

## **The Aftermath of the Vilnius NATO Summit (11-12 July 2023)**

- Reason prevailed among NATO leaders; situation is not ripe to accept Ukraine in the Atlantic Alliance. No date for a new rendez-vous with Kiev was given. Armageddon was for the moment averted. Zelenskyi himself was unduly frustrated. It is one thing for Ukraine to be boosted in the face of Russia and another thing to declare readiness to cross the nuclear threshold by inviting Ukraine into NATO. Geopolitical brinkmanship still knows limits. The Atlantics, for whatever reason it might have been, were wiser than centenarian H. Kissinger who of late was admonishing Ukraine's acceptance into NATO.

- Sweden's admission into NATO, for all its debilitating prostrations to President Erdogan comes closer but has not yet been rubber stamped, though this time Turkish allies are in dire straits. When will the Grand National Assembly in Ankara will convene to finalize the issue? At the end of October, when Turks celebrate the centenary since the proclamation of their Republic? Perhaps by that time Swedes will have come in terms with the humiliation they were subjected to by Ankara.

- Given the economic situation in Turkey, President Erdogan played pretty well his cards, to the least for his domestic audiences, awaiting the 29<sup>th</sup> October feasts. A piece of advice by Stravon the Anatolian, to Westerners: do not be credulous. Turkey will not get back to the western orbit. Turkey dreams of the Ottoman empire, it dreams of the Caliphate. Turkey was never properly western, nor is she today. Her national interest favors a multilateral world allowing her to play a role as a leader of the intermediate zone, with Istanbul (Constantinople, Constantiniye, Czargrad, Constantinopolis, Nova Roma, Byzantion ) as its navel. Turkey, 87 years ago worked successfully to get rid of the Lausanne Convention on the Regime of the Straits (24.07.1923) and the constraints therein. Now they reflect how to review the ensuing Montreux Convention (20th July 1936), in a way further cementing sovereignty and ownership over the waterways of Dardanelles and Bosphorus.

- In this framework they pursue "finlandization" of Greece, just at the moment when Finland escaped neutrality and joined NATO. But Greece, for all the fuzziness of her elite classes is not an easy nut to crack. It will strongly resist hybrid operations by Ankara aiming at securing a lopsided understanding. PM Mitsotakis-President Erdogan meeting in the margins of Vilnius generated some hope. There are at least prospects for some tranquillity in the Aegean for the time to come. It is a difficult and delicate

exercise. Unresolved Cyprus problem, with protracted Turkish occupation of the northern areas will be a major impediment in the road for a Greek Turkish rapprochement of sorts. In this context, Greek heavy, almost exclusive, reliance on an America looking increasingly east of Malacca Strait might not be an everlasting, adequate geopolitical recipe for success in the realm of Realpolitik.

***Stravon of Amaseia,  
Athens, July 2023***