policy: 1919-1939, First Series, Volume XVIII* (London: TSO, 1972).

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