CHAPTER 4

DIPLOMATIC AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN KINGDOM OF ROMANIA AND REPUBLIC OF TURKEY DURING THE ATATÜRK PERIOD (1923-1938)

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to explore the diplomatic and economic relations between the Romania Kingdom and the Republic of Turkey during the Atatürk Period (1923-1938). The first collaboration after the First World War between both states took place during the Lausanne Conference, when Romania sustained the principle of free passage in the Straits. Journal d'Orient noted that during the difficult moments of the conference, Ismet Pasha asked Minister Diamandi to mediate. The Lausanne Treaty was concluded on the 24th of July 1923, while, in the message of congratulations, the Romanian Minister I. Aurelian communicated to the Turkish Foreign Minister that the geographical position of both our countries, their proximity and the Black Sea represent an excellent way of communication between Romania and Turkey, which facilitates the re-establishment and the development of the economical relation. The aim of the Romanian foreign policy was to maintain good relations based on integrity and sovereignty respect with all the countries, which were also some of the purposes of the modern Turkish state, created by Mustafa Kemal. Romania has sustained a diplomatic activity in order to keep contact with the Balkans states and to keep peace in the region. *The Friendship, Non-aggression and Conciliation Treaty* (October 17, 1933) signed between Romania and Turkey, and the Balkan Pact (February 19, 1934) represent the contribution to the joined effort for the security in the region.

The paper is based on unpublished (original) documents found in the Romanian diplomatic archives, the Romania and the Turkish press, as well as on special and general publications.

Keywords: Romanian-Turkish Relations, Balkan Entente, Straits, Little Entente, Great Powers

1. Diplomatic Relations between Kingdom of Romania and Republic of Turkey during the Atatürk Period (1923-1938)

First steps for the resumption of political, diplomatic, economic and cultural relations were made through various visits; it may be mentioned those of the representatives of the Muslim community in Dobrogea (1923), of Romanian students (1924), at a sports level, or even the politician I.I.C. Bratianu planning a visit to Istanbul for the purpose of tying the relations between the two countries.

In 1927 the relations between Romania and Turkey were still cold, but steps were made to improve them. Nicolae Titulescu's (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1995, 24.XI.1927-9.XI.1928; 20.X.1932-1.X.1934; 10.X.1934-28.VIII.1936) declaration in connection with Romania's foreign policy, which consists in the development of good relations with all countries, without distinction, has aroused the interest of the Turkish Foreign Minister Tevfik Rüşti Aras. On August 5, 1927, Foreign Minister Rüşti Aras (AMAE, fund Turcia, vol. 58, p. 135; Aras, 1968) undertook the first steps toward improving relations with Romania, mentioning in this respect to Minister Filality that Turkey wants to conduct the best possible relations with Romania:

"I am very pleased to know that at the helm of Romania lies a strong Government where my good friend Mr. Duca is part of, whom I met in Geneva when he was Minister of Foreign Affairs. Then I discussed with Mr. Duca our respective countries' policy in the Balkans and we have agreed on all the points discussed. Turkey and Romania are initiating a policy of peace and closeness between Balkan states and I see with joy the strenghtening of relations between these states. As long as Mr. Duca was in Government, I found in him the echo of all my endeavors for the realization of the policy upon which both have agreed. After Mr. Duca left the Department of Foreign Affairs, a change has occurred in Romania's attitude toward us. The Minister in Bucharest has always suggested a policy of close amity with Romania and I personally was a proponent of a similar policy, but I had the impression that our desires did not find the expected echo in Bucharest. Then I thought of course to keep my reserves. However the line of conduct of my policy never deviated, and I did everything in my power to maintain good relations with your country. I can, however, be required to make a policy of insensitivity when it comes to my country's interests or prestige. We, Turkish Republic politicians are perhaps too susceptible, but it can be explained, and it is not to be forgotten that we are leading a new country that has nothing in common with the old Ottoman Empire. This excess of susceptibility is maybe a defect of countries in the formation process, but an evanescent defect.... between the former Ottoman Empire and the present

Turkish Republic there is a profound difference, not only in terms of the ruling, but also in terms of foreign policy. The old empire of the sultans were speculating on the conflicts or disagreements between foreign powers, while today's Turkey did not only seek to profit from such litigation or disputes, but sincerely wishes for harmony to reign among the states with which it maintains good relations" (AMAE, fund Turcia, vol. 58, p. 136).

On September 5, 1927, V. Anastasiu noted that all members of the Turkish Government have been summoned by Ismet Pasha in Constantinople where two important Councils of Ministers were held under the chairmanship of *Ghazi*. On this occasion the Romanian diplomat has established a meeting with the Turkish Foreign Minister stating that "I am very happy to learn that the Romanian Government wishes to resume relations of close and cordial friendship with Turkey. I'll take advantage of the first opportunity to share to all my colleagues from the Government this pleasant news received from Bucharest. Please send my warmest thanks to Minister Duca and the assurance that our Government shares completely the good feelings and intentions of the Romanian Government and sees with same joy the strengthening of friendship between the two countries" (AMAE, fund Turcia, vol. 58, p. 142).

The Turkish Foreign Minister had been informed by the Romanian Government through Huseyn Raghib Bey to specify in what situation the attitude towards Turkey by the current Romanian Government differs with respect to the current Romanian Government. Rüstü Aras mentioned to Consul Anastasiu that "as long as Mr. Duca led the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the old Government we were kept abreast of Romania with regards to issues of Balkan politics. After Mr. Duca's departure we have not been informed of anything. Then what I wanted to point out was that now, with the return to power of the liberals, among whom we have friends, we expect a development of relations between Romania and Turkey. And this was for me a difference compared to the attitude of former Romanian Government"(AMAE, fund Turcia, vol. 58, p. 143).

Romanian Minister in Turkey, Gheorghe Filality, in his report from November 4, 1927, mentioned the meeting he had with Rüştü Aras in Ankara. The Romanian Minister recalled Nicolae Titulescu's words that between Romania and Turkey there is no cause for suspicion even taking account of "the warm friendship that [Turks] have with the Russians, we are not justified in doubting the Gaziu's assertions and his Ministers regarding the fact that they will grant their sincere and selfless friendship to all neighboring or remote countries that would show them the same treatment" (AMAE, fund Turcia, vol. 58, p. 148).

On May 18, 1928, Special Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister of Romania to Turkey, Gh. Filality had been received by the President of the Republic of Turkey, Kemal Atatürk. On the occasion of the presentation of credentials he had been received in a private audience by the President of the Republic of Turkey. At the same meeting, Atatürk reminded Minister Filality of the measures taken by the Turkish authorities to make Queen Mary's stay in Istanbul as agreeable as possible (AMAE, fund Turcia, vol. 58, p. 168).

French security policy, was essential to coordinate the evolution of international relations in the interwar period signified an expansion eastward in a desire to counterbalance a potentially dangerous Germany. Thus French diplomacy has been focused on the "flank alliances": 1921 with Poland, 1924 with Czechoslovakia, 1926 with Romania, 1927 with Yugoslavia and in this context has supported the creation of regional alliances similar to the Little Entente. Also French policy has been focused on the economic penetration in the Eastern European region, between 1918 and 1929 the total loans to Hungary, Austria, Romania, Bulgaria and Poland exceeding 700 million Francs. While French banks have entered into force on Eastern European market by controlling up to 50% of their capital, effort that was closely watched by Berlin.

For Germany the recoil proved to be a tactical asset in order to revise the Treaty of Versailles and to ensure the hegemony in Central Europe. Thus in March 1931 the project for an Austrian-German Customs Union marked a first step toward a German Mitteleurope, although following France's pressures over Austria, the German attempt will not be successful. All around the same time, Germany's rapprochement to USSR continued with the conclusion of the Friendship and Neutrality Agreement from 1926, another reason of concern for Paris.

In the same context, the recoil was limited by the actions of Fascist Italy which, although it was opposed to the Anschluss and had a particular interest towards the Balkans, thusly blocking Germany in at least two areas of influence, had its own motivation to try to demolish the Treaty of Versailles. Thus, after the Treaty of Rome (1924) it reinstalled the sovereignty over the city of Fiume, through the treaties of Tirana in 1926 and 1927, Italy will provide "protection" in Albania. The stock market crash in New York in 1929 marked, without being understood as such by its contemporaries, a crossroads moment for the history of the interwar period.

With the start of the global economic crisis, the Balkan states were seeking their own solution to improve the economic situation. Balkan states wished to conduct an economic rapprochement, hoping that in this way they could make positive steps toward political talks.

Cafandaris, head of the Progressive Party from Greece, tried from June 1929 to find a way to weave the economic element with the political element. Thus, he proposed at the *Berlin International Trade Conference* the organization of regional parliamentary assemblies to be attended by representatives of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Turkey and Yugoslavia (AMAE, fund Înțelegerea Balcanică, volume 11, Report no 1 942/3.12.1929). Delegations of the Great Powers have declined the invitation. Papanastassiou, head of the Greek *Republican Union*, was for the convening of a Balkan conference to ward off the interference of the Great Powers in the Balkan problems: "For any international issue, the Balkan states must resort to a great power. Through the realization of the union, influences and rivalries among the Great Powers in this part of Europe would cease" (AMAE, fund Înțelegerea Balcanică, Report no 1 942/27.02.1930).

The idea of an agreement between the Balkan countries was launched within the framework of the International Peace Bureau (AMAE, fund Înțelegerea Balcanică, volume 11, June 30, 1930 from Bureau International de la Paix (Geneve) in Geneva, and during the International Office for Peace Congress in Athens (October 6-10, 1929). M. Papanastasiou has proposed setting up a Balkan Union and the convening of a conference at an informal level of Balkan countries.

The delegations were to represent the political, economic and social circles without engaging the governments of the Balkan states. At this conference they were going to participate with some international institutions: the League of Nations, the International Labor Bureau, the International Chamber of Commerce and other institutions interested to create a framework that could promote economic, parliamentary, scientific and industrial collaboration in the Balkans¹.

Thus, the Romanian Minister in Geneva, C. Antoniadă mentioned on **December 2, 1930**, that Minister Răștău Aras's idea of establishing a Balkan bloc in which to enter Turkey, Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria and Greece.

"final connection between Greece and Turkey is as accomplished, following the conclusion of the last treaties between these two republics. In order for this Balkan bloc to be solid, it's required that each of the countries that will compose it to renounce any differences not only between themselves but also more serious ones they have with their other neighbors. As regards to Romania, Turkish Minister believes that the agreement with Bulgaria would be the most difficult, harder, but not impossible, would be the one

1 The delegations had the following chiefs: Mehmet Konitza (Albania), Ștefan Kyrov (Bulgaria), Alexandru Papanastassiou (Greece), St. Cicio Pop (Romania), Hassan Bey (Turkey), V. Yonič (Yugoslavia).

with Hungary and the Soviet Union. His impressions from Hungary are remnants that may be cancelled in time and that they are not insuperable. The question of the Soviets remains. A series of words left me with the understanding that the Soviets want to get closer to Poland and to us and that would be impossible if it were embedded among us... ” (AMAE, fund Întelegerea Balcanică, volume 11, no 74 997/ 2.12.1930).

On **December 25, 1930**, the Turkish Foreign Minister in a conversation with Minister C. Antoniadie in Geneva expressed the desire to visit Romania. Romanian MFA recommended to him that if he repeated that he would like to come to Romania, “tell him that we’d be very happy with the visit, which would be a good opportunity to strengthen the good relations between our countries” (AMAE, fund Întelegerea Balcanică, volume 11, no 74 997/ 2.12.1930).

As early as the beginning of 1929, the tendency to dominate Austria through the intermediate of the Anschluss was present again in the political life of the Weimar Republic. It was a reiteration in the new forms of F. Naumann’s old project on Mitteleurope (Naumann, 1915). This time the old expansionist project was presented under the cover of an Austro-German Customs Union.

Romania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, deeply concerned about this revisionist plan which aimed as a matter of fact at changing the territorial and juridical order in Europe paid great heed to the negotiations between the two states. Likewise, they considered it necessary to meet and try to counterbalance that dangerous project. On February 11, 1929 a preliminary session of the *Economic Little Entente* (AMAE, fund Mica Întelegere [Little Entente], fila 21, Records of the Preliminary Economic Conference of the Little Entente, 11 February 1929). took place in Bucharest discussing the practical possibilities of implementing article 222 of the Treaty of Saint-Germain, and of article 205 of the Treaty of Trianon, that could form a starting basis for the rapprochement of the states in this region.

On February 20, 1929 when the Conference proper was held, the participants examined a great number of variants of the co-operation plan with all the Central European states. This plan was not destined only to counterbalance the Anschluss but to prove once more how false some of the theses still circulated by then could be, namely that the disappearance of the Hasburg Empire allegedly causes a great disequilibrium in the Danubia Basin (This plan was designed not only to counterbalance the Anschluss, but also to prove how wrong some of the views expressed up to that time could be, namely that the disappearance of the claims of the Hasburg Empire caused a great imbalance in the Danubia Basin.) (AMAE, fund Mica Întelegere [Little Entente]). The Conference examined the theses supported at Geneva by

Zimmermann, (former commissioner of the League of Nations in Austria) promoting their own solutions for the reorganization of this Central European space. The three states started from the idea to reorganize themselves in the spirit of the decisions made at the Ioachimov Session. First of all, they concerned with the measure which had to expand and regulate their mutual cooperation: free of trade, equal treatment for state and private enterprises, simplification of tariffs and unification of customs nomenclature, rationalization of big industrial production, agriculture in equal proportion with industry ect. The Conference evidence also diverging points of view between the industrial state(Czechoslovakia) and the agrarian one (Romania, Yugoslavia). All the participants agreed that this set of measures might be extended to other states in the region, after having been implemented by the Little Entente and in the meantime talks might be started in this respect with Hungary and Austria.

The vehement potests of the Austrian Anschluss circles against the theses mapped out in Bucharest, releaved the hostile attitudes of the pro-German circles in that state against an actual collaboration between the Central European states (AMAE, fund Mica Întelegere [Little Entente], file 21, Telegram no 360/ February 4, 1929 and no 561/ February 10, 1929 from the Romanian Legation in Vienna signed by Mitilineu).

Deep discontent was also shown in Berlin and a great response in the press of the Republic of Weimar (Deep discontent was also shown in Berlin, and there was a great reaction in the press of the Weimar Republic.) (AMAE, fund Mica Întelegere [Little Entente], file 4, Telegram number 1197, February 1929 and Telegram number 2558/February 16, 1929 from the Romanian Legation in Berlin signed by N.Petrescu-Comnen). Germany wanted to escape from “ the yoke of the Treaty of Versailles ”. On March 26, 1931, German and Austria published the plan of the customs union, drawn up by the German Foreign Secretary, Curtius and the Autrian Chanchellor Schober. N.Titulescu, stated that is was nothing else than a “preliminary to a political union ”(Titulescu, 1967, p.370). France disagreed with the *Curtius-Schober Plan* but on May 2, 1931 proposed to the Little Entente a project for the organization of the Danube region aimed to improving the economic situation of the Weimar Republic and of Austria (AMAE, fund Mica Întelegere [Little Entente], fila 22, The Question of Organization the Danube Basin put forward on the occasion of the Anschluss, May 2, 1931). Therefore, May 4-6, 1931, a Conference of Little Entente took place in Bucharest which decided to take proceedings in order to have *Curtius-Schober Plan* rejected (AMAE, fund Mica Întelegere, fila 4, Conference of the Little Entente, May 4-6,1931). The International Court of Justice in Haga rejected *Curtius-Schober Plan*.

In the same time, Italy also tried to detach Romania from her allies in the Little Entente (AMAE, fund Mica Înteletere, file 29, Report no 2089, June 22, 1929). As well, they signed

a treaty with Austria² and sent war materials to Hungary. The reply of the Little Entente to such plans was signed *the Act of Conciliation, Arbitration and Judicial Regulation* (May 23, 1929, Belgrade) which consolidated the alliance between the Little Entente states (AMAE, fund Mica Înțelegere, file 3, May 21, 1929).

In the Balkans, the revisionist tendencies of the states and, particularly those manifested by Germany to dominate Central Europe aroused serious concerns. Subsequently, talks on the setting up of a Balkan security pact were even more frequent and the economic crisis pushed all governments to achieve a regional peace and stability. In such a context, the government of the six countries concerned backed the idea to organize an Inter-Balkan conference of an unofficial character (AMAE, fund Înțelegerea Balcanică, file 11, Report no 1942, December 8, 1929). Papanastassion stood for the convention of an Inter-Balkan Conference first, to bridge the gap towards removing the mixture of the Great Powers in the Balkans “for any international questions the Balkan states have to resort to the intermediate of a Great Power. By achieving union, and influence and rivalry of the Great Powers in this part of Europe would cease ” (AMAE, fund Înțelegerea Balcanică, file 11, February 27, 1930). The International Peace Bureau agreed to have a First Balkan Conference in Athens in October 1930.

The First Balkan Conference proceedings opened on October 5, 1930 in Athens and showed that the fundamental goal was the rapprochement of the Balkan peoples from all points of view (AMAE, fund Înțelegerea Balcanică, file 11, 5-12 October 1930). The six committees were going to prepare the organization of the conference proceedings and in their work had to bear in mind the objective of promoting political, intellectual and economic rapprochement as well as better contacts among the six states. Also, talks for setting up an *Inter-Balkan Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture* and a *Postal Union*.

A first positive result of the conference was the historical reconciliation between Greece and Turkey (Treaty of Friendship, Conciliation and Arbitration) (Papanastassion, 1930, p.4). Also, Turkey intensified its actions for the conclusion of a Treaty of Non-Aggression and Mutual Guarantee with USSR and this treaty to be joined by Romania, Poland and Czechoslovakia (AMAE, fund Înțelegerea Balcanică, fila 12, r. no 994, June 2, 1931; r.no 13993, August 20, 1931).

The Second Balkan Conference proceedings opened on October 20, 1931 in Istanbul (AMAE, fund Înțelegerea Balcanică, fila 3, Report 1180, December 3, 1931). The participants

2 Italy signed in February 1930 a *Treaty of Friendship, Conciliation and Arbitration* with Austria

were able to vote on the resolutions which provide the need for concluding a pact able to eliminate war and to provide concomitantly arbitration and mutual assistance (AMAE, fund Întelegerea Balcanică, no12, September-October 1931).

During the time, the *Tardieu Plan* was mainly directed at barring German expansionism, although, it apparently was a purely economic plan. On the other hand, it was quite obvious also aimed at favouring the exercise of the strong French influence in the Danube Region. At the May 1932 conference of the Little Entente, they had decided to back the *Tardieu Plan* (AMAE, fund Mica Întelegere, fila 20, Compte rendu de la Conférence de la Petite Entente, 13-15 mai 1932). Central European anti-revisionist states, whose economies had been seriously impaired by the economic crisis, sought to do away with its harmful effects. Some plans, for instance the one concerning the joint exploitation of the Danube, could have led to a bad German expansionism tendency in Mittle-Europa.

The Third Balkan Conference held in Bucharest proceedings opened on October 21, 1931 in Bucharest (AMAE, fund Întelegerea Balcanică, Journal no 1 de la III Conférence Balkanique, October 21-28, 1932). The Council proceeded to establishing the committees and the agenda included important items like that of the Balkan Pact, tariffs unions conventions, the Statute of the Inter-Balkan Agriculture Chamber, cooperation in the scientific fields, as well as several problems to be solved by the committees themselves (AMAE, fund Întelegerea Balcanică, La troisième Conférence Balkanique, October 22-28, 1932). Romanian Foreign Minister, Nicolae Titulescu defining peace :

“Peace is not synonymous to the absence of war, but above all, a frame of mind up of confidence, mutual understanding and hopefulness in the days to come. Peace is not proclaimed, peace is conquered.” (AMAE, fund Întelegerea Balcanică, Compte rendu des travaux).

In the autumn and winter of 1932 the international situation became worrying for the states in the Little Entente and the Balkan countries. Germany's claims concerning equal rights in terms of arming were approved on December 13, 1932, marking a start on revising the treaties. Italy had begun an anti-Yugoslav press campaign (AMAE, fund Mica Întelegere, volume 20, Telegram no 2613/13.XII.1932), prompting the Yugoslav government to think about a closer connection within the Little Entente and with the Balkan states. By the end of 1932, the danger of revisionism was greater due to the decision made by the Great Powers in December 1932, to offer Germany the possibility to share equal rights in matters of armament “gleichberechtigung”.

On February 16, 1933, the *Pact for the Reorganization of the Little Entente* was signed. The Pact provide that common policy shall be inspired by the general principles included in all international post-war documents (AMAE, fund Mica Întelegere, file 1, The Pact of Organization of the Little Entente, February 16, 1933, signed by E. Beneš, N. Titulescu and B. Jetvić) (League of Nations Covenant, the Briand-Kellogg Pact, the Locarno Pact). The reorganization of the Little Entente was followed by a hostile campaign in the press in Germany, Italy and Hungary (AMAE, fund Mica Întelegere, Report no 1915, June 16, 1933, Telegram no 533/February 20, 1933, Telegram no 478/February 24, 1933) The **Four-Power Pact** was signed on July 15, 1933 between Britain, France, Italy, and Germany. By signing the *Convention for the Definition of the Aggressor* (London, July 3-4, 1933), Little Entente considered it took an important measure of self-defence³. During the same period of time, in Turkey, the opposition stood by the *Little Entente* to the European Four-Power Directorate and made a strong impression. Tevfik Rüstü Aras said for instance on **April 17, 1933** to I.P. Carp that “the velleities of the four Great Powers to form a grouping that would interfere in the rights of third powers, determined the Turkish Government, which is neither for nor against, and not for the revision of treaties, to be on the part with the Little Entente and with Poland, definitely against the procedural arrangements adopted by the Four” (AMAE, fund 71/Turcia, volume 59, p. 59)

By the end of September, at the ordinary *Session of the Permanent Council of the Little Entente* held in the Peleş Castle at Sinaia, the Balkan questions were discussed (AMAE, fund Mica Întelegere, Procès-verbal de la session ordinaire du Conseil permanent de la Petite-Entente, September 24-27, 1933). By the end of Spetember at Sinaia a campaing plan was mapped out for the creation of a regional union or of a multilateral agreement, with a view to safeguarding and the heads of those states entered directly the political arena, in their hope to surpass the difficulties barring the way to a Balkan Entente.

Early in October 1933 in keeping with the decision made at Sinaia gathering, King Alexander of Yugoslavia visited Bulgaria (AMAE, fund Întelegerea Balcanică, Report no 3626, November 13, 1933 from the Romanian Legation in Sofia signed by V. Stoica), Turkey (AMAE, fund Întelegerea Balcanică, Telegram no 1898, October 2, 1933 from the Romanian Legation in Ankara signed by I.P. Carp) and Greece (AMAE, fund Întelegerea Balcanică, fila 7, Telegram no 2459, October 12, 1933 from the Romanian Legation in Athenes signed by Langa-Răşcanu). N. Titulescu was expected to go to the same countries where he had been officially invited by both the Bulgarian (AMAE, fund Întelegerea Balcanică, Report no 3626, November 13, 1933 from the Romanian Legation in Sofia signed by V.Stoica) and Turkish

3 Signatory state: USSR, Romania, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Turkey, Iran and Afganistan

Gouvernements. The Bulgarian Prime Minister could convince, according to the statements he made to V.Stoica, that Romania's Foreign Minister was an adversary of any idea related to Bulgaria's encirclement. He noted that "the most advanced exchange of opinion took place with Romania" thanks to N.Titulescu's visit, as well as to the meeting between King Carol II of Romania and King Boris III of Bulgaria on the Danube (AMAE, fund Înțelegerea Balcanică, Report no 3626, November 13, 1933 from the Romanian Legation in Sofia signed by V. Stoica)

In this international relations framework, N. Titulescu arrived in Istanbul on October 14, 1933. On October 15, 1933, Minister Carp informed the arrival in Sirkeci train station of Foreign Minister Nicolae Titulescu who was expected by the Mayor and accredited diplomats in Istanbul and in the evening from Haydar Pasha Station he took the train to Ankara being welcomed by many Turkish public figures and a large audience. In Ankara, the *Treaty of Friendship, Non-Aggression, Arbitration and Conciliation* was signed between the Romania Kingdom and the Republic of Turkey on October 17, 1939. The Preamble stated that the Treaty was concluded both in the spirit of the Paris Treaty for the Renunciation of War (August 27, 1928) and the Definition of the Aggressor (July 3-4, 1933). Tefik Aras stated that after "you have given a real pledge for peace alongside us... How could I forget the effective contribution, collaboration and the loyal and honest aid for the historical work of defining the aggressor"? Nicolae Titulescu's answer was that certainly "I worked with all my strength and with ardent conviction for the realization of Briand-Kellogg Pact, whose initiative will remain forever in international context".

In Athens, Prime Minister Tsalaridis pointed out that "in the Balkans each state initials treaties of friendship with all the other states on an equal footing in the manifestation of hope to serve its own interest and in close connection with the preservation and defence of the European balance of forces"⁴ (AMAE, fund Înțelegerea Balcanica, Report no 2602, October 29, 1933, from the Romanian Legation in Athens signed by Langa-Rășcanu). The Governments of Italy and Germany were dissatisfied with the attempts at achieving a Balkan states approach, it was called by an Italian newspaper a *Travel around an Absurd Idea*.

The Fourth Balkan Conference opened on the 5th of November 1933 in Saloniki. In the Commission for Political Rapprochement the regular meetings between foreign ministers and the project of the Balkan Pact voted by the Third Bucharest Conference held in October 1932. were discussed The Bulgarian delegation agreed to vote for the project making the following reserve:

4 The *Greek-Romanian Non-Aggression and Arbitration Pact* was signed between Greece and Romania on 21 March 1928.

- a) Bulgaria should be recongnized and given full juridical rights in its relationship with other Balkan states.
- b) The disposition of the clauses for the minorities deriving from treaties should be loyally and fully applied.

Negotiations between Turkey, Greece, Romania and Yugoslavia were progressing and were on the point of signing a security pact referring to the statute of Balkan frontiers. On November 25, 1933 a Turkish-Yugoslav Treaty similar to the one concluded by Romanian-Turkish Treaty was signed. Then, Rüştü Aras traveled to Sofia to obtain Bulgaria's adherence to the Balkan Pact (AMAE, fund Înțelegerrea Balcanică, Report no 3626, November 13, 1933 fom the Romanian Legation in Sofia signed by V.Stoica). In the last month of 1933, King Boris of Bulgaria went to Belgrade and then to Italy (AMAE, fund Înțelegerrea Balcanică, Telegram no 3121, December 16, 1933 from the Legation in Belgrade signed by Gurănescu); Report no 4206/ December 29, 1933 from the Romanian Legation in Sofia signed by V.Stoica.

The principles established during N.Titulescu's visit to Sofia and Ankara remained unchanged. The Balkan Pact was to be grounded on :

- a) mutual guaranteeing of Balkan frontiers
- b) reciprocal consulatation on events which by their nature might affect Balkan interest
- c) the commitment to refrain from concluding a political agreement with another Balkan state without the previous consent of all signatory parties

The representatives of Romania, Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia gathered in Belgrade to discuss the contents of the Balkan Pact (AMAE, fund Înțelegerrea Balcanică, February 6, 1934 signed by N.Titulescu). The Pact was signed in Athens (February 9, 1934).

On May 11, 1934, Tevfik Rüştü Aras arrives in Romania. The Turkish Minister's visit to Bucharest brought a moment of summing up the Romanian-Turkish relations. This visit had positive consequences on the Romanian-Turkish relations; Prime Minister Ismet İnönü declared the following in the Parliament session of July 5, 1934: "we have signed various international documents with Romania over the past years. It is a wellspring of satisfaction for us the cooperation with Romania in the field of peace and aggression containment" (Ekrem, 1991, p. 52).

On September 15, 1934, the Permanent Council of Balkan Entente published an official communique in which it announced that the four allied states will vote in favor of the entry of the Soviet Union in the League of Nations and expressed their sympathy for the oriental

security pact and will continue the work with a view to collaborating with all Balkan countries, being particularly satisfied with the visit of King Alexander of Yugoslavia to Sofia. In October, when the terrorist bombing occurred in Marseille against King Alexander of Yugoslavia, Louis Barthou will convene an extraordinary session of the Council on October 19, 1934 in Belgrade, where he will communicate that the Balkan Entente states will continue the policy as before.

The French-Italian agreements concluded on January 7, 1934 where stated that “no state can change by any unilateral act its obligations in armament matters” (AMAE, fund Întelegerea Balcanică, Les Accords franco-italiens de Rome le 7 Janvier 1935 signed by Laval and Mussolini). The Permanent Council of the Balkan Entente (January 17-20, 1935) decided that Yugoslavia and Romania, together or unilaterally should pledge themselves to conclude the convention that had been mentioned by the Compte rendu of Rome (Mussolini-Laval) only if Turkey and Greece would be also invited to adhere, also in their turn, Greece and Turkey took similar guarantee (AMAE, fund Întelegerea Balcanică, Procès Verbal des séances tenues à Genève, 17-20 Janvier 1935). In the beginning 1935, N. Titulescu noted that:

“These Ententes [Little Entente⁵, Balkan Entente] as well as our alliance with France are the fundamentals of our foreign policy. The amity between Romania and the Soviet Union, and between the Soviet Union and France are guaranteeing the normal functioning of all these alliances, which are directed against nobody and on the contrary they are a security of peace in this area of Europe where our countries are placed demonstrating the importance of the expansion of our relations with the USSR, a country which in its truce considers its relations with France most significant” (AMAE, fund Mica Întelegere, Telegram no 200, January 27, 1935, from the Romanian Legation in Belgrade signed by Gurănescu)

On May 2, 1935 the French-Soviet treaty was signed and the document was received good by the Little Entente and the Balkan Entente⁶. Also in May 1935, Czechoslovakia signed similar pacts of mutual assistance with the USSR and France. After Germany had re-introduced the compulsory military service and was not hiding any more its will to recover its colonies. Great Britain decided to isolate the Third Reich and asked for collaboration of Italy initiating the Conference of Stresa held in April 1935.

As a result, a self-defence military measures were intensified in the Balkans and in Central Europe.

5 Traité d'assistance mutuelle entre la République Tchécoslovaque et URSS (Prague, May 16, 1936) signed by E. Beneš and S. Alexandrovski. A similar pact was signed with France.

6 *Traité franco-soviétique d'assistance mutuelle* (Paris, le 2 mai 1935) signed by Potemkin and Laval

The representatives of the Little Entente and the Balkan Entente gathered in Geneva on April 15, 1935. N. Titulescu emphasized the consequences of the concession made to Italy and its support for Bulgaria and Hungary revisionism. Also, Tevfik Rüştü Aras was anxious about Italy's military activity (AMAE, fund Întelegerea Balcanică, Telegram 898, April 14, 1935 from the Romanian Legation in Belgrad signed by Gurănescu)

In this international relations framework, the conference of the Balkan Entente was held in Bucharest (May 10-13, 1935). The participating states decided to include a stipulation regarding guarantees in case of the Habsburgs' restoration and that Italy should stop its revisionist propaganda. In this context, it was recognized as a matter of principle Turkey's right to rearming the Straits.

On May 6, 1935 the presentation of credentials to the President of the **Republic of Turkey** of the new representative of Romania in Ankara, Eugen Filotti, brought a review of the good relations between the two nations. E. Filotti revealed that during the meeting, Kemal Atatürk, has shown a great friendship for Romania (Ekrem, 1991, p. 55). The Turkish President transmitted King Carol II warm tributes and remembrance of the agreeable visit of the Romanian King in Turkey. Throughout the conversation, Kemal Atatürk showed the signs of the long friendship for Romania. Romanian Minister met with Ismet İnönü, who sent his admiration for the work of N. Titulescu in Geneva with a view to clarifying the point 6 of the Stresa communiqué (AMAE, fund 71/Turcia, volume 59, pp. 141-142).

Signing *the Anglo-German naval agreement* (June 18, 1935) and the invasion of Ethiopia by Italy (October 2, 1935) motivated the actions for the implementation of the military agreements within the Balkan Entente. The initiative was taken by the Milan Stojadinović and on November 29, 1935, the military experts of Romania, Turkey and Yugoslavia met in Belgrade and initialed the military convention. The meeting was held together with the conference of the staff of the Little Entente (AMAE, fund Întelegerea Balcanică, Telegram 1919, December 23, 1935 from the Romanian Legation in Ankara signed by Filotti).

Germany occupied the demilitarized zone of Rhineland on March 7, 1936. The Permanent Councils of the Little Entente and of the Balkan Entente⁷ (AMAE, fund Întelegerea Balcanică, Réunion de la Petite Entente et de l'Entente Balcanique). (March 11, 1936) gathered in Geneva adopted a resolution that the German Government violated the Treaty of Versailles. Austria reintroduced the military service, the Little Entente Council gathered in Belgrade and sent a formal note of protest (AMAE, fund Mica Întelegere, Procès Verbal de la session ordinaire

7 Attended by N. Titulescu (Romania), Subotnic (Yugoslavia), Cemil Husnu (Turkey), Heiderich (Czechoslovakia), Bibica Rosetti (Greece)

du Conseil Permanent d la Petite Entente, 6-8 Mai 1936). Little Entente (Bucharest June, 1936) discussed the necessity of setting a joint defensive military command of armies also to develop economic collaboration (AMAE, fund Mica Înţelegere [Little Entente], Protocole spécial concernant le commandement unique des armées de la Petite Entente, Protocole de Prague du 22 juin 1936, des experts économiques des pays de la Petite Entente). N. Titulescu noted that “peace has now, from Prague to Ankara, seventy million soldiers”(AMAE, fund Înţelegerea Balcanică, Circular Telegram addressed to all Romanian Diplomatic Mission, June 13, 1936)

In 1936, King Carol II removed Titulescu from all official positions, considered that Germany should not be challenged directly and the best example to be followed would be the Anglo-French policy towards that state.

After March 7, 1936 when the force of law was replaced by the right to force states found themselves in the situation to defend their integrity by other measures as well. On this line was Turkey’s position which was addressed to the League of Nation to revise the international regime of the Straits.

The Romanian Government gave a positive answer to the note (AMAE, fund 71/Turcia, Note no 255, April 11, 1936 of the Turkish Legation in Bucharest signed by Cevdet Dülger) received from Ankara: as Turkey never and will never put to question the territorial clauses under treaties regarding Romania has the honour to inform you it agrees to carry negotiations in the most amicable spirit in relation in the Note of April 11, 1936 (AMAE, fund 71/Turcia, Note of Response send by the Romanian Government to the Turkish Government on the Straits Question, April 29, 1936, addressed to Cevdet Dülger). N. Titulescu said in the first meeting of the Montreux Conference that “ anything touching the security of Turkey concerns the security of Romania too and anything concerning the Black Sea has a major interest for us” (Titulescu, 1967, p. 781-782).

Starting with 1936, the international situation worsens gradually, deterioration being caused by a series of events that took place that year: the termination of the Treaty of Locarno and the intrusion of German troops in Rhineland (March 7), Italy’s occupation of Abyssinia, the civil war from Spain, the Constitution of the Anti-Comintern Pact (November 25)⁸ and

8 On November 25, 1936, Germany and Japan signed the Anti-Comintern Pact that was formally directed against the Soviet Union, but in fact having rather anti-Britain objectives. Creating more pressure on the centers of the British Empire, Hitler hoped to paralyze London’s actions and to force it to think in terms of a conflict on three fronts: Western Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Far East. The Anti-Comintern Pact will be completed with the accession of Italy in November 1937.

the Italian-German agreements (October 26)⁹.

The Governments of England and France made concessions to revisionist states, the political tactics of states in 1936, thus leaving out the principle “In Unity Lies the Power” to rely increasingly on the principle of “saving oneself”. The negative consequences stemming from the Anglo-French conciliatory policy did not fall short and in South-East Europe, Yugoslavia, “escaping” from the Balkan Entente, signed, in January 1937, a treaty with Bulgaria, and in March an eternal friendship treaty with Italy.

In this international context, Göbbles’s visit to Athens in September 1936, and Nicolae Titulescu’s replacement on August 29, 1936, produced a profound unrest in Turkey.

On September 10, 1936, Rüşti Aras told Filotti that “he took knowledge of the statements that the new Romanian Foreign Minister has made to Turkey’s Ambassador in Bucharest regarding the Romanian Government’s will to maintain and deepen the friendship and alliance with Turkey” (AMAE, fund Înțelegerea Balcanică, volume 1, Telegram no 18.V.1936). Minister Filotti stressed that Foreign Minister Rüşti Aras learned with joy of the Foreign Minister’s intention of making a visit to Ankara and hopes to meet with him in Geneva at the meeting of Balkan Entente (AMAE, fund Turcia, volume 59, p. 222).

The Balkan Entente’s states continued the action of rapprochement towards Bulgaria. Kiosseivanov Government showed interest in getting close to the Balkan Entente, desiring a Balkan bloc, but remaining outside of it. Turkey and Bulgaria conducted friendly relations, and in November 1936, Rüşti Aras informed the Romanian Minister in Ankara that Yugoslavia wished to sign a separate pact with Bulgaria, considering it as a first step to a Bulgarian rapprochement to Balkan Entente (AMAE, fund Turcia, volume 59, Telegram no 187,6.XI.1936) Greece and Romania wanted this treaty to be simultaneously signed by all states of the Balkan Entente. Athens had doubts, considering that the Bulgarian-Yugoslavian Pact is Italy’s play and Romania did not want to approve a pact that could lead to a division among the four allies.

One of the important issues to solve was that of harmonization of the reserves of Yugoslavian, Romanian and Greek delegations regarding the Military Convention signed in Bucharest, on November 9, 1936 (AMAE, fund 71/Turcia, Convention militaire entre le Royaume de Grèce, le Royaume de Roumanie, le République de Turquie et le Royaume de

9 Internal consolidation plans would precede in parallel with the resumption of diplomatic offensive designed to weaken the French system of alliances in Europe. On October 26, 1936 Italy and Germany announced a forthcoming co-operation agreement-the Rome-Berlin Axis. It was the end point of a rapprochement that began during the Ethiopian crisis and strengthened throughout the civil war in Spain. The Rome-Berlin Axis presented two big advantages for Germany: forcing the two big Western Powers to think about the possibility of a conflict in the Mediterranean and, was especially eliminating Italian opposition towards Anschluss.

Yugoslavie, 10 novembre 1936). The Romanian reserve was now tied to the Bulgarian-Yugoslavian Pact which was contrary to the Romanian-Yugoslavian Military Convention (AMAE, fund Înțelegerea Balcanică, volume 23, Nota 1461,6.II.1937 from General Staff signed by the Chief of the General Staff I. Sichitiu).

In the Athens Session of the Balkan Entente Permanent Council, Stojadinović noted the pact signed with Bulgaria did not affect Yugoslavia's duties towards its allies in the Balkan Entente (AMAE, fund Înțelegerea Balcanică, Procès Verbal du Conseil Permanent de l'Entente Balkanique, le 15-18 février 1937). Also, on the Belgrade Session of the Little Entente was a discussion concerning the Italian-Yugoslav Pact signed on March 25, 1937 (AMAE, fund Înțelegerea Balcanică, Session du Conseil Permanent de la Petite Entente, April 1-2, 1937). The Stojadinović Government with both treaties concluded caused great worries in different European state and above all for Little Entente and Balkan Entente.

During 1937, the capital of Turkey was visited by the Foreign Minister Victor Antonescu, Prime-Minister Gh. Tătărescu, and in **June and August 1938**, Carol II visited Istanbul, all of these visits marked the solidarity in front of revisionist aggression that was shaping the European political atmosphere.

The newspaper *Tan* of **March 16, 1937** published the article *Our precious friends* which mentioned that "We feel a great deal of happiness to be able to welcome, in our country, two very well-known people in Europe such as, Mr. Antonescu and his treasured collaborator, Mr. Bădulescu. And so, from the bottom of our heart we wish them HOŞ GELDİNİZ (Welcome)!"

After the Anschluss (annexation of Austria), Europe's gate to the South-East, gave Germany the possibility to be on the verge of the Balkans, and the anti-revisionist states realized they must unite against the aggressor. The methods used by Nazi Germany to break the cohesion of the Balkan Entente states were diverse, from pressures to promises. Greece and Turkey have concluded the additional Treaty announced at the session of the Balkan Entente, and on April 16, 1938 a British-Italian agreement was signed to maintain the *status-quo* in the Mediterranean (AMAE, fund 71/Turcia, volume 60, p.273)

Turkey took the initiative to propose a Bulgarian collaboration with the Balkan Entente, but subtly so as not to create a feeling of resentment towards Germany, but as Numan Menemencioğlu emphasized that the German financial presence in the Turkish economy is so high, that it could not lead an official anti-German policy, but neither wanted to become the instrument of German interests (AMAE, fund Înțelegerea Balcanică, volume 26, Report no 873/3.V.1938).

On May 11, 1938, Nazi Germany produced a law objecting to the connection between the Rhine, Main and Danube River by which it was established as a communication route between the North Sea and the Black Sea that was worrying Bulgaria and the Balkan Entente states. Bulgaria wanted the recognition of the right for arming, and instead, Turkey and Greece could remilitarize the areas prohibited by the Treaty of Neuilly, that was displeasing Romania which wanted a non-aggression pact with all four allies (AMAE, Telegram no 3121/28. V.1938). To counteract the German action in the Balkans, Great Britain and the Soviet Union urged Bulgaria to conclude an agreement with the Balkan Entente. Romania wished to include in the draft, referring to non-aggression, the Briand-Kellogg Pact, and the Pact of the League of Nations, but it was not accepted.

In this context, in the period 18-20th of June 1938, Carol II went to Istanbul where he had a series of meetings with Turkish officials. King Carol II noted in his diary:

“We are announced that we’re entering the Bosphorus. At Büyükdere, a boat is landing with Rüştü Aras and Celal Bayar coming to greet me on behalf of Kemal Atatürk, who being gravely ill regretted he is not able to greet me himself. We are conversing until they cast anchor in the roadstead of Istanbul. We speak, understandably, about international politics. The most important part is the relations with Bulgaria, Aras tells me that he has full confidence in King Boris and the absolute need to see it concluded, as soon as possible, an agreement with them, because there is a great need for the Balkans to be at peace. I replied that I am and I have always been of this opinion, my whole policy was directed for an understanding with the neighbors, but even though we wanted to make this deal, we don’t gain anything, as well as others, a moral win for Bulgaria, the right for remilitarization, without receiving any compensation in return. In addition, they took place, a few days ago, some regrettable incidents, like the attack of the Bulgarian revolutionaries [comitagii] who killed a border guard, and Turtucaia Cup of the frontier relay race. This does not create a good atmosphere for an agreement and for it to conclude, this sort of incidents should no longer take place. I asked them, and they promised to communicate a decisive word to Sofia. I also asked for an exchange of ambassadors, without a favorable outcome, but delayed until the Balkan Entente Council assembly”(Carol II, 1995, p. 259).

The Consulate in Istanbul on **June 19, 1938**, announced the Romanian MFA that at 10 o’clock H.M. the King arrived and was greeted at the entrance of the Bosphorus by the President of the Council of Ministers; H.M. the King has landed and was visiting the city (AMAE, fund 71/Turcia, volume 60, p.290).

King Carol II portrays the meeting with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk at the board of the *Savarona* ship:

“It is understandable that the conversation between us is directed towards the Balkan Entente, the community of interests between us, the friendship that binds us, Romania and Turkey. We spoke of the strong friendship between Turkey and Greece, amazing example of two nations that have been enemies for ages and today are so tightly united. And who did this marvel, on one hand, Gazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha, who expelled the Greeks from Asia Minor, after the great battle of Yenışehir and Afyon Karahisar, and on the other hand, Venizelos, the perpetual rebel against the Turks in Crete and in the war of 1913, and General Metaxas, Chief of the General Staff of the Greek armies defeated by Kemal.

It’s a nice example, which should be a stimulus for the future. We speak about the Bulgarians and projects in progress, Kemal is expressing his admiration and confidence in King Boris, from here the conversation slips, naturally, on the Balkan Entente, which should be not only a political organism, but also a military one; our armies should be increasingly tied together. I may add that economic links are also a primary point of understanding.

I may add that Bulgaria, held in our sphere of action, will be able to spread the understanding through Poland towards the Baltics. In reply, Turkey is very happy of the Romanian-Polish alliance and sees, through it, the means to have the best connections with Poland, and, Romania must capitalize on the ties that the Turks have with USSR. I know that here stands the weight for this project; Russians don’t really see with good eyes the direct links with Poland. Still, I do not believe there are insurmountable difficulties and, with patience, this supreme virtue of kings, and that I may someday see that dream achieved, the Baltic-Black Sea-Balkans Union. I then bring into discussion that the problem of the emigration of Turks not be rushed. Kemal receives it with pleasure. I remind also the question of ambassadors, being ensured, provided by the provision that Aras made yesterday” (Carol II, 1995, pp. 262-263).

The issues addressed in the conversation with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk were those in connection to the relations between the Balkan countries, but also the problem of Sudetenland. Following King Carol II’s comment that the Czechoslovakian State is in a serious situation, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk will mention “How can the King of Czechoslovakia give up a territory that he was entrusted with by his people to protect this land”, the answer of King Carol II was: “Your Excellency, we understand the situation, but we fear the German pressure” (Erden, 2006).

On July 31, 1938 was signed in Thessaloniki by Metaxas on behalf of the Balkan Entente, and by Bulgaria's Prime Minister, Kiosseivanov, an agreement by which the military was abolished, naval and air clauses of the Treaty of Neuilly, and those relating to the demilitarization of the Turkish-Bulgarian border as provided for in the Treaty of Lausanne.

The undermining of the Balkan Entente was determined by Germany's pressure, Hitler's success in the remilitarization of Germany, and the defiance of treaties, that has eroded the Balkan alliance and German economic hegemony made its presence felt in the Balkans.

Nazi Germany was advancing freely towards Central Europe, dividing Czechoslovakia's territory and nothing seemed to hinder its path to the Balkans.

The states of the Balkan Entente were aware of the weakness in the face of a Germany in full recovery, while France had demonstrated its inability to act (Breton, 1996, p. 40).

In the foreign policy, Romania's concern was to find favorable situations in defense of national independence and sovereignty, and the territorial integrity of the country; the coordinates of foreign policy were maintaining the traditional relations with France and England, Little Entente, Balkan Entente and the alliance with Poland. In Romania's perspective, there was a tendency to use these as instruments against Germany's advance in the South-Eastern Europe (Breton, 1996, p. 41).

The day after the annexation of Austria (March 14, 1938), Gheorghe Tătărescu attempted to convene a Conference of the Little Entente in Bucharest.

In terms of relations between Romania and Turkey, Minister Aras affirmed that Turkey will always remain the sincere ally and friend of Romania, whose foreign policy for more than a year is similar in all respects to that of Turkey, and if it came to this result, is only due to the many discussions and exchanges of opinions between officials of both countries. Aras believed that Romania and Turkey today have that degree of friendship with Great Britain, maintains the same policy towards France, cultivates a friendly approach with Germany and Italy from an economic and commercial stance, without seeking a political alliance with the Reich or with Italy, have feelings of good vicinity and friendship towards Soviet Russia and maintain friendly relations with Poland (AMAE, fund 71/Turcia, volume 60, pp. 353-354).

On November 24, 1938, King Carol met with Adolf Hitler at Berchtesgaden, having to find out Führer's hostility towards Romania's politics. Regarding Italy, its desire was to seize the Balkans as a counterweight to Germany's seizure of Central Europe. On January 22, 1939, Ciano has visited Belgrade, clearly drawing the Italian intentions in the Balkans, the

dissolution of the Balkan Entente by luring Romania and Yugoslavia to join the Axis, so that Turkey and Greece also be obliged to take the same position (AMAE, fund Întelegerea Balcanică, volume 21, Telegram no 241,20.I.1939).

In what concerns the Balkan Entente, the security zone was limited: Greece had no intention of being involved in an Italian-Yugoslavian conflict, Turkey would not want to be involved in a Russian-Romanian war, and the Pact was standing if a state was attacked by Bulgaria, without the support of a Great Power. The situation becomes critical with the rise of Germany and Italy and with the withdrawal of France from the problems of southeastern Europe.

On the morning of **November 10, 1938**, at 9:05, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk died in Dolmabahçe Palace in Istanbul after a long suffering.

The funeral of the head of the Turkish state, held on **November 20** in Ankara, was an important event that attracted the presence of many European leaders. From the part of the Romanian state, Nicolae Petrescu Comnen (Romanian Foreign Affairs Minister (March 30, 1938 – January 31, 1939) sent a letter of condolence to which he received the response from his counterpart, Rüştü Aras, as well as Patriarch Miron Cristea, the President of the Council of Ministers, sent a letter of condolence, receiving a response of gratitude from Celal Bayar.

At the funerals were present representatives from 30 states, and on November 20 the Yugoslavian and Romanian delegations have arrived in the Turkish capital.

Prime Minister Celal Bayar submitted the resignation of the Government to the new President, İsmet İnönü, after which he was appointed with the formation of a new cabinet, where two changes were made: Sükrü Saraçoğlu will replace Rüştü Aras as Foreign Minister.

On December 26, 1938, Atatürk has received from Parliament the title of eternal leader, and on May 29, 1939, İsmet İnönü was awarded the same title for national leader.

Regarding Turkey's foreign policy, especially the Balkan Entente policy, after the death of Atatürk, was faithfully followed by the new President of the Republic, İsmet İnönü, giving assurances that Turkey's policy will remain unchanged.

The President of the Council of Ministers declared in front of the Great National Assembly (TBMM) on **November 22, 1938** that in their foreign policy nothing has changed “we remain honestly tethered to our agreements, our friendships, and our alliances” (AMAE, fund 71 / Turcia, volume 60:357). Reciprocal visits of political and military personnel during the years

1936-1 939 contributed to bolster the Turkish-Romanian ties as well as the continuation of efforts for insuring the common goal: collective security against aggressors and enemies of territorial *status-quo*.

2. The Economic Relations between the Kingdom of Romania and the Republic of Turkey during Atatürk Period (1923- 1938)

The Romanian-Turkish economic relations until 1929 covered by *The Trade Convention annexed to the Treaty of Lausanne* stipulated that Romania enjoyed the favored nation clause. Although after 1923 the trade exchange rates were rising, trade has not been significant, as can be seen in the following table that indicates the Romanian-Turkish trade in the years 1923-1930 (Comerțul exterior al României (1928-1937), 1939). While the Turkish products were the beneficiaries of a minimal customs tariff, the Romanian products did not profit from the same treatment on the part of Turkey. At the end of 1924 Romania tried to obtain minimal customs tariff reciprocity from the Turkish Government, objective that has been obtained in January 1926. Goods exported by Romania in Turkey were grain (corn and wheat), timber, and petroleum products (AMAE, fund Problema 41, n.pag. Report no. 68.829, December 28, 1925 of the Romanian economic Attaché to Ankara), sugar (Adevărul, June 12, 1929), cement and glass. During this period, Romania occupies a prominent place in Turkey's import of grain and sugar.

Thus, the first agreement signed between Romania and Turkey that was applied after the expiration of the Convention annexed to the Treaty of Lausanne, after Turkey gained complete freedom to regulate its trade relations with each country, is signed on June 11, 1929 and was implemented on a provisional basis from September 1, 1930. The Convention entered into force definitively after 30 days after the exchange of ratification (January 15, 1930), ratified on June 22, 1930, and the exchange of the instruments of ratification took place on December 16, 1930. The term was two years, and may be denounced with six months' notice.

However, with the exception of grains, the other Romanian export products, forestry and petroleum products could find an important outlet on the Turkish market, because of the large consumer needs arising from the process of Turkey's economic recovery. The condition was to return to the free-trade regime, because the protectionist regime was unprofitable for Romania's trade with Turkey. In the case of a free trade agreement, the Romanian products would have been favored by the proximity of the Turkish market, that meaning cheaper means of transport.

As mentioned in the diplomatic reports a negative factor in trade relations between the two countries was the similarity of products, given the situation of agricultural countries of Romania and Turkey.

Table 1: The trade balance for the main countries in the period 1919-1939, average years				
Country	1919 - 1924	1925-1929	1930-1934	1935-1939 — <i>Mil.LEI</i> —
England	- 641	- 694	+ 600	+ 3 709
Austria	- 719	- 384	+ 771	- 1
Belgium	+ 1 291	+ 2	+ 429	+ 202
Bulgaria	+ 257	+ 512	+ 165	+ 179
Czechoslovakia	- 291	- 2 410	- 919	- 474
France	- 97	- 796	+ 464	+ 19
Germany	- 1 264	- 1 747	- 733	+ 1 435
Italy	- 701	- 516	+ 594	+ 1 150
Yugoslavia	+ 197	+ 483	+ 191	+ 182
Netherlands	+ 422	+ 325	+ 616	+ 181
Poland	-670	- 343	- 304	- 76
USA	- 380	- 1 098	- 590	- 364
Turkey	+ 163	+ 274	- 4	+ 4
Hungary	+ 1 145	+ 2 058	+ 794	+ 435
USSR	+ 57	- 34	- 40	+ 18

Trade (Adevărul, October 4, 1935; Argus, October 7, 1935): **and Clearing Agreement** signed at Ankara entered into force on **October 19, 1935**. The Romanian-Turkish trade agreement from October 5, 1935, without prejudice to the provisions of the Convention of 1929, provided the 1/1 rapport for the trade with Turkey.

The **Transit Convention** was signed on October 5, 1935. An old idea was that of Constanța harbour to become a port of transit for Turkish goods destined for Central Europe (ANIC, fund Ministerul Propagandei Naționale - Presă externă, volume 477:24-25 ; Kurum, December 12, 1935), but also for other goods coming from Persia and going to Europe (AMAE, fund Problema 40, vol 130. Note of the MAE- Direcția economică, March 15, 1937).

Regarding the Romanian-Turkish relations it was decided sending a Turkish delegation in order to establish the bases of a new commercial agreement. In the application of the agreement concluded on October 4, 1935, Romania has approximately 1,500,000 Turkish Liras which could not be used because it was not taken into account the realities in respect of the export of petroleum products.

Other countries importing these products paid 100% in free foreign currency and Turkey through compensation means (Mănescu, 1939, p. 98).

Table 2 and 3: EXPORT and IMPORT of Romania by volume and value distribuite the main country in the period 1919 -1939, average years (Axenciuc,1997, pp.529,534,536)

Country	Export by volume — tonnes —				Export by value —Lei —			
	Year				Year			
	1919-1924	1925-1929	1930-1934	1935 -1939	1919-1924	1925-1929	1930-1934	1935 -1939
Total	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00
England	4,7	6,1	12,2	11,5	6,3	6,4	12,1	11,5
Austria	4,6	5,5	5,5	6,9	9,7	12,6	8,7	6,4
Belgium, Luxembourg	7,1	1,9	4,1	2,6	10,9	2,5	4,5	3,2
Bulgaria	3,1	2,3	1,1	1,1	2,0	1,7	1,0	0,8
Canada	X	X	X	0,1	X	X	X	X
Czechoslovakia	2,8	2,8	4,0	5,5	6,5	6,5	4,9	8,5
Denmark	-	0,4	0,8	1,3	-	0,4	0,8	1,4
Egypt	4,5	6,5	6,8	4,1	3,9	5,0	4,4	2,9
Switzerland	0,2	X	0,2	2,3	0,4	0,1	0,5	2,8
France	6,1	4,6	9,8	6,0	7,8	4,8	10,2	5,2
Germany	3,7	12,7	9,1	15,7	6,6	16,6	14,7	22,7
Greece	4,4	4,6	3,1	4,1	4,4	4,3	3,1	4,6
India	-	X	0,3	X	-	X	0,2	X
Italy	6,1	8,9	12,2	11,3	6,2	7,1	10,6	8,9
Yugoslavia	4,1	3,3	1,9	1,9	1,7	1,9	1,4	1,3
Japonia	-	-	X	0,1	-	X	X	0,2
Norway	0,2	X	0,1	0,1	0,4	X	0,1	0,1
Netherlands	3,3	2,1	4,8	1,6	4,1	2,6	5,0	1,8
Palestine	3,3	2,1	4,8	1,6	-	0,2	1,0	2,2
Polonia	2,4	3,8	0,9	0,8	3,3	4,9	1,7	0,8
Portugal	-	0,1	0,5	0,2	-	0,1	0,3	0,1
Spain	0,3	0,8	2,6	1,6	0,2	0,4	1,7	1,2
United States	X	0,1	0,1	0,3	0,1	0,3	0,2	1,2
Sweden	0,1	0,1	0,4	0,7	0,2	X	0,3	0,7
Turkey	2,8	1,5	0,8	0,9	3,2	1,6	0,6	0,7
Hungary	30,3	23,1	9,1	7,1	12,1	10,2	7,0	4,8
USSR	0,5	X	-	X	0,5	X	X	0,2
Other countries	8,7	8,1	8,6	10,7	9,4	9,8	5,0	5,7

Country	Import by volume — tonnes —				Import by value — Lei —			
	Year				Year			
	1919-1924	1925-1929	1930-1934	1935 -1939	1919-1924	1925-1929	1930-1934	1935 -1939
Total	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00	100,00
England	9,2	5,8	8,4	5,8	11,2	8,6	11,5	8,5
Austria	10,9	6,8	4,5	4,0	15,4	13,9	5,9	9,6
Belgium, Luxembourg	2,2	2,4	5,0	3,1	1,6	2,5	2,8	3,6
Bulgaria	1,1	1,3	0,6	0,4	0,2	0,2	0,1	0,1
Canada	0,2	X	X	X	0,2	X	X	X
Czechoslovakia	11,0	18,1	13,0	10,4	8,8	14,1	12,7	15,6
Denmark	-	0,1	0,2	0,6	-	0,1	0,2	0,5
Egypt	0,9	1,9	4,3	4,4	1,2	1,9	1,1	3,5
Switzerland	0,4	0,5	0,6	0,5	1,6	1,9	2,9	2,5
France	5,2	3,3	5,5	4,9	8,9	7,3	9,9	7,6
Germany	13,6	15,0	15,6	25,5	16,2	22,1	23,8	25,0
Greece	2,2	1,2	2,6	2,9	1,7	0,8	1,1	1,6
India	-	0,1	0,3	0,1	-	X	0,1	X
Italy	4,6	4,1	5,5	3,1	11,6	8,8	9,6	6,1
Yugoslavia	1,2	3,1	3,4	13,2	0,3	0,4	0,5	0,8
Japonia	-	X	0,1	X	X	X	X	0,1
Norway	0,2	0,1	0,3	0,2	0,1	0,1	0,2	0,1
Netherlands	1,0	1,0	2,3	2,3	1,1	1,6	2,3	1,6
Palestine	-	0,1	0,5	1,2	-	X	0,2	0,6
Polonia	13,6	20,0	13,0	3,9	8,4	6,0	4,2	1,9
Portugal	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,2	0,1	0,1	0,1
Spain	0,1	0,1	0,2	0,3	0,5	0,1	0,3	0,3
United States	8,4	2,0	2,1	2,4	2,9	3,6	4,3	4,0
Sweden	0,2	0,1	0,3	0,2	0,1	0,3	0,6	0,5
Turkey	5,9	2,2	4,4	2,2	2,1	0,8	0,8	0,8
Hungary	5,9	2,2	4,4	2,2	4,1	4,0	3,6	4,4
USSR	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,3	X	0,1	0,3	0,1
Other countries	1,7	1,1	0,9	0,8	1,6	0,7	0,9	0,8

In this sense a report of Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has concluded the results of the clearing agreements from 1935 between Romania and Turkey (AM.A.E., fond Problema 41. Raportul privind rezultatele acordului de clearing dintre România şi Turcia din octombrie 1935/ Report concerning the result of Romania and Turkey clering agreement). Thus, the

evolution of the Romanian exports in Turkey could be highlighted by studying the export of oil from Romania in Turkey:

“Given this, because, apart from the period of prosperity that followed the war and when our exports into Turkey, quite developed, consists of its main products (timber, grain, oil, sugar), in recent years, and especially after 1931, the date of entry into force of the quota regime in Turkey and of foreign exchange restriction, our export in Turkey is represented in petroleum products that represents 70-80% of the export turnover of Romania in Turkey.

The assessment of statistics reveals a difference between imports from Turkey and Romania’s export of Romanian products on the Turkish market, the balance being in favor of Romania, although the 1935 trade agreement requirements was based on equal sharing of goods. Indeed, the year 1936 marked a surplus in favor of Romania, consisting in 987 378 Turkish Liras and in 1935 of 1, 670 182 Turkish Liras.

As I stated in the foregoing pages, the blocking of the Turkish-Romanian trade was due to the failure of the clearing agreement between the two countries, the *Tan* newspaper mentioned foreign currency difficulties (ANIC, fund Ministerul Propagandei Naționale, volume 477:26; *Tan*, December 16, 1935) and dispatch of goods (ANIC, fund MPN, volume 477:50; *Zaman*, March 19, 1936).

On November 7, 1937 the same newspaper noted that the clearing agreement with Romania no longer stands and the amounts due to Romania remained blocked in Turkey:

“Romania does not buy goods from us as we do not buy the oil from Romania. Currency we buy oil and gasoline all the way from America and it’s natural that the freight rates for these articles to be higher. Even the Romanian oil company working in Turkey was purchasing its oil from America. For these reasons, the balance of trade that was always in our favor is starting to become increasingly smaller. There are expectations that this time the treaty which will begin between the two neighboring countries and allies will deliver results in accordance with the deep friendship that exists. We can get supplies of oil and timber from Romania, and Romania in exchange for these main items that we sell will achieve charcoal, olive fish and other foods. The taste and food habits of the Romanians and Turks are identical.” (ANIC, fund MPN, volume 477, p. 169).

As this situation could not continue, negotiations (*Argus*, January 6, 1938: *Modificarea*

convenției de comerț cu Turcia. Tratatul continuă [The change of trade convention with Turkey. Negotiations continue]) were necessary in order to conclude any agreements that can boost and develop the economic relations between Romania and Turkey (Akşam, November 14, 1937: Comerțul dintre România și Turcia [Trade between Romania and Turkey]), a transit agreement that can be functional (Universul newspaper, January 11, 1938). Another issue to be discussed in connection with the modification of the 1935 agreements was the signing of an arrangement for the purchase of **oil in exchange for foreign currency**.

After long negotiations (Argus newspaper, January, 71938: Incheierea tratatelor cu Turcia [The conclusion of the negotiations with Turkey]) held on January 5, 1938 a trade agreement (Timpul, January 7, 1938) and an agreement on payments were signed (Argus newspaper, 12.I.1938; Universul, January 12, 1938). The TAN newspaper published an article on January 6, 1938, by Emin Yalman, which examined Turkey's foreign trade, made some findings and proposed the following solutions in order to support a good Balkan economic cooperation:

“Today we are obliged to seek into our oil and gasoline all the way to America. But our natural source from which we should buy oil and gasoline is Romania. We are able to pay for our oil and timber purchases for a number of products other than cotton, such as rice, olives, oil, dry fish etc. ... so we consider appropriate to formulate at the moment a trade agreement that was concluded with Romania, that economic relations between the allied Balkan States to be more active now and ponder in this regard the adoption of more practical measures.” (ANIC, fund Ministerul Propagandei Naționale, volume 477, p. 178).

To see the sequence of the Romanian-Turkish economic relations in the year 1938, we present the report of the economic adviser to Istanbul, Nicolae Mănescu, tied to foreign trade of Romania and Turkey during the period 1937-1938 (ANIC, fund U.C.C.I., volume 2, pp. 21- 30) (**Table 4**):

Table 4:					
Year	Export to Turkey		Import from Turkey		Trade balance
	Tons	Ltqs.	Tons	Ltqs.	
1938	44.595	1.461.274	21.296	2.834.171	- 1.372.887
1937	55.909	1.556.750	14.519	839.973	- 716.777
Differences from 1937		- 95.476		1.994.188	

As a conclusion, we can see below and the evolution of Romanian-Turkish economic exchanges from 1919 to 1938 (**Table 5**):

Table 5:									
Year	IMPORT				EXPORT				Balance of Trade - Lei -
	Cant.		Val.		Cant.		Val.		
	Tone	%	Lei	%	Tone	%	Lei	%	
1919	38.291	9,25	337.542	8,97	13.166	12,06	12.971	12,43	- 324.571
1920	26.163	8,59	450.195	6,45	66.528	4,53	153.885	4,46	- 296.310
1921	42.489	6,90	457.832	3,77	163.002	6,01	648.794	7,85	+ 190.962
1922	30.320	5,19	584.092	4,74	147.490	3,62	746.497	5,31	+ 162.405
1923	22.224	3,26	313.352	1,61	67.305	1,37	535.569	2,18	+ 222.217
1924	44.708	5,42	357.752	1,36	71.806	1,49	620.124	2,19	+ 262.372
1925	40.520	1,61	287.602	1,81	74.969	1,61	527.074	1,81	+ 239.472
1926	11.303	1,22	230.317	1,62	115.817	1,89	668.577	1,75	+ 438.260
1927	11.981	1,19	202.996	0,60	104.603	1,43	513.727	1,35	+ 310.731
1928	10.318	1,1	228.286	0,7	79.340	1,3	476.981	1,8	+ 248 695
1929	32.958	2,99	297.561	1,00	89.007	1,26	425.593	1,47	+ 128.032
1930	33.629	4,18	184.946	0,80	57.125	0,73	197.291	0,69	+ 12.345
1931	23.454	4,19	157.584	1,00	58.652	0,58	118.836	0,54	- 38.748
1932	27.390	6,09	111.114	0,93	34.536	0,38	61.460	0,37	- 49 654
1933	19.800	4,24	90.612	0,77	82.008	0,94	98.672	0,70	+ 8.060
1934	23.516	3,70	72.828	0,55	124.533	1,41	122.055	0,89	+ 49.227
1935	11.688	2,19	26.665	0,25	66.565	0,72	72.821	0,43	+ 46.156
1936	19 120	3,0	49 579	0,4	140 193	1,3	189 275	0,9	+ 139 696
1937	17 933	2,5	97 998	0,5	74 476	0,8	195 264	0,6	+ 97 266
1938	20 707	2,5	252 030	1,3	76 490	1,0	209 419	1,0	- 42 611

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AMAE (Romanian: *Arhivele Diplomatice ale Ministerului Afacerilor Externe*) = Diplomatical Archive of Romanian Foreign Affairs Minister funds:

- 71/ *Grecia*
- 71/ *Ungaria*
- 71/*Anglia*
- 71/*Bulgaria*
- 71/*Germania*
- 71/*Iugoslavia*
- 71/*România*
- 71/*Turcia*
- *Arhiva Economică*
- *Dosare Personale*
- *Înțelegerea Balcanică*
- *Mica Înțelegere*

ANIC (Romanian : *Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale*) = The National Archives of Romania funds:

- *Casa Regală*
- *DGP* (Romanian : *Direcția Generală a Poliției*)
- MPN (Romanian :*Ministerul Propagandei Naționale*)
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