

## **Economic Cooperation and Scholarships to African Countries: The Case of Turkish Government Scholarships for African Countries**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*It is widely accepted that economic cooperation provides an environment conducive to develop scholarly works. This paper attempts to analyse the Turkish Government scholarships being awarded to African nationals to study in Turkish Universities. The findings indicate that there is a stronger interest by Turkish Government to award scholarships to African nationals. Hence, there is a good evidence that Turkish Government scholarships program for African nationals can serve as a success model for economic cooperation between Turkey and African countries. There is no accurate measure of the exact size of the scholarships allocated by Turkish Government to African countries, since the scholarships are not open for assessment in Turkish official statistics, press release and official announcement. This article will analyze the prospect of support of the scholarships to the economic cooperation between Turkey and African countries.*

Keywords: Turkey, Africa, Economic Cooperation, Scholarships for African Students.

**Ekonomik İşbirliğinin Burslar Yoluyla Desteklenmesi: Türk Hükümetinin Afrika Ülkeleri için Tahsis Ettiği Burslar Hususu**

### **ÖZET**

*İktisadî işbirliğini desteklemenin ilmi eserler geliştirmeye imkân sağlayan bir ortam temin ettiği yaygın olarak kabul edilmektedir. Bu makale, işbirliği yolu ile Afrikalı vatandaşlara Türk üniversitelerinde okumak için verilen Türk Hükümeti burslarını analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Makale ayrıca bu bursların arkasındaki mantığı da araştırmaktadır. Bulgular Türk Hükümetinin Afrikalı vatandaşlara burs vermeye daha güçlü bir ilgisi olduğunu işaret göstermektedir. Dolayısıyla Türk Hükümeti tarafından Afrikalı vatandaşlar için oluşturulan burs programının Türkiye ile Afrika ülkeleri arasında iktisadî işbirliği için bir başarı modeli olarak hizmet edebileceğine dair iyi bir delil vardır. Bu burslar Türk resmî istatistikleri, basın açıklamaları ve resmî duyurularda değerlendirme için açık olmadıklarından Türk Hükümeti tarafından Afrika ülkelerine tahsis edilen bursların tam miktarının doğru bir ölçümü mevcut değildir.*

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Türk Hükümeti, Afrika Ülkeleri, İktisadî İşbirliği, Afrikalı Öğrenciler için Burslar.

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## **1. Introduction**

Frequently, the concept of international cooperation is linked almost automatically to the English word “aid” (Insulza, 1998: 1-10). This connection is no accident, but it reflects a situation that existed five decades ago. At the time the idea of cooperation began to develop on the international scene, and it was then understood as an aid or transfer of resources, by way of grants, from the more developed countries to other countries which, due to their level of income and precarious living standards, could be classified as underdeveloped. At present, however, the concept of international cooperation has evolved to acquire a more general meaning. This is basically in reply to the increasing complexity of the issue which currently combines the concept of aid and solidarity with that of commercial promotion and political interests. In this respect, international cooperation is understood as “a series of actions that attempt to coordinate policies or join efforts to achieve common objectives on the international sphere”(Insulza, 1998: 1-10). The foregoing definition actually gives an idea of the broad meaning the concept has achieved to day. However, a detailed analysis allows us to define its contents more precisely:

In raising the issue of coordination and the need to join efforts, it emphasizes the concept of cooperation in its true semantic sense, drawing it away from the traditional notion of “aid”(Insulza, 1998: 1-10). Thus, although the resources involved may be soft loans or grants, cooperation should not be understood as a unidirectional process in which a country or a group of countries, that is, the donors provide support to another country, that is, the recipients. Rather, the international organizations are currently in the presence of a “two-way process” in which both types of countries, that is, donors and recipients agree to cooperate to solve a given problem and in so doing, satisfy objectives that each one has set out to achieve beforehand. In this respect, cooperation always generates “mutual benefits”(Insulza, 1998: 1-10).

The term “mutual benefits” does not necessarily involve obtaining economic benefits since it may also involve certain political objectives. Some problems in the international arena extend beyond state borders or due to their nature involve the validity of certain universal values, legal standards or “public assets” which humanity is interested in preserving. These include for example, environmental sustainability, human rights, stable democratic systems, social equality, etc. From this perspective, cooperation is also an ideal instrument to help find solutions that involve more than one country, without infringing a fundamental principle in international relations that is, non-intervention. Finally, the definition clearly places

the concept of cooperation in the international sphere, reaffirming the idea that it is always part of the foreign policies of governments. Thus, “both the forms of cooperation chosen by the donor countries, as well as the decisions of those who are going to receive cooperation or with whom cooperation will be exchanged, involve foreign policy decisions that are directly related to the interests that each country wishes to express on the international sphere”(Insulza, 1998: 1-10).

If cooperation is defined by the foreign policy goals of governments, then changes in cooperation therefore, reflect the changes in the scenarios in which relations between countries take place. As mentioned before, cooperation was initially closely linked to the concept of aid and, more specifically to what was then called “development aid”(Insulza, 1998: 1-10). The basic principles of cooperation were based on the belief that the less developed countries were hampered by certain structural obstacles that prevented them from achieving development through their own means. Problems such as lack of sanitary conditions, illiteracy, agricultural backwardness and the lack of minimum infrastructure, were viewed as obstacles to development which could be eliminated with the help of international cooperation. In this framework, the main criteria used for eligibility for cooperation were determined by the degree of development and by strategic and political considerations linked mainly to the geographic areas of influence of the donor countries. In the early stages, cooperation had a strong political bias imposed by the Cold War, a situation in which the major powers tried to guard their spheres of influence and their sources of raw materials, which were usually located in underdeveloped countries. This international scenario has changed considerably in the past decade. At present, we are part of a world system with a new reality that has a direct effect on international cooperation affairs.

This international scenario has changed considerably in the past decade. In this respect, some major elements to be considered are the following:

1. Globalization, marked by the unification of world markets that intensifies the breadth and scope of the links and interconnections between states and societies. Globalization increases interdependence, communication and interaction between governments and national civil societies and also the international activities conducted between the public and the private sector.
2. Liberalization of world trade, which results in a growing interdependence and complement of world economies, giving rise, at the same time, to strong pressures on the domestic economic systems by demanding accelerated growth of technological

development, personnel retraining and the modernization of production.

3. The growing ideological convergence among leading countries in the international political system (Insulza, 1998: 1-10).

Due to these changes on the international scenario, basic world competition, manifested through strategic conflicts, is reoriented toward an area where economic and trade interests predominate, as does leadership in science and technology. Therefore, the traditional donor countries are reviewing the main priorities in matters related to cooperation. Priorities linked to global economic competitiveness tend to predominate (trade promotion of goods, services, technology and capital). The same applies to aspects deemed by the same countries to be critical factors for world stability and the sustainability of their own development, for example, the environment, democracy, and extreme poverty. Consequently, cooperation has also become a part of economic links in affairs between states supporting the active role played by countries in promoting their own economies and in opening up their markets. Cooperation for development continues to exist but it is increasingly targeted to specific issues and to less developed countries. Thus, cooperation aimed at countries with an intermediate level of development tends to shift from grants towards technical cooperation with shared costs and economic cooperation. Emphasis is now placed on a relationship between “partners” or associates who cooperate for mutual benefit. In this context, the concept of economic cooperation begins to acquire increasing importance.

## **2. Economic Cooperation**

As said before, if international cooperation is always an essential part of the foreign policy implemented by governments, in order to understand the changes that take place in cooperation, we need to take into account the new scenarios in which relationships between states are taking place. Therefore, the emergence of new concepts linked to cooperation, such as what is known as “economic cooperation” is closely related to the changes that have taken place in the world scenario and particularly, to the processes of globalization and integration currently going on. In this sense, the concept of economic cooperation is an answer to the emergence of new challenges in the processes of globalization and commercial integration that call for the concept of cooperation as a relevant variable to be included. Not only in terms of the political relations between states, but also, in the economic relations established in the international context.

From a historical viewpoint, one could argue that, in economic terms, states have always maintained relations of exchange and interdependence based on trade and investment. Furthermore, in the second half of the 20th Century, foreign trade became increasingly important as a share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and of

the socioeconomic development of countries. The existence of global markets are, just the result of an advanced stage of the process of internationalization of the different economies, which began with the start of industrial capitalism in the 19th Century (Insulza, 1998: 1-10). However, as is usually the case with long and medium term historical processes, the features of any phenomenon become more clearly defined as the processes become more explicit in the everyday activities of societies. Moreover, they do not necessarily develop along the initially expected course. That is, the same forces which have given rise to the process of globalization of the world economies has given rise to a new reality which not only involves a more advanced phase in the process of integration but also constitutes a completely different state.

Since this is the framework in which the concept of economic cooperation operates, the task of defining and conceptualizing economic cooperation, as a way to make its contents explicit and thus operational, is still pending. In order to come closer to defining the concept of economic cooperation, some of the main features involved will be described below:

- 1. Economic benefits:** Although the traditional definition of cooperation continues to be valid, the emphasis on the prospective goals changes since these are straightforwardly economic and are linked to exchange processes connected to trade or capital flows.
- 2. Emphasis on the relationship between partners or associates who cooperate to obtain a mutual benefit:** This is a relationship between two or more actors that inevitably involves a concept of mutual benefit and shared costs in the medium and long term.
- 3. Inclusion of the private sector:** The reason for this is that cooperation is directly linked to trade integration processes.
- 4. The changing role of the state:** The state adopts a leading role insofar as economic cooperation is essential to ensure top quality achievements in the international arena by fostering the technological and productive development of a given country. Similarly, and insofar as the involvement of the private sector becomes a determining element in the process, the government should concentrate on becoming the facilitator and articulator of initiatives rather than directly implementing policy.
- 5. Actions or activities intended to secure indirect, short and medium term economic goals:**

Actions or activities conducted in the framework of economic cooperation center on generating conditions to facilitate trade and enhance competitive skills in world markets.

Therefore, maximization of direct economic benefits in the short term are foreign to the activities or actions of economic cooperation as such (Insulza, 1998: 1-10).

In view of the above features, Insulza proposes the following definition for the concept of economic cooperation:

Economic cooperation is a component of international cooperation that seeks to generate the conditions needed to facilitate the processes of trade and financial integration in the international arena by implementing actions with the purpose of obtaining indirect economic benefits in the medium and long term (Insulza, 1998: 1-10).

The purpose of the paper is to analyse Turkish Government scholarships for African countries from economic cooperation perspective. The major questions that need to be asked are: Can Turkish scholarships for African nationals be achieved? Can Turkey-Africa economic cooperation support and promote scholarships for African nationals? To do this, the paper collected data from Turkish Government official statistics, press releases and official announcements of scholarships for African countries since its opening up to Africa in order to understand the nature and number of scholarships it has awarded to African countries. In the conclusion part, the paper will briefly summarize the argument and points to the areas of further research that might be fruitful for the two sides.

### **3. A brief Analysis of Turkey-Africa Economic Cooperation**

With Africa attracting growing interest among leading and emerging economic powers, Turkey is the latest country to seek strategic relations with the continent. Turkey's strategic relations with the continent was initiated in 1998 when Turkish Government drafted a plan, called "Opening up to Africa", to intensify its ties with the continent (Anadolu Agency: News in English, 1999). The doors opening out to Africa may be considered as the first step taken by Turkey towards globalization. Turkish foreign policy for opening up to African countries may, however, be viable if her policy would be beneficial for Turkish and African citizens. In inter-state relations, state interests are divided into economic and political. However, in the recent setting of international affairs, it is acknowledged that economic interests cannot be pursued in isolation from political interests or vice versa. In the era of globalisation, economic and political interests are intertwined and complementary to

one another. Economic power effects political power. At the same time, economic influence of one state on another state duly impinges on its political influence therein. This is particularly valid in African countries as they attach the utmost importance and priority to their economic development as a means of disentangling themselves from long persisting patterns of poverty. The issue at this point is to find the right combination to channel economic power in the service of political interests. Given the links between economic partnership and education, it is clear that this would be fully manifest in the initiatives that support this area of interest. Fostering economic cooperation through scholarships is a driving force for economic cooperation. It is worthwhile to examine the nature of Turkish Government scholarships for African countries.

#### **4. General Information about the Scholarships**

These scholarships are provided by the Turkish Government and by the Council of Higher Education of the Republic of Turkey for foreign national students and are valid only in Republic of Turkey (Anadolu Agency: News in English, 1999). The students are placed at universities where the language of instruction is Turkish, and are to study Turkish language in the language school in the first year (Anadolu Agency: News in English, 1999).

##### **4.1 The Nature of the Scholarships**

- 1-Research scholarships are granted for those who will do scientific research in their field of interest in Turkish Universities unless there is a special quotation in Cultural Agreements, Cultural Exchange programmes or in similar agreements.
- 2-Duration of the scholarships is four years and above.
- 3-Scholarships commence in October every year.
- 4-Travel expenses to or from Turkey is paid by the students or their governments.
- 5-Candidates awarded scholarship is provided with free accommodation at state dormitories affiliated to the Ministry of National Education on condition that there are places available. The students pay for their food in the dormitories.
- 6-Monthly scholarship allowance can only meet the needs of one person thus, it is essential that; the scholars come to Turkey alone.
- 7-The students' medical care is encountered by Turkish government (Except for long-term illnesses, complex operations, orthodontics, prosthesis and toothprosthesis).
- 8-The scholarships provide financial assistance scheme for a part of the expenditure and maintenance to the African students. However, no grants are possible for students who refuse state accommodation and the monthly scholarship allowance is 175-New Turkish Liras (MEB, 2006).

#### **4.2 The Scholarships for African Students**

Recognizing the importance of scholarships for African countries as a vehicle for promoting economic cooperation, Turkish Government decides to provide a number of scholarships for African nationals to study in Turkish Universities (Anadolu Agency: News in English, 1999). Since the year 2000, Turkey has been providing scholarships to African students to study in Turkish Universities. The scholarships fall into three main categories:

(1) undergraduate, (2) graduate and postgraduate. The position on the scholarships awarded under cultural exchange programmes to African nationals to study in Turkey, during the period under study is outlined in the table below. Those marked with “x” show the African countries’ awards research, undergraduate, cultural exchange programmes, bilateral and other arrangements such as Turkish language programmes, whereas those marked with “X” show the African countries’ awards research, doctorate, master, undergraduate and Turkish language programmes (Anadolu Agency: News in English, 1999). These scholarships are based on mutual agreements between Turkey and African countries (MEB, 2008).

**Table: The Scholarships Allocated by Republic of Turkey to Individual African Countries**

No	Ülke adı Name of country Nom de pays		Araştırma Research Recherche	Yüksek Lisans/ Doktora Master/ Doctorate (Ph.D) Maitrise/ Doctorat	Lisans Undergraduate Etude supérieure	Türkçe Yaz Kursu Summer course Cours d'été
1	Angola				X	
2	Benin	Benin			X	
3	Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso			X	
4	Burundi	Burindi			X	
5	Cezayir	Algeria		X	X	
6	Cibuti	Djibouti			X	
7	Çad	Chad			X	
8	Ekvator Ginesi	Equatorial Guinea			X	
9	Eritre	Eritrea		X		
10	Etiyopya	Ethiopia		X	X	
11	Fas	Morocco	X	X	X	
12	Gabon	Gabon			X	
13	Gambiya	Gambia		X	X	
14	Gana	Ghana			X	
15	Gine	Guinea		X	X	
16	Gine Bissau	Guinea-Bissau			X	
17	Güney Afrika Cumhuriyeti	The Republic of South Africa		X	X	
18	Kamerun	Cameroon			X	
19	Kenya	Kenya	X		X	
20	Komor	Comoro			X	
21	Kongo Demokratik Cumhuriyeti	Democratic Republic of the Congo			X	
22	Kongo Cumhuriyeti	Congo			X	

23	Kotdivuar	Ivory Caost			X	
24	Liberya	Liberia			X	
25	Libya	Libya		X		
26	Madagaskar	Madagascar		X	X	
27	Mali	Mali		X	X	
28	Mauritius	Mauritius		X	X	
29	Mısır	Egypt	X	x		X
30	Moritanya	Mauritania			X	
31	Mozambik	Mozambique		x	X	
32	Namibya	Namibia			X	
33	Nijer	Niger			X	
34	Nijerya	Nigeria		x	X	
35	Orta Afrika Cumhuriyeti	The Central African Republic		x	X	
36	Raunda	Rwanda			x	
37	Senegal	Senegal			x	
38	Seyşeller	The Seychelles			x	
39	Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone			x	
40	Somali	Somali			x	
41	Sudan	Sudan		X		
42	Tanzanya	Tanzania		X	X	
43	Togo	Togo			X	
44	Tunus	Tunisia	X		X	X
45	Uganda	Uganda			X	
46	Zambiya	Zambia			X	
47	Zimbabve	Zimbabwe			X	

**Source:** Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı (MEB) (Republic of Turkey Ministry of National Education), Dış İlişkiler Genel Müdürlüğü, Bakanlıklar, Ankara, TC Hükümeti, Yabancı Hükümetler ve Diğer Burslar, (Scholarships allocated by the Republic of Turkey to the Foreign Students), [http://digm.meb.gov.tr/burslar/BURS\\_IC/Ib\\_list\\_country.doc](http://digm.meb.gov.tr/burslar/BURS_IC/Ib_list_country.doc), (Accessed on 29 June 2008).

The effective use of economic agreement to implement relations requires sustained investments in human resources development. These efforts will involve strengthening existing economic cooperation and introducing new approaches. As the table indicates, out of 53 countries in Africa, Turkish Government awards scholarships to 47 African countries (MEB, 2008/2006). However, according to

Turkish Government's framework of cooperation for Africa, the scholarships would be increased in the future (Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit, 2008 and MEB, 2008). Today, there are unprecedented influx of African students into Turkish Universities through the initiative of the Turkish government and inter-governmental exchanges of scholarships in which Turkey provides quota for African countries. Increased commitment towards education is a necessary condition for balanced development and sustainable partnership. Since the year 2000, Turkey has been providing higher education scholarships to African students (Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit, 2008 and MEB, 2008/2006).

The higher education scholarships for African countries are as follows:

Burkina faso 2; Burundi 4; Algeria 5; Djibouti 10; Chad 3; Equatorial Guinea 2; Ethiopia 5; Morocco 3; Ivory Coast 1; Gabon 3; Gambia 7; Ghana 5; Guinea 11; Guinea-Bissau 3; South Africa 3; Cameroon 4; Kenya 6; Comoros Islands 2; Congo 5; Democratic Republic of Congo 10; Liberia 1; Madagasca 3; The Republic of Seychelles 3; Mali 2; Mauritius 3; Egypt 3; Mauritania 5; Mozambique 9; Namibia 2; Niger 3; Nigeria 19; Central African Republic 1; Senegal 6; Sierra Leone 3; Somali 10; Sudan 17; Tanzania 6; Togo 1; Tunisia 7; Uganda 3; Zambia 2 and Zimbabwe 4 (Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit, 2008 and MEB, 2008/2006).

Today, there are graduate, postgraduate and undergraduate African students pursuing Master and Doctorate, including both taught and research postgraduates, for example, PhD students, in Turkish Universities. You might imagine Turkey to be one of the most avoided, even forbidden destinations for student travel and studies, but the situation could not be more contrary. Bridging, as it does, Turkey provides an in-demand educational environment for African nationals. On the other hand, it is worth noting that there is no accurate measure of the exact size of Turkish Government scholarships allocated to African countries. This is because of limited and/or lack of access to Turkish Government official statistics and documents. It can be argued that one of the objectives of Turkey-Africa partnership agreement is not only to create a trade agreement between Turkey and African countries, but also, to provide a framework for scholarships to African nationals to study graduate, doctoral, undergraduate and language courses in Turkish Universities. The scholarships allocated by Turkey to African countries can be seen as a part of the original outcome of Turkey "Opening up to Africa Policy" (Karaca, 2000, p.116). Most importantly, perhaps, is the fact that Turkish scholarships for African countries are building sustainable relations with African populations. Building sustainable relations through scholarship is a significant contribution to human resource and social capital development. Turkey, by providing these scholarships for African countries, has contributed significantly to the development of human resources in Africa. In addition, scholarships like these encourage bonds between Turkey and African countries. Education for African nationals is needed for promoting

partnership between Turkey and Africa countries. African countries make the youngest continent and they can turn that into a competitive advantage by making young men and women raise the fortunes of mother land 'Africa', especially if they ensure the education of young girls.<sup>1</sup>

## **7. Cooperation in Social Development and Capacity Building**

### **7.1. Education**

Africa and Turkey recognize that human resource development is vital to achieve the socio-economic development goals of Africa and universal mass education is a key factor in this endeavor. Turkish and African Universities could sign memoranda of understanding that would facilitate student and staff exchanges and in which students audit courses in African and Turkish Universities in areas where they will mutually benefit. It would benefit science-major students in biology, botany and zoology from Turkey to sample the rich African bio-diversity and ecology by spending time studying the ecology of African countries. These trips could also be undertaken as part of summer holidays in which students both learn and relax in tropical and Savannah environments. To date, it seems it is only the privately sponsored students from Turkey who have seized the opportunity to study in African Universities, a fact that is little known. Recently there has been a spate of students from Turkey who have sought admission in African Universities, and especially in the Anglophone countries of Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Tanzania. This is a welcome development and this core of returnees from African Universities should provide the important social and cultural link between Turkey and Africa because, many of these graduates already speak the more widespread African languages like Kiswahili and Hausa. They should be encouraged to join diplomatic service. They should be encouraged to form Alumni Associations, as much as those African students who have returned home, to strengthen Turkish-African ties. They could use these associations not only to network, but also, to act as bridges between their societies. These groupings already exist for students who studied in the United States, India and Germany and are active in organizing annual events to bring together past students and forge new links within the larger societies in which they live.

It is interesting to note that Turkey in fact, is not bereft of scholars interested in Africa. There is already a core group, albeit small, of Turkish scholars who have conducted research on aspects of African society. These scholars have a solid understanding of current African issues and should be persuaded to form Turkey-Africa Studies Association that can come together on an annual basis to discuss their research, just as the African Studies Association of America or the newly formed

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<sup>1</sup> Address by Her Excellency Ms Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa, at the first Africa-Turkey Summit, Turkey", South African Government Information <http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2008/08081912151001.htm> 19. 08.2008.

Association of European Africanists which had its first and successful congress at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), between 29th June and 5th July, 2005. African resident in Turkey could participate in the proceedings of the latter association, and will find that they are part of an exciting and large group of social scientists interested in Africa. They could invite some of their colleagues to come and give lectures on African issues, ranging from art, to music and politics, and this will certainly fire enthusiasm about Africa. The Istanbul based Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), Sanat ve Bilim Vakfı, and other Professors at various Turkish Universities already have organized lectures to interested students on aspects of African history.<sup>2</sup> All these individual efforts will ultimately bear fruits in encouraging an understanding of Africa.

On their part, the African countries should not be merely trapped in opening only to the West, but must encourage their academics to take an interest in non-Western and non-African societies. These ties can be strengthened even further by expanding bilateral contacts through academic exchanges of students and staff on long or short term basis, and by periodic visits of sportsmen, musicians, and artists; exchanging T.V. programmes, and especially documentaries that inform each side about the histories and cultures of the other. There is a necessity to introduce the study of the major African languages like Kiswahili, Hausa and Zulu in Turkish Universities and the reciprocal teaching of Turkish and its dialects spoken in Central Asia in African Universities. Many Africans are unaware that Turkish is the main lingua franca of many of Central Asia and is spoken by well over two hundred million people in such strategically important countries as Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, parts of Tajikistan and even far as Afghanistan and China. For both Africans and Turks, the mutual learning of these languages will greatly facilitate mobility and trade possibilities.

Apart from academic exchange of staff, universities could play an important cultural role by hosting writers from each other's countries and by initiating courses in Turkish language, history, politics and literature. African literature is an important component of World literature and works by African authors could be translated into Turkish in order to familiarize Turkish readers with this literary heritage. Works of major Turkish authors should also be translated into the major African languages for an African readership. These activities would narrow the information gap about the two regions. As it is, Turks know very little about Africa, and the little they know is mediated through Western media that often portrays Africa in its desperate moments of famine, hunger and natural catastrophes.

On the Turkish side, there have been recent attempts to focus somewhat on Africa in such programs as "AYNA" (Turkish word for mirror) broadcast by Samanyolu Television station and sometimes shown on Channel 5, but the program merely

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<sup>2</sup> Prof. Dr. Mim Kemal Öke, İstanbul Ticaret Üniversitesi, Ticari Bilimler Fakültesi, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü Başkanı, Üsküdar Kampusu, İstanbul.

reinforces the stereotype of the continent and its peoples because of the poor preparedness of the presenter who himself, seems to have done very little background reading on the countries that he visits. Such programs could have enormously improved understanding between the two peoples by talking to African intellectuals, artists, writers, educationists and movers and shakers. Instead the programs fleet through markets and deserts without exploring real issues that affect the lives of the people. This situation could be improved through exchange of programs made on various aspects of Africa by African documentary makers through the Nairobi based Union of Radio and Television Networks of Africa (URTNA). Turkish Radio and Television TRT, in its turn, could give African television stations those programs that will advance a better understanding of Turkish history, society and culture. As argued earlier, there is a need to introduce the study of languages in both Turkey and Africa. Some Universities, even as regional centers, would be encouraged to offer Turkish courses, and Turkish Universities could also embark on a program of introducing African courses.

## **8. Sports**

Recognizing the need to enhance mutual understanding and friendship between different nations and achieving common prosperity and progress of mankind, as well as underlining the importance of cultural exchanges and cooperation, Africa and Turkey will resolve to enhance cultural relations between the two sides. The African continent is famous for its world class athletes. Long distance runners from Kenya and Morocco compete in races both at home and abroad and have brought honor and glory not only to their countries, but also, to the entire continent. But what is edifying is that some of these athletes have been community conscious and have set up world class facilities to train the next generation of athletes to take their place as world beaters. These facilities are so good that even athletes from Europe have made use of these facilities to hone their skills in high altitude settings which they cannot find in their own countries. Turkish athletes, both men and women should explore the possibility of making use of these facilities to improve their performances and learn from the experience of some of the greatest living athletes like Kipchoge Arap Keino, Mike Boit and Michael Arap Sang, to mention only a few. African football enjoys significant respect world wide through the dazzling performance of national teams like those Nigeria, Cameroon, Morocco, Egypt and South Africa. Turkish audiences have hardly had the chance of seeing some of Africa's most talented players live in action. African and Turkish Sports Ministries must take the initiative to arrange their respective teams to place friendly matches in both, African countries and Turkey.

## **9. Culture**

Turkey has a well developed cinematic culture with films that address the concerns of ordinary citizens and the paradoxes and challenges of life. Many of the themes of Turkish cinema will find ready reception in many African countries because of the

similarities of family structures and the central place of the family in African culture. They are also cheaper to import than those from Hollywood. Arrangements could also be made for African and Turkish movie makers and directors to meet and discuss and learn from one another. The cultural division of African Union and the Ministry of Culture in Turkey could take the initiative to get these two groups together. Turkey too has one of the most vibrant musical cultures anywhere and it would certainly further the cause of mutual understanding and appreciation if occasionally, Turkish musicians could be persuaded to perform to African audiences in various African capitals like Cape Town, Nairobi, Accra, Tunis, Fez, Cairo and Nairobi. Again, under the auspices of the cultural section of African Union, world renowned African musicians could be enlisted to perform in Turkish centers of culture like Istanbul and Ankara, and thus display something of African musical genius. There could be joint performances by African dance troupes and such professional groups as Sultans of Dance, one of the most spectacular dance groups anywhere. Also, the more famous of Turkish musicians and artists could be sponsored to perform in African capital cities especially in East Africa and North and North East Africa which have strong Middle Eastern musical influences and where the Turkish kind of music can easily be appreciated. It must not be forgotten that popular culture has a direct bearing on economic activities. It is noted that the popularity of American popular culture globally also does fuel demand for American goods. There is no reason why African and Turkish scientists should not come together in collaborative and joint scientific projects to improve agricultural yield or animal husbandry. Already, American, European and Japanese scientists have been collaborating with African scientists in many vital areas of research in medicine, genetics, and agriculture among several areas.

## **10. Conclusion**

The paper has attempted to analyse Turkish Government scholarships to African nationals to study in Turkish Universities. It is widely accepted that fostering economic cooperation provides an environment conducive to develop scholarships. The findings indicate that there is a stronger interest by Turkish Government to award scholarships to African nationals to study in Turkish Universities. There is strong evidence that the scholarships program for African nationals still can serve as a success model for economic cooperation between the two regions. By helping to create scholarships for African countries, Turkey is advancing its own interests in Africa. On the other hand, there is no accurate measure of the exact size of the scholarships allocated by Turkish Government to African countries, since the scholarships for African countries and their nationals are not open for assessment in Turkish official statistics, press releases and official announcements. Furthermore, the scholarships are limited only to specific African countries.

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