

[DOI: 10.20472/IAC.2015.015.010](https://doi.org/10.20472/IAC.2015.015.010)

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THE FUTURE OF PEACE PROCESS IN TURKEY: THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Abstract:

The peace process aiming to end violent and long lasting Kurdish Problem in Turkey, has been continuing peacefully for more than two years. When comparing Turkey's peace process to the equivalent cases of Northern Ireland, the Basque and South Africa, it has been much more peaceful despite minor escalations. In spite of some existing problematic issues in the process, there has progress. The literature has so far been dealt with many aspects of the Kurdish peace process in Turkey, but few has analyzed the threats to and opportunities of the process. Thus, this paper, aims to replenish the missing part of the literature.

The peace process arose out of the opportunity provided by a proper environment of both domestic and global political climate. Yet, by the time the process was underway, it faced new threats and opportunities. Peace processes can face structural, cyclical, and contextual threats, such as lack of a mediator, usage of conflict language, absence of mechanism that deals with transitional justice, change in the international environment, problems of transparency and participation. Therefore, it is critical for a sustainable peace process that the structural necessities, procedural developments and contextual requirements are carefully dealt with.

As of now, Turkey does not appear to be well-protected from these threats. However, this paper identifies a number of potential opportunities to strengthen the peace process to better cope with these threats, one of which includes the existence of a strong political will on both sides. With the recent geo-political and strategic developments in the region, it has denoted the need for cooperation of both parties and the transformation of the negotiation process into a new and comprehensive stage. So while the future of the peace process in Turkey remains vulnerable to both real and perceived threats, it also entails some opportunities, all of which this paper explores.

Keywords:

Peace Process, Turkey, Kurdish Problem, negotiations, participation, cooperation.

JEL Classification: F01, L38, H12