CONCLUSION

Moral principles have evolved in society within certain cultural contexts. Accordingly, different cultures have developed different systems of ethnics which promoted different moral principles to govern the political process. The issue of ethics of political behaviours of states therefore, warrants some scepticism. There are particular difficulties when it comes to investigating the role of morality in relations between states. It is a common perception that war is the very antithesis of morality, that the condition of war is the ghastly manifestation of the absence of morality. In absolute terms that may be the case but there are serious consequences that result from considering any form of human behaviour as beyond the moral pale. Here the question is not really whether moral criteria are appropriate in judging the international behaviours of states but what moral criteria are appropriate, in what circumstances they are supplied and what onsequences follow from their application. Hence as individuals we all live in a moral system, that is, all our behaviour has a moral context and that we are either implicitly or explicitly guided in our actions by general moral principles. However, all do, occasionally confront situations which require a rather more explicit and conscious consideration of the moral consequences of our behaviour and is with international relations. The everyday routine behaviour of states in the
international system does not require the explicit application of explicit moral principles. However, certain situations such as war do require rather more attention being given to the moral context of state action. That is not to say that ethical principles should or do wholly determine behaviour in these situations. The moral dimension will be more explicit because of the context itself, the possibility of death and destruction as a result of a policy decision will itself force moral issues on to the decision-makers agenda.

The Kuwait crisis demonstrated the limitations of the political expediency which had governed international relations in the cold war era. In the West Asia, every “political convulsion was seen as a plus or a minus in the great geo-political game, depending on whether it was viewed from Moscow or from Washington.”¹ Turkey, despite her co-existence with the West Asian countries for so many years, could not build a solid, reliable, working relationship with any of them. “Turkey shares its foreign policy orientation with Mubarak’s Egypt but while the Turco-Egyptican relationship is promising in form, closer scrutiny betrays an absence of substance. One is left with an abiding impression of Turkey as much on the periphery and as much an awkward and uneasy actor in the Middle East region as it is in

Europe."2 Turkey’s political and intellectual elites do not generally regard themselves as Middle Eastern, while the bulk of the population probably do not much care about it. But whatever the people’s view of themselves, Turkey is part of the West Asian system of states. It may not be a central action in economic, geographical or ethnic terms but it is affected by the political currents of the region. And its policies in other areas have implications for its relations with the West Asian region. Keeping the geographical settings in mind, Turkey has steadily developed a series of principles to define and underpin its foreign policy-making on the area. An understanding of its geo-political compulsions makes it possible to comprehend and even to some extent predict Turkish policy towards the region. It is clear that in a changing world, especially one which has altered so profoundly on the cusp of the new decade, there will be modifying pressures on the most basic principles of foreign policy. Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait, provided a new challenge to the principles of Turkish policy on the West Asian region. Turkey’s historical and indeed contemporary experience of the West Asian region has therefore been, for the most part, a negative one. The prevailing attitudes of the Turkish people towards their West Asian neighbors have been negative and stereotypical images persist. The Arabs are seen as inferior, vengeful and not trustworthy. Much of Turkey’s contact

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with the region is hampered by conflicts. On the few occasions when Turkish
decision-makers address the West Asia, it is as a region which represents a
range of threats, whether as a hot bed of communism, a sanctuary for
murderous terrorists on a breeding ground of Islamic fundamentalists. Such
crisis-related issues are not the only policy interfaces between Turkey and the
region. Turkey has profited from a thriving economic relationship, which is
sounder today than it ever been. Tourism has in some small way demystified
both Arabs and Iranians. Yet such positive areas of interaction are not the
ones which capture the public imagination. New issues in the region have
arisen which are regarded as posing yet more threats to the Turkish state,
non-conventional weapons proliferation and medium-range missiles look set
to define a new generation of relations.

Power relations in the larger region of West Asia, that is the countries
further from the Gulf, have changed dramatically. Under President Turgut
Ozal, Ankara took clear sides with the West and the European community
during the Kuwait conflict. And after some initial apprehension permitted the
coalition to station various forces at the air base of ‘Incirlik’ and to attack
Iraq from Turkish territory. Turkey also accepted hundreds of thousand of
refugees from Iraq. In the end, it emerged as a major player in the region.

Aukara demonstrated its clear stance with NATO and the UN during
the Kuwait conflict and might be asked to do in the near future. The impact
of the Gulf crisis had already forced many Western countries into energy saving policies. The crisis occurred in a time of near recession, when strategic stocks had been built up to the maximum because of the Gulf war. Those who argued that the crisis was only about oil were usually people who had the military response in the first place, though there was also a rare agreement between conservationists who argued that the crisis was a punishment for the West’s profligate use of oil and right wing isolationists, who claimed that environmental concerns had hampered US domestic production of oil and made the US over-dependent on supplies from the Gulf. But while the Western members of the anti-Iraq coalition were concerned about the future security of Gulf oil. There was also legitimate concern about the nature of the new world order which was now replacing the previous superpower rivalry. Arab and Third World states, even those involved in the coalition were determined that the crisis should not give the Americans an opportunity to impose their hegemony on the West Asian region. To counter this perception Bush tried to make the coalition as broad as possible.

However, its worth drawing some attention to the moral context of the policy of sanctions as a means of coercion. Sanctions are almost universally and perhaps unthinkingly regarded as morally superior to the use of force. Even in situations where aggression has taken place there is usually great pressure from some section of opinion for the use of sanctions as a means of
coercing the aggressor to withdraw. The assumption, usually unquestioned is that on all occasions a non-military solution is better than morally preferable one. The logic of sanctions is that economic, political military and moral isolation is used to make it possible for the aggressor to continue his aggression by undermining the ability to continue. But the Iraqi leadership did not care for the consequences of invasion or did not rely on its population. Saddam Hussian maintains power through coercion and repression and public support is more accurately described as passive acquiescence rather than active enthusiasm. Moreover, in the case of Iraq civilian suffering was likely to be the major consequence of a policy of sanctions. Since the leadership had built a colossal economic and military stockpile reserved both for the elite which maintained the regime’s internal structures of coercion and control.

The moral issue is that it’s a “direct intention of the policy of sanctions to create hardship, suffering and even death among civilian population as a means of exerting coercive pressure on the aggression leadership.”3 And those conditions of suffering are likely to include starvation and arguably there is little difference between death by starvation and death by military attack. What is the moral difference between an

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unintended civilian death caused by military collateral damage and an intended civilian death caused by a policy of sanctions? All other things being equal, it's the question of intention that is crucial. Thus it can be clearly seen that sanction is not a policy without moral consequences and is certainly not the morally cost-free option that is often assumed by those who pose it as an option obviously more desirable than military force in resisting aggression.

The potential impacts of the Gulf crisis on the Arab world will be devastating for years to come. Some are already comparing them to those that resulted from the establishments of Israel. The crisis represents a major turning point in the political development of the Arab world. No doubt the President of Iraq did not expect this scale of international condemnation for his invasion of Kuwait. The invasion was a miscalculation on his part, that many countries in the region and the world and not only Iraq, will pay for it. The invasion pushed the region into the political realities of the post-Cold war era. The East-West prism of judging your friends from your enemies is not valid any more. This is the first regional crisis we face in this era. The way we resolve it will influence the ways we resolve other future regional crisis in the world. "The crisis is a manifestation of the politics of avoidance that we practice, as an international community all over the world. 'Right' and 'wrong' political positions are made on the basis of what is helpful and
convenient to current policies. In this process Saddam Hussain is being isolated from the international community. It's ironic that those countries which supported him the most during the war with Iran are the ones which are against him the most now. Saddam Hussain is capitalising on another aspect of the politics of avoidance in the region. The policies of the US in the region have traditionally centred on three pillars, that is containing the Soviet threat, assuring the flow of oil and protecting the security of Israel. These pillars do not address the political aspirations and the desires of the Arab people for a better future. Arab intellectuals add that the petro dollars generated from this oil are being invested in the West and are contributing little, aside from token projects, to the development of the region.

The Gulf crisis, which initially looked as though it might cement US-Soviet cooperation in world affairs, could instead contribute to a cooling in super power relations. An increasingly assertive Soviet military establishment is uncomfortable with the US display of might so close to its southern border, while foreign policy makers now have to confront the possibility that the Soviet Union's views on the future of West Asia security will not count for much. In all the euphoria over America's triumph in the Gulf, one thing should not be forgotten that, this crisis could have been

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avoided. If “Western states had not helped arm Iraq to the teeth, if Washington had not misjudged Saddam’s designs on Kuwait, if Americans were not so hooked on cheap Middle Eastern oil, the US might not have had to send over a half million troops to fight Operation Desert Storm.” 5

Hence, a regional role for Israel in West Asia is no longer inconceivable, though it is still far from likely. What is much more likely is a greater role for the other non-Arab states, that is Turkey and Iran. The eclipse of Iraq, however temporary, will correspondingly increase the importance of Iran in the Gulf. If Iran’s rulers continue to think in terms of national interests rather than Islamic revolution, that increase may become permanent. Turkey too may find itself obliged to abandon its long-maintained policy of avoiding any involvement in Arab or West Asian politics, and will be compelled to play a more active part.

The UN is designed to maintain international peace and security and the UN charter contains a blue print for an international security system with an enforcement capacity to deter aggression. It could have done much towards establishing the rule of law world wide. But the power struggle of the cold war was carried into the UN Security council. In the Gulf crisis, the military mobilisation against Iraq, was not truly collective. It was not under

the UN control. In the absence of collective authority and control by the UN, the aftermath of a military inferno in West Asia will not be the beginning of a new enlightened order but the ascendancy of militarism in a more ordered world. One must question whether preparations for combat on such a phenomenal scale are not a self-fulfilling commitment to war.

However, the Gulf crisis has demonstrated the importance of domestic conditions in several ways. There would have been no UN coalition without the cooperation of the US and the Soviet Union. Without it the UN would have been paralyzed again by the permanent members' security council veto or by General Assembly division. But one weakness of the US-led coalition is the deep sympathy that many Arabs feel for Saddam Hussein not because they like him but because they see in him the champion of resistance to an American with a double standard in West Asia. The popular backlash among the Arab people in the "post-war period in a political environment of receding hope will turn against the existing regimes which by their alliance with the West under diverse persuasions will be seen as having betrayed the Arab cause."\(^6\) The US-led alliance forged in the 'new order' with the kingdoms and lesser fiefdomes is likely to prove in "Geogre Washington's phrase, 'a rope built of sand'. The upsurge among the Arab people may lead to a prolonged period of turmoil in which the kingdoms may disappear giving

place to volatile regimes with all the attendant consequences, including the resurgence of militant fundamentalism.\textsuperscript{7}

In fact when Saddam invaded Kuwait there was very little support for him within the Muslim world at large. Even groups which are now very pro-Iraq, were critical of the invasion. The invasion was largely condemned not only by Muslim governments but also by a broad cross-section of the Muslim masses. However, their attitude began to change as Muslims became painfully aware of the double standards of the US. The worse part is that, the US has gone out of its way to protect Israel’s annexation of Palestine by using its veto to thwart any attempt to enforce UN resolutions on the issue. It is this blatant lack of even-handedness, gross disregard for the norms of fairness, and contempt for justice that has caused a wrench in the hearts of the Arabs and Muslims. It is the US governments unethical and immoral stand on Israel and Palestine which is largely responsible for the solidarity of the Muslim masses with Saddam and Iraq.

In the world view, the Kuwait crisis substantially altered the role and perception of the UN, its Security Council, and its processes of peace making and peace-keeping. In leading the UN mission against Iraq, the US for the first time insisted on active and extensive financial contributions from other states. Here Washington’s “instance demonstrated the economic limits of US

\textsuperscript{7} Ibid.
global power, even in a supposedly unipolar structure. But it also demonstrated the financial challenge of major UN military operations."

It was the moral dimension of discrimination and proportionality in warfare that assumed significance in the context of the use of so-called 'smart weapons' by the UN coalition in the Gulf crisis. Weapons that find their target with a very high degree of accuracy and which cause a very low degree of 'collateral' damage, in principle at least, are highly desirable given the context of war. The UN, far from emerging as the international trouble-shooter, by virtue of its role in the 'Gulf crisis' is projecting itself as an instrument for the selective protection of the interests of the US and western powers. It is in this sense that instead of fostering security in the west Asian region, the security council by becoming an extension of US policy objectives in the Gulf, may well become source of regional insecurity. Its resolutions against Iraq have cleared the way for continued US military presence in the region. This would not only prevent the states of the region from evolving their own security system but also divide the regional states along with confrontational camps.

Faced with the "Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990", it was never likely that Turkey would issue anything other than a strong

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8 Wolfgang F., Danspeckgruber and others, 'The Iraqi Agression Against Kuwait', USA, West view Press, 1996, p.288
condemnation of the occupation of territory by force."9 But, in the initial
stage it was not clear whether it would take any effective action to reverse it.
Immediately after the invasion the government appears to have expected that
the crisis would soon blow over or would be settled by diplomacy. At this
stage, the government appears to have assumed that it could preserve its
traditional neutral attitude in what was seen as a purely inter-Arab dispute,
without damaging its links with the Western powers. However, the national
interest and the global atmosphere compelled Turkey to adopt a more cautious
approach to the crisis. In the Gulf-crisis Turkey served its national-interest
very tactfully without hampering her image outside to a greater degree. With
the most unstable part of the USSR so close to its border, Turkey will have
deeper reservations about the changes in the Soviet Union than its NATO
partners. With respect to Europe, Turkey looks set to fare even worse. It is
likely to be overtaken in the race for EC membership by states only recently
thought to be without aspirations. Turkey will be left to stand in the corner
indefinitely with its national pride badly bruised. Even the smaller council of
Europe, whose badge of membership Turkey wears with pride is in danger of
becoming marginalised by the more broadly, defined ‘council for security and
cooperation in Europe’, which includes Soviet Union. Turkey’s relationship
with Europe could become analogous to that of the USSR, a geographically

9 Willian Itale, ‘Turkey, the Middle East and the Gulf Crisis’, International Affairs,
marginal state omitted from the emerging spirit of a new and unified continent. If Europe becomes increasingly defined by a common mix of occidental culture and Christianity in a frantic attempt to grasp those few common characteristics which bind it together then Turkey’s exclusion would be more pointed. The view that Turkey is part of the Middle East could, ironically become more deeply entrenched in Europe. Even though it’s with that region that its dealings are so acutely uncomfortable.

Turkey has only two feasible choices to strive for, the first is that Turkey can seek to develop better ties with the main centres of the Turkic people, mainly in Central Asia, nevertheless of the degree of sovereignty which they enjoy. The emergence of a Turkic commonwealth which looks to Turkey for leadership, as the commonwealth once looked to Britain. Disagreements exist within the Turkic people but the one characteristic they share is a libido to orient themselves towards Ankara. If Turkey can keep the relationship on a cultural and political plane, uncertain though this might be, it would be spared the greater cost of such a relationship, specially that is to say a large bill for economic aid.

However, the second one is the Organisation of Islamic Conference within which Turkey enjoys much authority and respect. Its full participation is beyond reasonable objection. Yet as a formally secular state it could never aspire to the leadership of the organisation and hence, does not challenge the
considerable influence of states such as ‘Saudi Arabia.’ But inspite of its drawbacks in many instances in an increasingly multilateral world, it is a club of considerable importance. With the collapse of the bipolar world, the ‘Non-Aligned Movement’ has lost its importance. If Europe is to define itself increasingly as a Christian entity, then the Islamic conference organisation is imbued with greater legitimacy as an organization. If such a cleavage does open up between a Christian Europe and a Muslim belt to its south and east, Turkey with its Muslim faith but secular state may yet find a credible role for itself as a bridge between two communities.