promotion of human rights. And there in lies an irony because the criticism stems not from what is appalling about Turkey, but what is laudable about it, not from what it has been in the past, but what it aspires to be.

The divergence of opinion is more clearly visible between United States and Turkey in Middle East policy, although superficially there is a consensus. Washington and Ankara agree that the existing regional balance has to be kept and stabilized under continued supervision of western interests. The regional spread of weapons of mass destruction must be limited and finally undone. The peace process has to be bought to a successful conclusion. The establishment of a multi-national peace and stability-oriented regional network has to be promoted. But beyond these common general goals, Turkish and US regional policies differ. Chapter 3 surveys Turkey’s relations with its Middle Eastern neighbours. This chapter analyses how the Middle East has come to affect Turkish security and the way in which decision makers have tried to manage Turkish foreign and security policies toward the Middle East. These matters also affect Ankara’s relations with the United States and to somewhat lesser extent its European partners.

While the end of the cold war has led to increased strains in Turkey’s relations with Europe, it has also opened up new prospects for the expansion of Turkish influence in Central Asia, the Caucasus and the Caspian region. These expanding ties have given Turkish policy a new geopolitical focus. The Caspian region is a major source of gas and oil that Turkey needs to meet its increasing domestic requirements. This would not only help assure Turkey’s growing domestic energy needs, but would increase its political influence in the region over the long run. Whoever controls the transport of oil and gas is likely to be the dominant political actor in the region. In a certain sense, the old nineteenth-century “Great Game” is being reenacted in a new geopolitical setting.
United States has sought to support Turkey as a balancing factor in the Caspian against the expansion of Russian and especially Iranian influence. Chapter 4 discusses the geopolitics of Caspian Basin and Turkey’s energy security in the post-Soviet space. The chapter explains that Turkey’s domestic needs and consideration have been the driving force for its international energy policy, despite the risks such policies pose both to Turkey’s allies and its rivals.

As the calculus of benefits and liabilities for US-Turkish alliance has changed over the years, it is not sufficient to assume that close ties in the past will ensure smooth relations in the future. The alliance now faces greater challenges than at any time in the recent past. Much depends on Turkey’s internal developments and its EU candidacy. The uncertainties are bigger if only because Turkey could change significantly over the next decade and because it touches on so many areas of the new world in important ways. American policymakers are clearly going to have to focus more on Turkey, continue to secure the basic relationship, vigorously sort out US interests on specific issues and be inventive in dealing with occasional clashing perspectives. Chapter 5 reviews US-Turkish alliance; problems and progress in post-Cold War, post-Gulf war era. It considers some of the uncertainties facing those relations, discusses potential problem areas and opportunities in bilateral ties, and concludes with reflections on US efforts to influence Turkey’s regional and domestic policies.