



Hydro-diplomacy in the Middle East. The case of the *Peace Water Pipeline Project*

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Turkish Hydro-diplomacy





Turkey's strongest weapons in foreign politics: Tigris and Euphrates



"Turkish best weapon is its water"

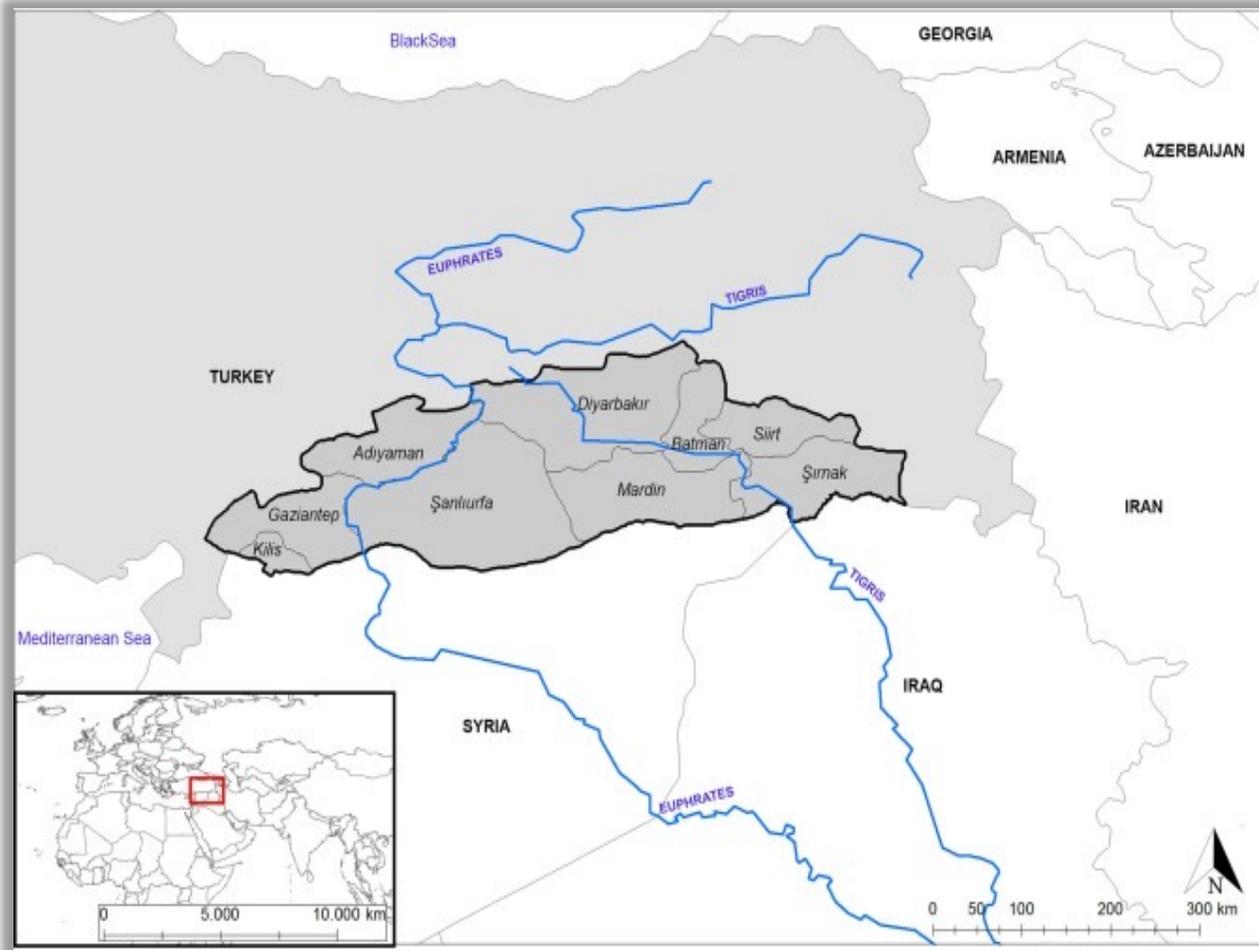


If "weaponized", water can be a tremendous tool for an aggressive foreign strategy





Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi - GAP



GAP is a multi-sector integrated regional development project which involves the construction of **22 dams** and **19 power plants**

Located on the shores of Tigris and Euphrates rivers, due to its technical dimension, GAP is by far **the largest Turkish hydropower infrastructure** and one of the largest in the world.



UN Watercourse Convention (1997)

In 1997, the UN attempted to establish a framework convention on the issue, the **UN Watercourse Convention**



The most important aspects concerned:

- ❖ Article **Five** (doctrine of equitable utilization).
- ❖ Article **Seven** (no-harm rule).
- ❖ Article **Eleven** (obligation to prior notification).

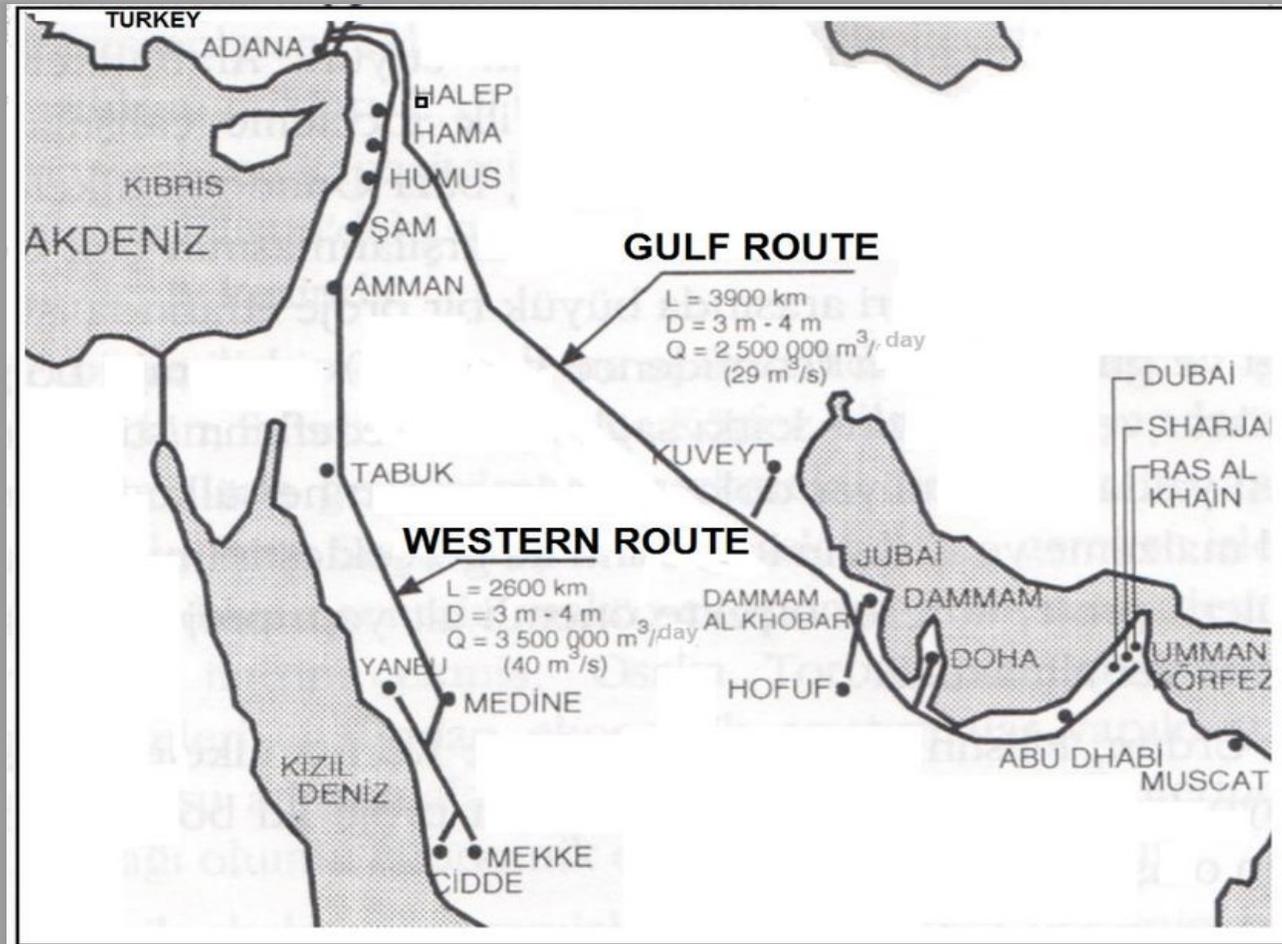


The GAP project, in fact, has put the water supply for millions of Arab citizens located in Syria and Iraq at risk. Further, the economic wellbeing of hundreds of companies operating downstream on the shores of the Euphrates and Tigris have been affected.



The Peace Water Pipeline Project

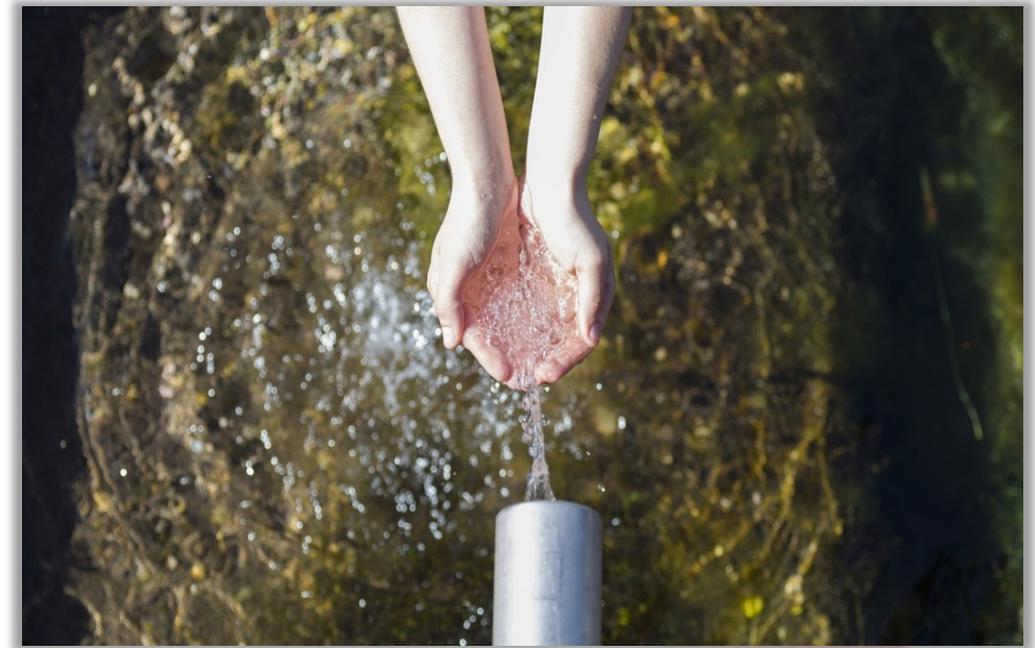
Turgut Özal, 8th President of Turkey
(November 1989 - April 1993)





The Peace Water Pipeline Project: Mission

Theorized by Turgut Özal in the early 1980s, this project aimed at building **large pipes** that would **carry millions of cubic meters of water** to many areas of the Middle East where the water supply was (and still is) extremely scarce.





The Peace Water Pipeline Project: Main infrastructures



Originally, the project involved two infrastructures: the first one was called the Western Route and had a length of 2.650 km with a daily water flow of 3.5 million cubic meters.



According to plans, the western pipeline would pass through Hama, Homs, Damascus, Amman, Yanbu and Medina and terminate in Mecca. The countries directly involved were **Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.**



The second, called the Eastern or Gulf Route, would extend deep into Western Asia and would reach **Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates** after passing through Syria and Jordan. It was longer than the first, almost 3.900 km in total, with a lower capacity, about 2.5 million cubic meters of water per day.

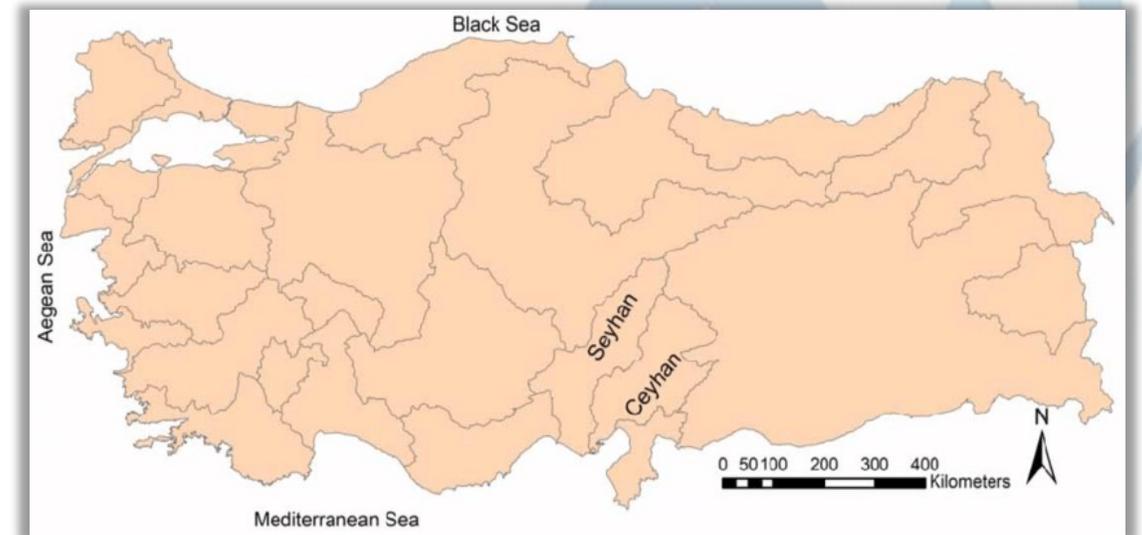
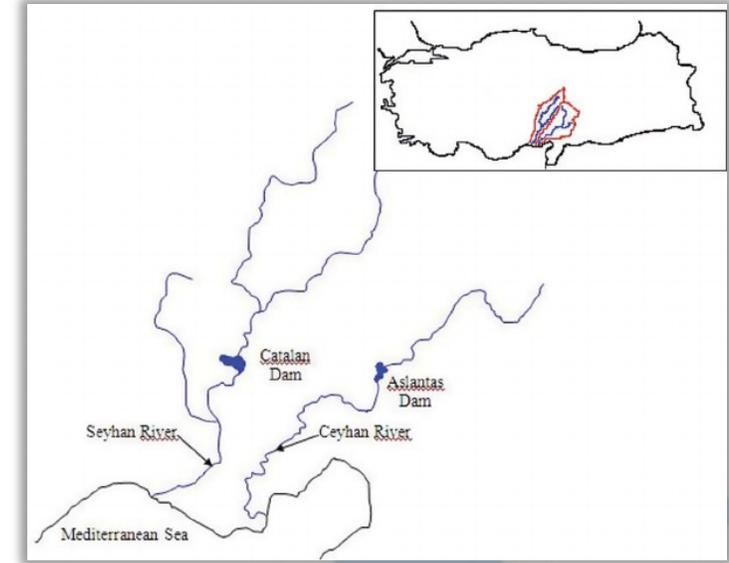


The Peace Water Pipeline Project: Costs and feasibility

The estimated cost of this ground-breaking project was substantial, around **\$ 20 billion**. The rivers from which the water would have been withdrawn were the **Ceyhan** and the **Seyhan**, two streams that originate and flow entirely in Turkey before flowing into the Mediterranean Sea.



From an international relations standpoint, no particular issues would have arisen, since **no riparian** state would have complained of a lower water flow following the use of water to be diverted through the pipes.





The Peace Water Pipeline Project: Opposition





The Peace Water Pipeline Project: Interruption

The Peace Water Pipeline never came to fruition

The reasons were many:

Geopolitics

National sovereignty

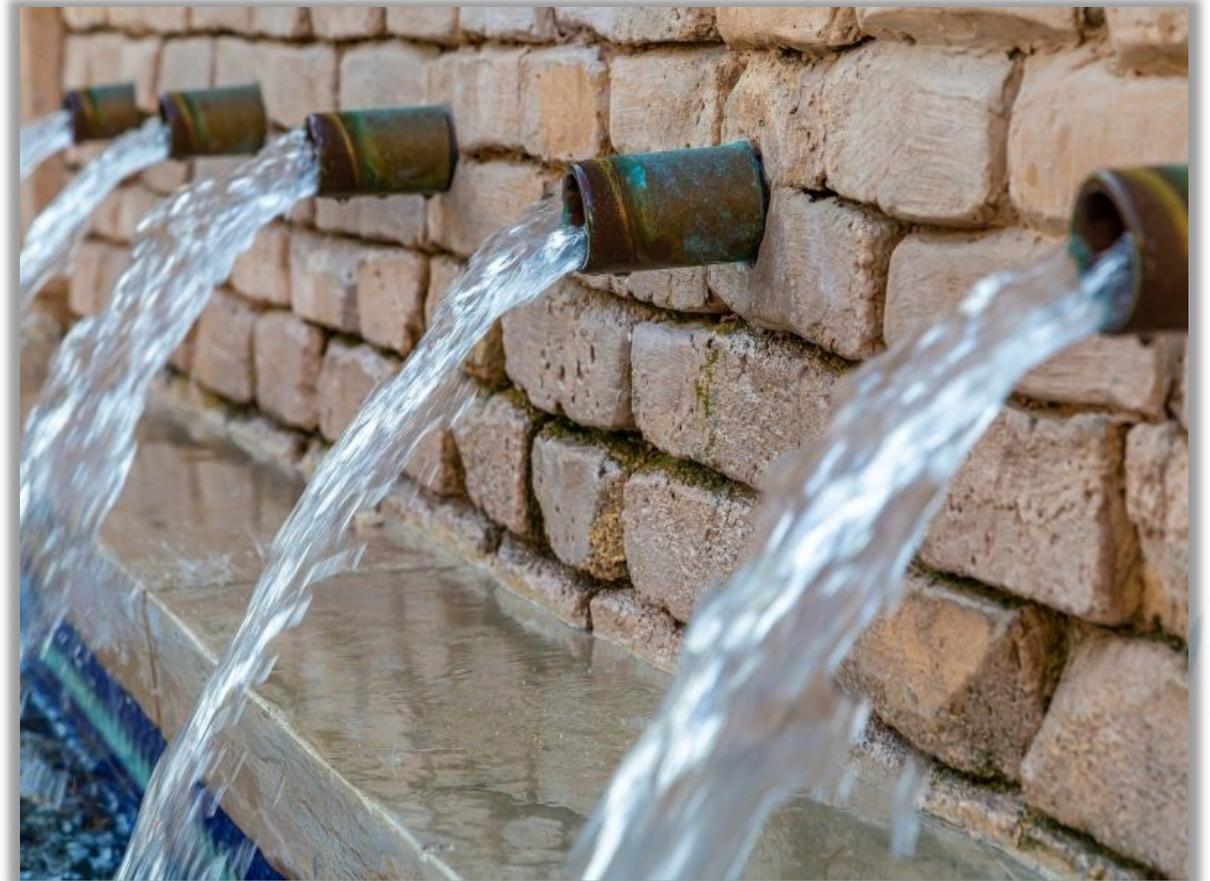
Economic expenditure



After an initial lukewarm reception, many governments of the countries involved changed trajectory showing **very little inclination** to proceed in the direction indicated by Turkey.



Turkish projection in the Middle East: a matter of hydro-security





Thank you for your time

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