Chapter 1

An Assessment of the Relationship Between Turkey and the United Nations International Organization for Migration in the Context of Public Diplomacy

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ABSTRACT

Turkey is in a strategic position in terms of its geographical location. It is surrounded by seas on three sides, and there are only a few straits in the world that connect the two continents to each other to connect Asian countries to Europe. Combined with Turkey's strategic location, this makes Turkey an essential transit route in every activity in terms of both tourism and business resources. This strategic location of Turkey can be exploited by irresponsible and problematic elements from both inside and outside the country for both human trafficking and human smuggling activities. These groups of individuals or unions can openly collaborate with both internal and external parties due to the combination of many parties. Therefore, it is very crucial to continue the cooperation between the Turkish government and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to overcome these problems. This study will examine the work done in cooperation between the Turkish Government and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in dealing with these illegal activities.

INTRODUCTION

Every year, thousands of men, women and children are victimized by human traffickers in their own

countries or abroad. In this context, the fight against the crime of human trafficking and the protection of victims have an important place on the agenda of countries. The strategic geographical location of Turkey makes it a traffic lane for global trade. Turkey's location between two continents and two oceans makes it an international route with heavy traffic in terms of land, sea and air routes. It is a connecting route for various economic, social and cultural activities by countries around the world, particularly in Asia and Europe. Obviously, this creates a good economic potential which is very encouraging for developing countries such as Turkey. In addition, in terms of social and cultural aspects, having many interactions with the outside world, Turkey is better known in international relations and brings with it the possibility of acculturation, which can contribute to the existing cultural diversity between Turkish culture and surrounding countries. However, behind the current potential there are promising economic, social and even cultural benefits. This strategic location indirectly poses a challenge for Turkey.

Since the processes such as combating the crime of human trafficking, protecting those who have been subjected to this crime and providing support to victims of human trafficking fall under the jurisdiction of multiple institutions and organizations, the idea of establishing a common platform among all relevant institutions and organizations working in this field has made it necessary and in order to promote humanitarian and orderly migration, Turkey cooperates with the International Organization for Migration in order to help address the challenges related to the management of complex problems and to ensure that victims are less affected by the impacts of irregular and illegal migration through mutual trust and cooperation. In this context, the study will look at the cooperation between Turkey and the International Organization for Migration from a public diplomacy perspective.

BACKGROUND: THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is an international organization dealing with international migration issues, one of which includes the crime of Human Smuggling or Human Trafficking. It is an intergovernmental organization and it is independent. It currently has 173 member countries and 8 observer countries (IOM, 2022a). The International Organization for Migration presently has offices in more than 100 member countries. Today, Turkey has one of the largest country offices globally with over 820 staff in 15 different locations across the country. This is, naturally, in line with the United Nations, which aims to create world peace, and with the goals of the International Organization for Migration, which aims to create peace in terms of international migration. The International Organization for Migration is also one of the important actors and partners of the governments of the countries in order to create a humanitarian and orderly migration that can be beneficial for all its members, as well as to address cases and problems related to world migration and to help find solutions to each of its problems. In this context, it is also one of the important actors in the fight against human smuggling and human trafficking crimes in Turkey. The International Organization for Migration is an international and intergovernmental organization that aims to ensure the orderly and humane handling of migration, promote international cooperation on migration-related issues, provide humanitarian assistance and help find practical solutions to migration problems. It is committed to assisting migrants in need, both refugees, internally displaced persons and other residents forced to leave their homes (IOM, 2022b). From 1991 to date, the International Organization for Migration's anti-trafficking activities in Turkey have focused on awareness-raising activities and prevention of acts of trafficking, protection of victims

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