II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

-Turkey has long-standing historical and cultural relations with the African continent, dating back centuries.

-The first state founded by the Turks in Africa was the Tulunids, which ruled in North Africa in the 9th and 10th centuries.

-In the subsequent period, the Ottoman Empire prevented colonial expansion in North Africa. Similarly, the Ottoman Empire, an African State, played a major role in preventing the penetration of colonialism in East Africa. In the 16th Century, the Ottoman Navy commanded by Admiral Seydi Ali Reis defended the people of the Zanzibar Island against the occupying forces.

-Good relations were also established with the Kingdom of Timbuktu which was located around today’s Mali. Likewise, relations were established with the Kanem Empire that once occupied the territories of today’s Niger, Chad, North Nigeria and North Cameroon.

-As a whole, Africa feels a particular admiration for Turkey’s war of independence. The reforms developed under the leadership of Atatürk set good example for leaders of certain African countries during the early periods of national independence.

-Historical relations with North and Northeast Africa have an exclusive place in the memories of our peoples.

-It wouldn’t be possible to understand the role Turkey is playing before thorough knowledge about its historical involvement in the continent and in East Africa in particular.

-In the lands where it was once present, the Ottoman Empire has built the infrastructure, water systems, bridges, madrasahs, mosques, hamams for the benefit of local peoples.

-It has not imposed its own culture on the local populations.