

Türkiye in Africa: Mapping the Contemporary Effects of Ankara's Footprints in Africa. The Case of Cameroon in the CEMAC Region

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Abstract

In an era of geopolitical gains and building of cooperation among states especially with Africa states, The Republic of Türkiye has made significant in roots in Cameroon which is viewed as the regional hegemon in the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) region. Turkish foreign policy in Africa particularly in Cameroon has resounding implications from diplomatic initiatives, trade partnerships, and burgeoning developmental projects is significantly shaping Cameroons socio-economic landscape. With Turkish officials always professing a “win-win” and having strategic partnership with Africa build on mutual benefits via diplomatic, economic, and socio-cultural exchanges. Through the lens of Ankara-Yaoundé ties, the main purpose of this paper is to analyze the dynamic effects of this relation on Cameroon, a country seen as a regional hegemony in the CEMAC region. Furthermore, the paper looks at some key historical foundation of Türkiye-Cameroon relations. The paper indicates that by assessing the responsive effects of Ankara's cooperation with Cameroon, it supports Cameroon's developmental prospects especially its developmental blueprint penned down as “Vision 2035” through the various transformative programs in Cameroon. The article makes use of the middle power theory as its theoretical lens. Lastly, the paper revealed that in the last decade, Turkish foreign policy has significantly improved, particularly in the CEMAC region thanks to the frequent organization of Turkey-Africa Economic and Business summits, Diplomacy, and Partnership Conferences with resounding results for both states.

Keywords: Africa, Cameroon, CEMAC Region, Effects, Turkey, Foreign Policy.

Introduction

The period after the end of the cold war, when observers would invariably name France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, as the only foreign powers to have substantial interests in sub-Saharan Africa is drawing to a close (Shively, 2005). Affirmatively, the Republic of Türkiye is one of the newcomers into the continent with a huge foreign policy appetite in recent years which is spreading across the continent like summer ‘wildfire’ framed gigantically. (Tepeciklioğlu, 2021) held that not only does the African Continent host the countries with the fastest growing economies, it is also blessed with such resources as oil, natural gas, and valuable mines. These factors have paved the way for the continent's development as a competitive arena for such global

powers as the United States, the European Union, and rising powers like China, Russia, Japan, and India. The interest of Turkey in Africa has also escalated, and the developing intensity of the relationships between Turkey and a number of African nations has naturally had repercussions on the Turkish academic field. Turkey's interest in the continent relates to the economy, policy and external factors.

The expansion and the new directions of Turkish foreign policy over the last decade have generated a lively debate in domestic and foreign policy circles, among diplomats, analysts, academics, journalists, and businesspeople, and in civil society. The debate revolves around the transformation of Turkey's foreign policy agenda against the backdrop of major shifts in regional and global power structures. Various questions, some well informed and others rather rhetorical, are posed to assess Turkey's standing in global politics (Kalin, 2012). When we look at the last two decades, it seems that Turkey's new foreign policy towards Africa can be divided into two stages: In the first stage starting in 2005, Turkey implemented African Initiative Policies to introduce itself to the continent. In the second stage, which started after 2014, it aimed to strengthen its institutions and partnership in Africa throughout Africa Partnership Policies. Moreover, powers like France, Russia, China and the UAE challenge Turkey's strong presence in Africa for their strategic concerns (Orakçi, 2022).

Turkish foreign policy which was traditionally aligned with and calibrated towards western nations has over the years acquired a new paradigmatic shift and priority: a whole scale "openings" towards the Middle East, Central Asia, South America and Africa. This new approach within the Turkish foreign policy is predicated on developments within the Turkish internal politics (the rise and hegemony of AKP party government since the early 2000s) and the geopolitical rise of a multi-polar world order occasioned by the rescinding "powers" of the Trans-Atlantic normative/traditional powers (Dahir, 2021). According to (Kalin, 2012), the new geopolitical realities of the new century have compelled many countries, including Turkey, to redefine their strategic priorities and adjust themselves to the new dynamics of multiple modernities and multidirectional "glocalization." Great transformations of the post-Cold War period have taken place in three interrelated areas, namely, the global political structure, the world economy, and the sociopolitical order. At the moment, all African states now picture diplomatic alliances via novel lenses on national interests and Türkiye and China have joined the 'old guards' by rebranding and assorting their diplomatic contacts so as to gain economically.

Türkiye's foreign policy towards the Middle East, Africa, Central Asia and South America has changed drastically in the last two decades. What occasioned Türkiye's foreign policy changes? Baudner argues that historically Turkish "foreign policy role concept was determined by its nation-state building history" (Baudner, 2014: 85). Hence, in the early periods of the republic and during the

cold war, Türkiye's foreign policy considerations were based on Türkiye's internal political interests and aligning with Europe and the United States; Türkiye had no geopolitical interests in global politics beyond its neighbourhood. Furthermore, the pre-AK Party foreign policy "has been tainted with subservience to western lines and unconditional acceptance of Western stance" (Gürpınar, 2020: 8).

The Republic of Türkiye has established itself as an increasingly influential actor on the global political arena and the African continent is no exception. Looking at her gigantic scale and scope of Ankara's engagement on the African Continent especially in Cameroon which happens to be a power house in the CEMAC region within a short time is a clear indication. Türkiye's reawakening towards the continent can be penned down to be the 'last dice' in her foreign policy agenda emanating from her quest in achieving not only regional statuses but also a global power joining the ranks of the others particularly France, which have had a firmed grip on the continent especially in the geographical sphere of France with an active foreign policy package for more than six decades and beyond. Interestingly enough, the extent to which Türkiye appears to be warmly received with open arms by African leaders is perhaps striking and staggering in recent Türkiye-Africa relations proposing to their African counterparts, a nexus of economic, social and humanitarian incentives. The Turkish government is successfully riding home the message of increased diplomatic gains on a 'win-win' pipeline accompanied by huge economic benefits. The desired objective of this article is to x-ray the historical genealogy and the effects Turkish footprints has in Cameroon as the country faces economic problems and a 9 years socio-political upheaval ongoing in the two English speaking regions.

Historical Relations

Cameroon-Türkiye relations refer to the foreign relations between Cameroon and Türkiye. Historically, relations between both states can be traced under Cameroon's late President Ahmadou Ahidjo in the 1960s though initially marked by taut since he used the police and state security gadgetry to obliterate political opponents. At the beginning of Biya's presidency in the 1980s, relations with Türkiye improved emphatically as he attempted to develop a more democratic country and press for freedom of speech and press. From this period onwards, Türkiye assisted Cameroon in the construction of schools and infrastructural projects. Notwithstanding, Yaoundé-Ankara clashes erupted in 1984 over the failed coup in Cameroon emanating from the deplorable crackdown on dissidents, mostly Muslims from the North.

Most recently Cameroon-Türkiye relations can be traced in the early 2020 and late 2021. Cameroon Tribune on March 12, 2020 reported that, the Minister Delegate to the Ministry of External Relations in charge of

Cooperation with the Islamic World, Adoum Gargoum received in audience the Turkish Ambassador to Cameroon, Ayse Sarac during which both personalities discussed deepening bilateral relations between both countries. In her remarks “she thanked the Minister for receiving them. Türkiye and Cameroon are strategic partners and they have good bilateral cooperation in multidimensional culture as well as at the international level. She went further to say that “they discussed elaborately on how to strengthen these cooperation ties further,”. It should be noted that, on the 28th of January 2020, Ayse Sarac was also at the Ministry of External Relations in which she extended an invitation ahead of the Türkiye-Africa Summit and expressed her country’s commitment in supporting the peace building process in Cameroon emanating from the organization of the Major National Dialogue in resolving the conflict in the English-speaking regions which failed before it occurred based on bad fate of the organizers.

Relations between Cameroon and Türkiye are positive with both Presidents having carried out official visits to each other’s nation. In March 2010 former Turkish President Abdullah Gul visited Cameroon and Paul Biya also visited Türkiye in March 2013 gave special impetus and increased the depth of cooperation ties. Due to these friendly relations between both countries, several cooperation agreements have been agreed upon in areas like health, education, security, and infrastructure; with the Türk Exim bank having financed 75 per cent of the construction of the Japoma 50.000 capacity stadium in Douala, Littoral region. Cameroon recently participated in both the Türkiye-Africa III and IV Business and Economic Forum and Türkiye-Africa Partnership Summit all held in Istanbul at the auspices of Turkish President in October and December 2021 and 2023, which signifies the stamina and continuous cooperation of both states which saw the presence of Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his reaffirmation of continuous ties between his country and Africa on a win-win lane. Despite the restrictions that Cameroon’s membership in the Franc Zone may present, Paul Biya’s economic model of Communal Liberalism paved the way for greater economic involvement with economies like Türkiye. With a more liberal externally oriented market economy, economic relations between Türkiye and Cameroon have greatly improved over the last decade. The commitment of both states to mutual trust, trade expansion and economic cooperation has enabled both states strong and beneficial economic ties.

Theoretical Framework

(Pieterse & Reiben, 2008) stated that we are at the cusp of major changes of global significance. A new phase of globalization has begun, in which the United States, Europe and Japan are being overtaken by low-cost producers and service providers in East Asia, China, India and Latin America. Their rise is

made possible by a combination of low wages, technological advances, demographic advantages, economies of scale and good education. Long cherished aspirations such as greater South–South cooperation is now gradually taking shape in trade, energy and finance. The influence of American hegemony and the Washington-based international financial institutions is declining precipitously. No doubt the emerging economies are part of the ‘crazy vitality of business boosterism is a deceptive guide.

Middle powers are states that are neither great nor small in terms of international power, capacity and influence, and demonstrate a propensity to promote cohesion and stability in the world system. Despite problems of classification, a consensus has developed that states such as Australia, Canada, Norway and Sweden are middle powers. However, that consensus on middle-power identification is being undermined by the recent inclusion of such states as, among others, Argentina, Brazil, Nigeria, Malaysia, South Africa, and Türkiye in the middle-power category. However, this grouping of states as diverse as Brazil and Canada, or South Africa and Sweden together raise the issue of the usefulness of the middle-power concept and risks undermining the concept’s analytical power (Jordaan, 2003).

The concept of the middle power dates back to the late 16th century, when Italian Renaissance philosopher, Giovanni Botero, divided the world into three types of states-*grandissime* (empires), *mezano* (middle powers), and *piccioli* (small powers). In mainstream IR, it became popular in the mid-20th century with Organski’s power transition theory (1958) (Organski, 1958), which postulated a power hierarchy formed of dominant, great, middle, and small powers. Organski’s typology recognized the middle power grouping as consisting of states which are able to exert influence on a regional, and to some degree, global scale, though his analysis tended to treat states in this category as peripheral actors and focused rather on the predominance of greater powers in world politics (Cooper, 2011). The term ‘middle power’, like great power or minor power, defines what kind of actor a state is by reference to its status. Specifically, the term tells us what the consensus is about a state’s relative ranking within the international hierarchy of national power. Some status markers, such as the amount of military and economic capabilities, can be quantified and have always been recognized as key measures of a country’s relative power. That noted, four general categories have gained wide acceptance for ranking states: great power (or polar power), major power, middle power, and minor power (Schweller, 2017).

Illustrative archetypes of middle powers traditionally included Canada and Australia as well as the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) and the Netherlands. These states are typically described as guardians of the global balance of power protecting peace and order in the international system (Holbraad, 1984). They are widely accepted to be bridge-

builders, striving to link up different clusters of states built around certain interests and ideas, and consensus seeking interlocutors who “pursue multilateral solutions to international problems” and embrace “notions of ‘good international citizenship’ to guide their diplomacy” (Cooper, Higgott, & Nossal, 1993). India under Nehru’s leadership, for example, engaged in this kind of inter bloc diplomacy and played an important role in the Non-Aligned Movement trying to defuse tension between dominant powers during the Cold War. Middle powers practice “niche diplomacy” concentrating their energy and resources in specific issue areas likely to yield the most results as they have limited resources for pursuing a grand global strategy (ibid.: 19, 145). The Norwegians, for instance, have assumed the role of mediator in complex international conflicts and are heavily invested in the idea of using their Scandinavian identity as a neutral country to pursue peace-making diplomacy.

The geography and identity of a middle power can also facilitate its role as a bridge-builder. For

For instance, consistent with the older geostrategic notion of middle powers as physically situated in the middle, Türkiye’s claim to be a middle power rests on its geographical position as much as its lacking within the international hierarchy. Türkiye’s location makes it a natural bridge between East and West. In addition, the contradictory elements of Turkish Islam and Kemalist secularism at the core of its national identity make Türkiye an ideal political-ideational bridge between Islam and modernity. Islam in Türkiye is distinguished by considerable diversity, both ideational content and in institutional forms, and is more open to political pressure and compromise than its counterparts elsewhere. Accordingly, Turkish Islam may serve as an example for Islamic democratic movements throughout the world (Schweller, 2017). Keohane (1969: 295-296) views the states as to the degree of influence played in the international system. Middle powers are those who have their influence in international affairs necessarily mediated by alliances and multilateral coalitions, the “system-affecting states”. He further stated that a middle-power is a state whose leaders consider that it cannot act alone effectively, but may be able to have a systemic impact in a small group or through an international institution. Typical of relatively weak actors, middle powers also champion a strong international legal system; they would prefer that international politics look more like domestic politics, governed by the rule of law (a constitutional order) that places strict limits on the returns to power (Ikenberry, 2001). Cooper et al., (1993) stated that middle powers are recognizable by their foreign policy behaviour.

Since the end of the Cold War, scholars have discussed Türkiye’s ambition to expand its area of influence in its neighbourhood and the middle power concept has been widely used to describe Türkiye’s engagement with the international system (e.g., Müftüler and Yüksel, 1997; see also Hale, 1992). For

example, (Hale, 2013) argues that using the term middle power is the most realistic way of conceptualizing Türkiye's international role to explain Turkish policies, defining power as "the ability to oblige other states to take actions that they would not otherwise have taken and to resist pressure to do so from other states". Given their unique place within the international system, middle powers can be expected to display a specific pattern of statecraft that promotes international order through coalition-building, by serving as mediators and "go-betweens," and through international conflict management and resolution activities, such as UN peacekeeping. It is a statecraft grounded in entrepreneurial flair, technical competence, and activity niche-building diplomatic in the functionalist logic of issue-specific strengths and skills within domains where they hold a significant number of resources and reputational qualifications (Cooper 1997). More heroically, it is a statecraft rooted in the conviction that middle powers have a moral responsibility and collective ability to protect the international order from those who would threaten it, whether they be great or small powers (Schweller, 2017).

(Fonseca, De Oliveira Paes, & Cunha, 2016) purported that an emerging power would be the one whose diplomatic behaviour aims to reform or to review the international order, having material support to its claims. This pattern of behaviour is prototypically associated with a non-identity belonging to the status quo of the international order. Research on intermediate states or middle powers have a common understanding that states are disposed of in a certain scale of power among nations. (Süsler, 2019) hammering on this argued that "while Türkiye is not a great power, it has considerable ability to act independently, resist pressure from great powers, and exert influence as a regional actor." Clinically, Türkiye's burgeoning economic maturation which began from the 2000s is thanks to foreign policy elites and crafters which has bestowed her into the hall of fame of an emerging power. While mapping in Türkiye-Africa, her footprints in all the corners of the continent in the past decades including in Cameroon has placed Türkiye as a global and regional actor in international affairs hence a middle power state.

Features/Tenets of the Emerging Middle Power

- Emerging powers judge international law as playing a part in anchoring their dividends but cannot alternate the global tectonic form.
- They are pivotal in sharpening global interaction within international institutions via international law which gives a voice to all states on the table.
- Emerging powers usually operate an activist finesse while interfering in global affairs such as humanitarian, military, economic etc.
- They restrain from interfering in conflicts and if they do, they push for an international mediation through varied channels and organs.

- Emerging powers do not menace the status quo of global order in the realms of economic, military, political order and stay off from attacking liberal democracy.
- They embody rising economic potentials arising from the display of neoliberalism while making generous humanitarian/aid donations.
- The FP of emerging powers span beyond its geography and the positive results void of self-interest places them as reliable international citizens such as Türkiye.
- Exhibit status seeking behaviour “one of the main aspirations of Türkiye is to be recognized as a global actor, or as a “pivotal state” as (Davutoglu, 2001) termed.
- Emerging powers have the aptitude to succour idols capitalizing on their soft-power stockpile.

The recent debates surrounding traditional middle powers and emerging middle powers has been viewed from a diverse lens. Traditional middle powers are understood to be wealthy, stable, and egalitarian social democracies and promoters of a liberal international order. Emerging middle powers, on the other hand, are often states that have assumed internationalist postures after the post-Cold War and in many cases have a lower quality of development and democratization experiences. Furthermore, emerging middle powers tend to have semi-peripheral roles in the global economy coupled with significant income inequality in the domestic arena. They often approach global governance with structural concerns about the international power hierarchy (Alden & Vieira, 2005) and they can be hesitant to promote liberal internationalism. As (Öniş & Kutlay, 2017) put it, they face “a dilemma that they are both critical of the existing liberal order dominated by the established Western powers and, at the same time, have an incentive to be a part of an international order based on liberal norms”.

Türkiye is a good example of a state which has faced this dilemma: Turkish decision makers have often criticized the Western-dominated international order, especially for structural inequalities, but at the same time recognized the incentives of having a greater say in the same order. Successive Turkish governments have criticized decision-making processes in international institutions, for example the UN for failing to take effective steps to bring peace to Israel-Palestine (e.g., Erdogan, 2018d). President Erdogan’s slogan “The World Is Bigger than Five” – referring to the permanent members of the UN Security Council with veto rights – encapsulates the Turkish government’s critique of the existing international system and, in the words of (Erdoğan, R. T., 2021), this motto is “the biggest-ever rise against global injustice” and exploitation of the world economy. However, while voicing criticism of the existing order, as (Kirişçi & Bülbül, 2018) observed, Türkiye has benefited greatly from participating in the liberal international system since “membership

to NATO, the G-20, the World Trade Organization, and other connections with the trans-Atlantic alliance became key components of Türkiye's rising soft power in the early 2000s". Furthermore, in his speech at the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly and in an op-ed in *Foreign Policy*, Erdoğan himself defended multilateralism and free trade and even criticized the Trump administration for undermining the liberal international order (Erdoğan, 2016).

Turkish foreign policy over the last decade has shown behavioural characteristics of an emerging middle power in a number of ways. First, as (Jordaan, 2003) points out, one of the common features of emerging middle powers is that they are "eager, and often leading, participants in regional structures" and frequently identified as regional powers. A main objective of Turkish foreign policy in the Justice and Development Party ("AKP") period has been to position Türkiye as a regional power and to increase Türkiye's presence in regional as well as global initiatives. To this end, Turkish decision makers attempted to improve Türkiye's relations with Middle Eastern states with Muslim-majority populations, established closer ties with regional organizations such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and strove to generate soft power using Türkiye's history and identity. This policy was particularly successful in the early 2000s, especially when the Turkish government was able to boost Türkiye's image as a role model for the Muslim world; however, it then faced significant setbacks with a decline in the AKP's performance in terms of economic development and democratization (Öniş & Kutlay, 2017); (Kuru, 2015).

Turkish foreign policy makers have attempted to practice niche diplomacy using Türkiye's unique geographical and cultural position between the East and the West and presenting themselves as bridge-builders. Davutoglu, for example, often emphasized that Türkiye has access to both the global north and south, and he identified mediation and humanitarian diplomacy as the key components in gaining Türkiye a greater say in global governance (Davutoglu, 2013a, 2013b). As (Wohlforth, de Carvalho, Leira, & Neumann, 2017) argue, one of the strategies middle powers use to seek status is formulating policies which will allow them to be perceived as a "good power" with foreign policies that have a moral dimension. Türkiye is a good example in the sense that Turkish decision makers have tried to develop the moral dimension of Turkish foreign policy investing in Türkiye's image as a mediator and a humanitarian power. Accordingly, Türkiye assumed the role of a mediator in a number of international conflicts, mostly in its immediate neighbourhood, and was an eager participant in multilateral initiatives on peace making. Most notably, it launched indirect peace talks between Israel and Syria in 2008 (Davutoglu, 2013b: 85), negotiated a nuclear deal with Iran in 2010 working in collaboration with Brazil (Barrionuevo and Arsu, 2010), and set up the Group of Friends of Mediation under the UN framework in 2010 in a joint effort with Finland for peaceful

settlement of disputes and conflict prevention (Davutoglu and Tuomioja, 2012).

Turkish foreign policy decision makers also concentrated their efforts to develop what they called Türkiye's "humanitarian diplomacy", increasing Türkiye's assistance to developing nations and responding to major humanitarian crises around the world (Davutoglu, 2013a; Çavusoglu, 2016). Türkiye eagerly took part in international initiatives to discuss the global humanitarian system. For example, it hosted the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 and promoted its image as a humanitarian actor in international forums, underlining that it hosts the largest refugee population in the world which includes more than 3.5 million Syrian refugees (Sabah, 2016). The Turkish government emphasized the humanitarian dimension of Turkish foreign policy when engaging with the developing world. For example, as Foreign Minister (Çavuşoğlu, 2022) explained, "humanitarian diplomacy is one of the main components of Türkiye's approach towards Africa". Scholars have highlighted Türkiye's transformation from an aid recipient to an aid donor country and characterized Türkiye as a "new humanitarian power" (Ali, 2011); see al (Ozkan, 2011); (Oğuzlu, 2007); Habiyaremye and Oğuzlu, 2014). The government complemented its "humanitarian diplomacy" with a policy aimed to increase trade and cultural exchanges with African nations. As a result, Ankara's approach gained Türkiye considerable soft power and was welcomed particularly by African governments which depended on Turkish aid the most.

As Önis and Kutlay (2017: 3) stress, to conduct effective foreign policy, emerging middle powers need to have "the ability to serve as role models based on their soft-power resources – i.e., the quality of their developmental and democratic credentials". In this regard, major domestic setbacks Türkiye has faced in recent years, including a decline in democratization and economic performance, have limited Türkiye's attractiveness on the global stage and constrained the abilities of Turkish foreign policy to exercise soft power to shape politics beyond its borders (see e.g., (Kuru, 2015). The weakening of the Turkish Lira, coupled with the consolidation of power by the government, has diminished Türkiye's middle power image along with its capacity to serve as a role model. This is in contrast with the pre-Arab Spring Turkish foreign policy when Türkiye boosted its soft power in its neighbourhood and when there was a debate in popular and academic circles in the Western world on whether Middle Eastern states could follow the "Turkish model" and whether Türkiye's experience with democratization and economic development may have a demonstration effect on the other countries in the region (e.g., (Ülgen, 2011); Taspinar, 2012).

In conclusion, the term "emerging middle power" has become an applicable analytical yardstick and hence can be used in elucidating Ankara's FP tactics on the continent and in Cameroon hence positioning herself as a global player. Türkiye does portray the tenets of an emerging power and despite the

flaws associated with her internal politics and democratization, economic palavers and human rights. If Ankara were a member of the EU, these dilemmas that caused analysts to downplay her emerging and middle power prowess would have very little to harm her on the subject thus leading to exert her potential globally. To conclude, Amitav (2014: 59) espoused that the terms “emerging powers” and “rising powers” recognized the growing economic as well as political and strategic status of a group of nations (and in some accounts still are) as part of the “third world” or “global south.” The definition of who belongs in these categories is neither fixed nor controversial. These terms are often used to include countries such as BRICS+ (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), as well as Indonesia, Mexico, Argentina, Australia, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, and Türkiye. Andrew Cooper has observed that “the depiction of rising powers “has been “expansive, fluid and contested...No one acronym has the field to itself.”

Effects of Turkey-Cameroon relations on Cameroon

Türkiye’s engagement with Africa has expanded significantly since 2005 in the fields of diplomacy, trade, investment, aid, education, religion, culture, security and crisis-management. Much of this involvement is concentrated in North Africa, which remains far more important than sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) to the Turkish economy. For example, Algeria was Türkiye’s 24th largest export partner and its 20th largest import partner in 2012, while Nigeria was 53rd in terms of both exports and imports and South Africa was 55th and 38th respectively. Ankara has developed increased ties with Yaoundé due to its catapulting economic vitality while still nursing her closed economic ties with her traditional friends like South Africa, Nigeria, Sudan etc. (Kizilarlan, 2012) in his words stated that “We believe that Turkey, with its vision, “fair trade through free trade”, is the most appropriate country to help the African countries break the vicious circle of poverty and develop the economic and commercial relations of the African countries all over the globe because the geographical proximity between Turkey and Africa and Turkey’s historical ties with certain African countries are crucial factors to the development of economic and commercial relations.”

Frameworks for Industrial Investments in Cameroon:

Consider within the framework of the dynamic aiming at encouraging Turkish companies to invest more in Cameroon, H.E. Victor Tchatchouwo, Ambassador of Cameroon to Türkiye, during the month of September 2020, met the top management of the following Turkish companies:

1. Cemsan-Makina: Specialized in the development, design, and manufacturing of the most modern installations for butcheries and slaughterhouses, the integration and cutting of meat such as paddocks, cutting for cattle, cows, and sheep.

2. Astor: Specialized in the manufacturing of power and distribution transformers, dry-type cast resin transformers, air-insulated modular cells, concrete, and sheet transformation substations, RMUs, and metal ducts.
3. Gürbağ Construction S.A: Specialized in the manufacturing of industrial structures, prefabricated construction, and ready-to-use concrete plant installations.
4. Oyak Cement Concrete Paper Group: Specialized in the manufacturing of cement and concrete paper with an annual production capacity of 32.6 million tons in Türkiye and abroad. It is important to highlight that Türkiye is the leader in Europe and is among the top six countries in the world in the cement industry.
5. Karpowership: Specialized in innovative energy projects and the sole owner, operator and builder of the world's first floating power station (Powership).
6. Aktif Bank: One of the largest private investment banks in Türkiye and offers a range of fast and more efficient banking services to exporters for their operations in Africa.

Table 1: List of Turkish Companies Operating in Cameroon.

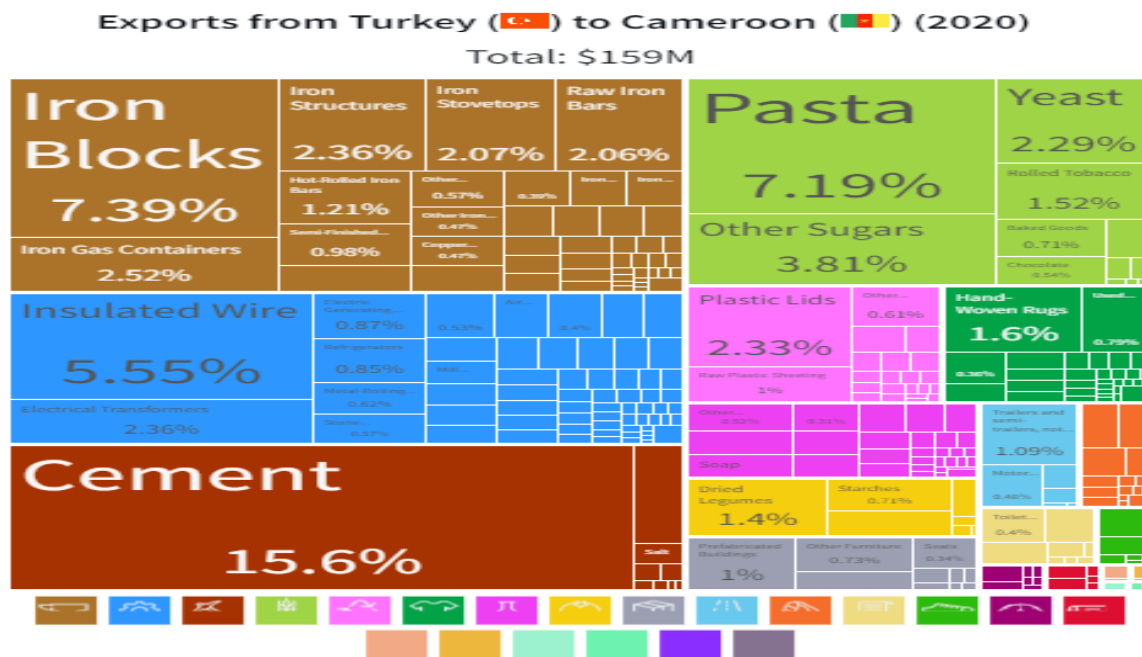
Names of Companies	Areas of Operation
Yenigun	Construction Company
Dantella	Construction
Metzem	Cement production
Cimpor Cameroun SA.	Cement production
Erdem Group	Infrastructure and Construction
AGS Metal	Infrastructure and Construction
ESER Construction	Infrastructure and Construction
Istanbul Restaurant	Cuisine (Turkish Food, drinks, Ayran)
Izmir	Cuisine (Turkish Food, drinks, Ayran)
Maarif Foundation	Education

Source: Researcher's Compilation

During these various meetings, the Ambassador presented the reasons for investing in Cameroon and encouraged these companies not only to forge partnerships in Cameroon but also to explore the possibilities of settling in our country telling a great story that provides personality. Writing a story with personality for potential clients will assist with making a relationship connection. This shows up in small quirks like word choices or phrases. Write from your point of view, not from someone else's experience. If you try to write with a wide general audience in mind, your story will ring false and be bland. No one will be interested. Write for one person. If it's genuine for the one, it's genuine for the rest.

Increase Volume of Trade to Cameroon

When looking at the degree of trade in terms of export from Turkey to Cameroon, this indicator is paramount expert in assessing the economic dynamism of trade between Ankara and Cameroon. Within a decade, the relationship between these two states portrays a catapulting. From statistics Ankara’s exports to Yaoundé is an indication of its burgeoning presence in the markets across Cameroon’s main cities. As Ankara graduates into becoming a global actor, its economic diplomacy has steadily progressed and sorting out favourable opportunities within the African economic cycle with Cameroon inclusive. The increasing pace of Turkish exports to Cameroon indicates the mutual connection shared from the increased economic engagement. Flourishing Turkish goods consist of textiles, machinery, construction materials etc. have made their way to Cameroonian markets, up casing on Cameroonian expanding consumer demand and infrastructural development. Below are figures that show Turkey's export to Cameroon.



ec.world/en/account

Fig 1. Exports from Turkey to Cameroon (in 2020)

(In 2020, Turkey exported \$159M to Cameroon. The main products exported from Turkey to Cameroon were Cement (\$24.7M), Iron Blocks (\$11.7M), and Pasta (\$11.4M). During the last 25 years the exports of Turkey to Cameroon have increased at an annualized rate of 15.8%, from \$4.02M in 1995 to \$159M in 2020).
 Source: [BACI HS6 REV. 1992 \(1995 - 2020\)](#).

Agricultural Improvement

In the domain of agriculture that seems to be very vital for the economy of

Cameroon as a country with agrarian focus, Ankara's effect can be felt in the agricultural sector. TİKA has provided machines and equipment, needed for the production of chicken feed, to the Poultry Cooperative operating in Ngaoundere in Cameroon. As a part of the project carried out by TİKA, a feed grinder and mixer and a weighing machine as well as technical equipment and materials regarding packaging were delivered to Jaynitaare Cooperative to increase the production capacity of the poultry cooperative. Turkish Ambassador to Yaoundé, Volkan Işıkçı, TİKA's Coordinator of the Program Coordination Office in Yaoundé, Burak Özden, and Jaynitaare Cooperative officials attended the delivery ceremony of the products. It is aimed to reduce the high prices for chicken feed to affordable prices and increase the amount of chicken meat produced, the income of the cooperative, and the production capacity in the region through the delivered products.

Revamping Tourism and Hotel Management

TİKA has been able to provide kitchen equipment and supplies for the practice restaurant affiliated with the Department of Tourism and Hotel Management at the University of Yaoundé I in Cameroon. The Practice Restaurant of the Department of Tourism and Hotel Management in the Faculty of Arts, Languages and Social Sciences at the University of Yaoundé I, one of the oldest educational institutions in Cameroon, was put into service with a ceremony held following the equipment project implemented by TİKA. The opening ceremony held at the university was attended by Volkan Işıkçı, Türkiye's Ambassador to Yaoundé; Prof. Maurice Aurelien Sosso, Rector of the University of Yaoundé I; Prof. Christiane Felicite Ewane Epouse Essoh, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Languages and Social Sciences; Burak Özden, TİKA's Yaoundé Program Coordinator; and a large number of faculty members and students. In his speech at the ceremony, which was enlivened with local dance performances, Ambassador Işıkçı said that the cooperation between Türkiye and Cameroon, two friendly countries, was improving day by day and that students would be able to develop themselves thanks to this project.

Stating that the restaurant would contribute greatly to the education of students, Rector Sosso expressed his gratitude to Türkiye and the people of Türkiye on behalf of the university. According to Burak Özden, TİKA's Coordinator, "they were very happy to contribute to the practice restaurant, which would be used both in the practical training of students and as a cafeteria". Furniture, major appliances, and kitchen equipment and tools were delivered to the restaurant as part of the project, allowing 10 students to do their internships at the same time. The students of the Department of Tourism and Hotel Management serve approximately 20,000 students and 300 faculty members at the restaurant. Established in 1962 the University of Yaoundé is the oldest educational institution in this field in the country, and has been split into

two, namely Yaoundé I and Yaoundé II, as a result of the reform carried out in 1993. The University of Yaoundé I have 4 faculties, 17 departments, and approximately 60,000 students.

Sports and Infrastructural Development

Turkish company Yenigun Construction has constructed Cameroon's largest football stadium, the Japoma stadium in Douala. In addition to the stadium with a capacity of 50,000 spectators, the largest in Cameroon, the Japoma sports complex also includes a sports hall, an Olympic swimming pool, two training grounds as well as tennis courts. "Japoma is currently the largest and most luxurious stadium in Cameroon" Yenigun Africa Projects Director Tahsin Tufan Sercan said in an interview with (Anadolu Agency, 2018) that the project which started in March 2017 has come to an end. The stadium has been delivered and the project will end this year with the completion of related facilities and other additional demands. "The contract amount for the project is \$ 232 million," he said, adding that the project cost \$ 254 million due to additional demands and unforeseen expenses

"Japoma is currently the largest and most luxurious stadium in Cameroon. It will be the most popular stadium for the Africa Cup of Nations that was held in the country in January 2022, and will host important matches," Sercan asserted. "Cameroonians have seen what Turkish entrepreneurs can do", Sercan noted that "Turkish entrepreneurs were not recognized in Cameroon before this project". "We often receive compliments on the Japoma stadium from the International Federation of Football Association (FIFA), the African Football Confederation (CAF) and Cameroonian officials. Cameroonians have seen what Turkish entrepreneurs can do. Consideration of Turks and Turkish entrepreneurs has changed completely," said Sercan. The director explained that Yenigun Construction employs around 2,000 people for the project, 70% of whom are Cameroonians, and that the financing of the investment price was made by Turkish Eximbank. "All eyes are on the African market" Noting that the world market is now very small, Sercan said that "all eyes are on the African market". "Africa is now a big market and there are big business opportunities for every sector in many countries of the continent".

Conclusion

To conclude, the examination of Turkish foreign policy in Cameroon in the CEMAC region reveals an intertwining of historical ties, and succinct effects on Cameroon. Through a panoramic view of the historical relations between Cameroon and Turkey, it is clear that the relations between these states are deeply rooted, especially within the last decade, hence acting as the foundation for present-day interactions. Based on the effects of Turkish foreign policy footprints in Cameroon, the paper unpacked a blend of political, economic, geopolitical, and socio-culturally effects ranging from trade, infrastructure,

socio-cultural benefits, and diplomatic cooperations. In a nutshell, this paper underscores the complex nature of Turkey's engagement in Africa within the CEMAC, with a special focus on Cameroon. By encouraging connections across historical, theoretical, and empirical evidence. This article opens a new discourse of Türkiye in Sub-Saharan Africa with the case of Cameroon away from the traditional studies on Turkish relations with Sudan, Egypt, South Africa, Egypt, Libya, Somalia. From the results, more is underway in this relation for both parties especially for Cameroon as she looks forward in meeting vision 2035 developmental goals.

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