

## **Turkey's Opening to Africa and Implementation of Commercial Diplomacy towards Africa in the 2000s: Can Sub-Saharan Africa be a Critical Market for Exports and Contracting Sectors?**

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### **Abstract**

In 1999, Africa came to the fore in terms of Turkey's search for alternative markets, possibly due to the global economic crisis. The African continent is an important region for Turkey with its growing markets, rapid population growth and historical and cultural proximity. However, a serious policy could not be developed until 2008. The negative impact of the 2008 global crisis, especially on the economies of developed countries, brought the Africa to Turkey's agenda again in the context of the search for alternative markets. In this context, embassies were opened in sub-Saharan African countries, and it was aimed to increase relations in areas such as economic, cultural, technical cooperation and education. Likewise, a number of commercial offices have been opened in African countries, and their number has been increased where there are already exists office. In the context of commercial diplomacy, various FTAs. As well as cooperation agreements have been signed with the countries in the region. Again, after 2010, the Arab Spring and the decline in oil and natural gas prices brought about contractions in both the contracting sector and the exports markets in the Middle East, North Africa and CIS countries, whose economy is heavily dependent on these two products. Therefore, Sub-Saharan Africa emerged as one of the prominent regions for both sectors as new markets. As a result of the policies implemented, both the export and the contracting sectors achieved a success that partially compensated for the declines in other markets. It can be argued that the African initiative has been successful in terms of both sectors.

**Keywords:** Opening Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, export, Contracting Sectors

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