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TOPIC OF RESEARCH : **Public Diplomacy of Turkey During the Rule of the
Justice and Development Party (2002-2017)**

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FINDINGS

This comprehensive study of Turkey's public diplomacy during the Justice and Development Party era (2002-2017) reveals a transformative period marked by strategic institutionalization and ambitious redefinition of Turkey's global identity. The research establishes that Turkey moved from a Western-centric, state-oriented approach to a multi-directional, historically-grounded strategy leveraging Ottoman heritage, Islamic identity, and multicultural capital as distinctive soft power assets.

The most durable achievement was institutional transformation through creation of coordinated public diplomacy infrastructure—including the Prime Ministry Office of Public Diplomacy, Yunus Emre Institute, Presidency for Turks Abroad, and expanded TIKa—establishing unprecedented institutional capacity. Regionally, Turkey achieved greatest success in Africa through coherent multi-track engagement combining developmental, educational, and diplomatic instruments, while the Arab world demonstrated soft power's fragility when undermined by geopolitical overreach.

The research identifies fundamental tensions: the soft power-hard power dilemma where military assertiveness eroded benevolent images, narrative incoherence across regions, and politicization that raised authenticity concerns. Turkey's experience confirms that soft power is fragile and requires consistent policy reinforcement, while demonstrating how middle powers can sequence cultural outreach, economic integration, and strategic partnerships to build influence. This ambitious national image-crafting project, though partial and contested, fundamentally elevated Turkey's global profile and offers valuable lessons for 21st-century diplomacy.