

Turkey -- General Staff Website Serves as Main Media Outlet for Military

The official website of the Office of the Chief of the General Staff of the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) located at www.tsk.mil.tr, serves as the Turkish Military's primary platform for communicating its message to the general public. The military uses the site to inform the public of its counterterrorism activities, to expound its views as the upholder of Ataturk's legacy and the foundations of the Turkish Republic, and to offer what it considers the official viewpoint of the Turkish state on the Armenian issue. Targeting the public as well as army personnel, the site showcases the TSK, its military prowess, its activities, and its projects, and offers a comprehensive archive and access to its publications. The General Staff website also provides links to the individual websites of the Ground Force, the Air Force, the Navy, and the Gendarmerie, as well as other military-related websites. It is frequently updated, sometimes more than once a day.



Turkish Armed Forces, Office of the Chief of the General Staff

The website banner shows the logo of the General Staff, the Turkish flag juxtaposed over the General Staff building, and a picture of Ataturk in military uniform.

Counterterrorism Activities

The General Staff posts on its website press releases on the latest clashes with Workers' Party of Kurdistan (PKK) militants, supplying casualty figures on both sides, as well as details about cross-border operations and air raids into northern Iraq. As part of its counterterrorism reporting, the TSK also provides in the "[News and Incidents](#)" section a list of incidents involving the PKK, including reports on weapons seizures, mine explosions, and the number of militants that have surrendered or have been captured. The reports appear under the headings "Struggle against the separatist terrorist organization," "Weekly situation in the struggle against the separatist terrorist organization," and "Incidents in which the separatist terrorist organization used bombs and mines;" and they are updated as necessary.¹

- An air raid conducted against PKK targets in north Iraq on 1 December was announced via a statement posted on the website on the same day.
- On 16 October, the General Staff posted on the website a press release on a "terrorist" attack that took place on 15 October in Hakkari, resulting in the death of four soldiers.

¹ For an example of a weekly compilation of these incidents, see the 7 December 2008 OSC Translation, **Turkey: General Staff Counterterrorism Report for Period 26 Nov - 06 Dec 2008** (GMP20081207005001).



The General Staff website also features a link via an icon on the main page to its Center of Excellence-Defense Against Terrorism ([TMMM](#)), a center established in conjunction with NATO with the aim of fostering international cooperation and providing training in the field of counterterrorism. An article posted on the main page of the TMMM website stresses the need for international cooperation in the struggle against terrorism, in general, and against the PKK, in particular. Citing what it terms the support provided by some countries to the PKK, the article says: "At this point, Turkey's utmost expectations from friends and allies are sincerity, determination, cooperation, and adoption of measures based on concrete steps."

The TMMM site hosts information about the center and its activities, and lists international regulations on combating terrorism. Also appearing on the site are the center's publications, English-language newsletters, and the first "Spring 2008" edition of the *Defense Against Terrorism Review*. The *Review*, which is also published in English, features the following papers:

- "Terrorism with Its Differentiating Aspects"
- "Countering Terrorist Support Structures"
- "Military Response to Terrorism and the Jus ad Bellum"
- "EU Institutional and Legal Counter-terrorism Framework"
- "Analysis on Future of Terrorism"
- "Countering Ideological Terrorism"
- "Combating the Financing of Terrorism: Rethinking Strategies for Success"

Military as Upholder of Republic, Ataturk's Legacy

The military uses the website to convey its stand as the upholder of the secular republic established by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. Most notably, on 27 April 2007, the General Staff posted on its website a press release warning against antiseccular trends and chastising the Erdogan government for its "open defiance" of the state.

Coming against the backdrop of a controversy pertaining to the possible election of a president affiliated with the Islamic-rooted Justice and Development Party (AKP) and a 12 April 2007 statement by then Chief of Staff Yasar Buyukanit calling for the election of a president loyal to the republic's fundamental values, including secularism, the press release posted on the website was coined an "e-memorandum" by the Turkish and foreign media.

- Pointing out that "certain circles" who are engaged in "a relentless struggle to erode the founding principles of the Turkish Republic, mainly secularism, have recently stepped up their efforts to this end," the press release warned against the exploitation of people's religious feelings. Expressing concern over the recent debate on secularism in connection with the presidential elections, the General Staff declared: "It should not be forgotten that the TSK is a side in this debate and it is the absolute defender of secularism." No one should doubt that the TSK "will clearly display its position and

attitude whenever necessary," the statement pledged, underlining its determination to fulfill the duty assigned to it by law to protect "these characteristics."²



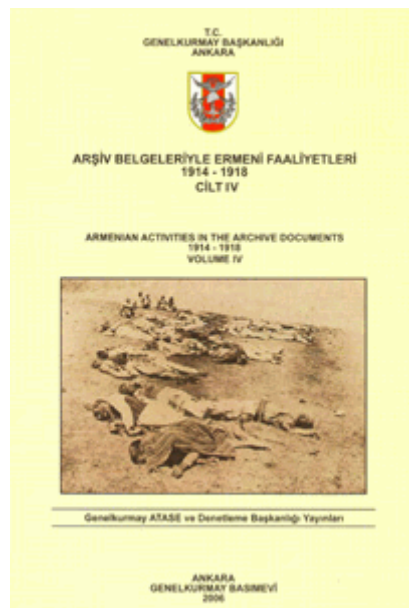
Ataturk: My mortal body will certainly turn to dust one day, but the Turkish Republic will last forever (Ataturk Mausoleum web page).

Furthermore, postings and publications listed on the website of the General Staff focus on the legacy of the "Great Leader" Ataturk as a commander and a reformer, and on his military doctrines, portraying the army as the guardian of the principles of the republic.

- An article penned by Husnu Ozlu in the October issue of the *Armed Forces Magazine* on "Ataturk's Republic Ideal and the 85th Anniversary of Our Republic" asserts that "one of the most important foundation stones of the republic is secularism." The article says that "teaching the next generations that national sovereignty, the republic, democracy, and secularism are the most important and indispensable principles" should be considered a fundamental duty.
- The section in the website on "[Turkey's contribution to the efforts to support global peace](#)" highlights Ataturk's principle of "peace at home, peace in the world" as the basis of Turkish foreign policy. This motto also appears in the banner of the English-language version of the website.
- Recounting the history of the nation and the Armed Forces, the website refers to Ataturk as the sun that rose from the ruins of the Ottoman Empire and a "great soldier and statesman of the 20th century. As a reformist of military origin, Ataturk proved his genius to the nations of the world, by improving the state, which he founded, in every field," the text asserts.

² For the full text, see the 28 April 2007 OSC Translation, Turkey: General Staff Statement on Reactionary Activities, Army's Duty (GMP20070428016005).

Armenian Issue



ARMENIAN ACTIVITIES IN THE ARCHIVE DOCUMENTS 1914-1918, VOLUME IV

The caption for the picture on the document reads:
"Turks murdered by the Armenian terror organizations
(July 15, 1915 -- Diyarbakir -- Lice)."

In a bid to present the official viewpoint of the Turkish state, the website carries eight volumes of Ottoman archive documents pertaining to the alleged massacre of Armenians during the World War I period, as well as some articles touching on the subject.

- The link "[Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents](#)" leads to eight volumes of archive documents and a ninth volume providing an index for the archives. Published by the Military History and Strategic Studies, and Supervisory Directorate of the General Staff (ATASE), these documents in Turkish and in English attempt to shed light on the events pertaining to the Armenians in the World War I era. The documents will serve academia as a basis for research on the subject both at home and abroad, and enable everyone to view the facts pertaining to the "relocation" of the Armenians "through the mirror of truth," declares the chief of ATASE in his presentation.
- The "[Armenian Issue](#)" also appears as a subtopic under the "Cross-Sections From History" menu item. In addition to the eight volumes of "Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents," this section provides an eye-witness account of a Russian officer, a link to the "Documentation Hall on the Armenian Issue" -- where the original Ottoman documents and photographs relating to the events of 1915 are exhibited -- and a 30-page paper entitled "Issues Missed in the 1915 Armenian Debate" by Professor Hikmet Ozdemir published in 2007 by the Strategic Research and Study Center affiliated with the General Staff (SAREM).
- The February 2008 edition of the *Military History Research Magazine* -- accessible via the "[Publications](#)" link -- carries an article entitled "Armenian Rebellions According to Ottoman Documents and American Board Missionaries (1875-1918)" by Gulbadi Alan. The article, which is based on a 2004 paper prepared by the think tank Eurasian Strategic Research Center (ASAM), explores the role of US missionaries on the eruption and expansion of the Armenian rebellions.

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Organization, Layout

The main page is colorful and concise, but offers a vast quantity of information through multilayered clickable headings. The page is separated into three main columns:

I. The column on the left-hand side lists the main menu items, each leading to a clickable drop-down menu, which in turn proceeds to related documents and links:

 TSK HAKKINDA	▷	About the TSK
 GENEL BİLGİLER	▷	General Information
 BASIN YAYIN FAALİYETLERİ	▷	Media Activities
 ULUSLARARASI İLİŞKİLER	▷	International Relations
 EĞİTİM ÖĞRETİM	▷	Training and Education
 TATBİKATLAR	▷	Exercises
 İNSAN KAYNAKLARI	▷	Human Resources
 TARİHTEN KESİTLER	▷	Cross-Sections From History
 YAYINLAR	▷	Publications
 ARŞİV		Archive
 FAYDALI BAĞLANTILAR	▷	Useful Links

About the TSK

- History
- Chiefs of staff
- Its task
- Its defense policy
- Its defense organizations
- Its force structure
- History of the General Staff Headquarters building
- [Video](#) clips

General Information

- TSK's mobilization system
- Military museum
- Medals
- Command banners
- Rights of martyrs' beneficiaries and of veterans
- Symbolic voluntary military service for disabled citizens
- Civilian-military cooperation
- Continuous Acquisition Life Cycle Support project
- Implementation of savings measures

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- Natural disaster search-and-rescue teams
- TSK scientific decision support activities
- Transportation coordination system

Media Activities

- Press statements
- Press announcements
- Information notes
- TSK radio-TV programs
- Visits
- Ceremonies
- Meetings
- Speeches
- Messages

International Relations

- ISAF in Afghanistan
- Vienna Document
- Open Skies Agreement
- OSCE
- Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty
- Turkey's contribution to the efforts to support global peace
- TSK military training and cooperation activities
- Partnership for Peace Training Center ([BIOEM](#))
- Center of Excellence-Defense Against Terrorism ([TMMM](#))
- Mediterranean Dialogue
- NATO infrastructure program
- NATO expansion
- Changing strategy and concepts within NATO's logistics concept
- Human trafficking via the sea
- Ottawa Treaty
- Military attaches
- Security in the Black Sea
- Regional weapons control
- Small arms and light weapons
- Weapons of mass destruction
- National and international defense research and technological cooperation activities
- UNIFIL
- Black Sea Littoral States Border/Coast Guard Cooperation Forum ([BSCF](#))
- Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group ([BLACKSEAFOR](#))

Training and Education

- TSK training system and institutions

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- TSK training projects
- Partnership for Peace Training Center ([BIOEM](#))
- Center of Excellence-Defense Against Terrorism ([TMMM](#))
- Human rights training in the TSK
- Exercises
- Exercises and shows

Human Resources

- TSK personnel administration system-2010
- Personnel recruitment by TSK units
- Application for military schools

Cross-Sections From History

- Armenian issue
- Archive documents on the Menemen incident (in which an army officer was killed by pro-shari'a rebels in 1930)
- Excerpts from the Canakkale battles
- The Turkish Republic from the past to the present
- Anecdotes about the national independence struggle
- The story of a soldier woven with love
- Important dates in Turkish history

Publications

The website hosts the full content of the magazines published by the TSK as well as a comprehensive list of all the military publications. The magazines are published by the General Staff Military History and Strategic Studies (ATASE) Chairmanship and carry the caveat: The articles published in these magazines reflect the personal views of their authors and not those of the Turkish Armed Forces. All the publications are in Turkish and can be downloaded in .pdf form.

1. **General Staff ATASE Chairmanship publications catalogue** -- This 98-page comprehensive catalogue incorporates all the ATASE publications comprising the years 1916-2008 according to subject, author name, date of publication, updated publications, and periodicals.

2. **List of publications for sale** -- This three-page catalogue lists the prices of the publications for sale.



3. **Military History Research Magazine** -- The magazine, a member of the International Military History Committee, is published twice a year. The most recent edition from February 2008 is 216 pages long and features the following articles:

"Armenian Rebellions According to Ottoman Documents and American Board Missionaries (1875-1918)"

"The Significance of the Canakkale Battles in Turkish and World History"

"Ataturk's Arrival in Samsun as the 9th Army Inspector According to Archive Documents of the National Struggle Period"

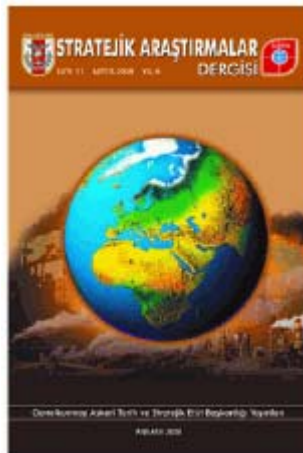
"The Army and Military Organization in the Ayyubid Period"

"The Turkish Grand National Assembly's View of the Pontus Issue and the Search for a Solution (1922)"

"The Road to the Amendment of the General Elections Law in the First Parliament"

"French-Armenian Cooperation in Anatolia From the Past to the Present and the Urfa Example"

"Military Service and Conscription From the Ottoman State to the Turkish Republic (as of the 19th Century)"



4. **Strategic Research Magazine** -- The magazine, which features the logos of the General Staff and of SAREM, is published twice yearly. Its most recent edition from May 2008 runs 146 pages and includes the following articles:

"Turkey and the Ban on Deportation in the EU Accession Process"

"A Signal of Change in Georgia: the 2008 Presidential Elections"

"The Real Dimensions of Global Warming"

"Globalization"

"Globalization and the Real Nature of the Fener Greek Patriarchate and the Greek Seminary Issues Within the Framework of the EU Accession Process"

"The Effect of Globalization on Geo-Economic and Energy Policies"

"Afghanistan's Strategic Position in a Historical Context, Turkey and the International Dimension of Afghanistan's Reconstruction"



5. *Armed Forces Magazine* -- Published every three months, the magazine's latest 128-page issue is from October 2008 and contains the following articles:

"Ceremony for the Transfer of Duty to the new Chief of the General Staff"

"Ataturk's Republic Ideal and the 85th Anniversary of the Republic"

"Intelligence Activities in the Armistice and Independence War Period"

"Ways To Motivate the Personnel Along the Goals of the Institution Through the Use of Theories"

"The Effect of the Good Soldier Syndrome on Information Sharing and the Ascent of Institutions"

"Computer-Aided and Remote Training in the World, in Turkey, and in the Air Force Command"

"The Causes of Halitosis and Its Treatment"

"Ataturk's Address to Officers: Speech Addressing Officers at the Afyonkarahisar Army Corps Department (31 July 1920)"

"Graduation Ceremonies Held at the Ground-Navy-Air War Schools and at the Gulhane Military Medical School"

"The Armed Forces in the Media"

"New Publications"

"Publications for Sale"

Archive

- Media activities (dating back to 2003)
- Other news (dating back to 2005)
- Exercises (dating back to 2004)
- News and incidents (dating back to 2007)
- Training and education activities (not updated since 2006)
- Number of visitors at the Ataturk Mausoleum (dating back to 2005)

Useful Links

- State institutions
- Military units
- International organizations
- Foundations
- Associations

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Also listed in the left-hand column are icons providing links to pages within the website:



Ataturk Mausoleum Site



Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents



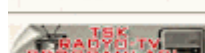
Military Schools Applications and Results



Turkish General Staff Sports Activities



Video Clips



TSK Radio-TV Programs



Information Unit



Correct Use of Turkish Language



Contact Us

Ataturk Mausoleum Internet Site: This internal site provides links to general information about Ataturk -- his photos, a recording of one of his speeches, press articles, his books, his life, Ataturk as a statesman, Ataturk as a soldier, his reforms, his ideals, his houses, world leaders on Ataturk, and his sayings. It also houses an archive of transcripts of the entries in the Mausoleum Special Book dating back to 2005, a gallery of Ataturk's photographs, the historical and architectural concept of the Ataturk Mausoleum, a site map providing details about the different spots in the mausoleum complex and their significance, Ataturk and the Independence War Museum, and current activities including the number of visitors.

Armenian Activities in the Archive Documents: This page contains eight volumes of Ottoman archive documents, in Turkish and English, pertaining to the alleged massacre of Armenians during the World War I period and a ninth volume providing a 258-page index for the archives with a short description of each document. The volumes run between 600-700 pages each and are downloadable in .pdf form.

Military Schools Applications and Results: The page hosts links to all the military schools, including admittance conditions and application forms.

Turkish General Staff Sports Activities: The website contains information about the sports events organized by the army or in which the military takes part, including links to the Military World Games and international military sports organizations.

Video Clips: The 16 video clips hosted on the page are promotional in nature, showcasing the army, its equipment and weaponry, soldiers in action, and soldiers helping school children and the civilian population.

TSK Radio-TV Programs: The page lists the programs aired on state radio and television about the army.

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Information Unit: The page contains application forms for receiving information about the army, details about regulations regarding the process of requesting and receiving information, a section of frequently asked questions, and links to the information units of the individual force commands.

Correct Use of Turkish: The page links to a 146-page guide book published by the ATASE Chairmanship in 2007 on "communication and effective speaking, writing, and reading."

Contact Us: A click generates an e-mail message to gnkur@tsk.mil.tr.

II. The main middle column features the "Current Announcements" and the "News and Incidents" sections. The items in these categories are continuously updated, providing the latest General Staff press releases or statements on military activities.

Current Announcements

The latest announcements, messages, statements, and information notes issued by the Chief of the General Staff's Office are posted on the main page and updated as necessary. These include, for example, a message issued by the military on the occasion of the anniversary of Ataturk's death, a statement on an air raid against PKK positions in north Iraq, and an information note on an upcoming radio program or military exercise.

GÜNCEL DUYURULAR

Genelkurmay Başkanı Orgeneral İlker BAŞBUĞ'un TSK Rehabilitasyon ve Bakım Merkezini Ziyareti.
05 Aralık 2008

Genelkurmay Başkanı Orgeneral İlker BAŞBUĞ'un 1'inci Hava Kuvetleri Komutanlığını Ziyareti
05 Aralık 2008

Basın Açıklaması / 58
05 Aralık 2008

Bilgi Notu / 106
05 Aralık 2008

The following entries were posted on the main page on 6 December 2008:

- Chief of Staff General İlker Basbug's visit to the TSK Rehabilitation and Treatment Center, accompanied by a photograph
- Chief of Staff General İlker Basbug's visit to the 1st Air Force Command, also accompanied by a photograph

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- Press Release 58 -- A statement about an air raid conducted against PKK targets in north Iraq
- Information Note 106 -- An announcement about a television program on vocational courses offered by the TSK

Clicking "to continue" provides the reader with an archived list of all the statements, information notes, press releases, messages, speeches, etc. issued by the General Staff in the past year. A further click proceeds to the website's main archive, which dates back three to four years and is also listed as a main menu item on the left-hand column.

News and Incidents

The "News and Incidents" section in the middle column offers quantitative accounts and descriptions of various incidents pertaining to counterterrorism efforts, border violations, and other activities of the TSK in the military and civilian spheres. Updated frequently, the information is offered under clickable headings, as listed below. In addition to a moving ticker on the top informing the reader about the latest entries, it is possible to learn when each topic was last updated by placing the cursor over a particular heading.

- Border violations
- Airspace violations
- Violations of territorial waters
- Illegal border crossings
- Struggle against the separatist terrorist organization
- Weekly situation in the struggle against the separatist terrorist organization
- Incidents in which the separatist terrorist organization used bombs and mines
- Number of visitors at the Ataturk Mausoleum
- Social development support activities
- Search-and-rescue activities undertaken by the TSK
- TSK's support activities during fires and natural disasters
- Turkey's contribution to ISAF in Afghanistan
- Recent international developments
- International regulations on combating terrorism
- Narcotics seizures

III. The right-hand column presents a profile of the current chief of the General Staff as well as icons providing links to individual external websites related to the military.

Chief of Staff



Accompanied by a photograph, this section includes biographical information on the incumbent chief of staff, his visits at home and abroad, his messages marking various occasions, and his speeches.

External links:

Turkish Armed Forces



[Ground Forces Command](#)



[Naval Forces Command](#)



[Air Force Command](#)



[Gendarmerie General Command](#)



[Coast Guard Command](#)

Military Sites



[War Academies Command](#)



[Gulhane Military Medical Academy](#)

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[Partnership for Peace Training Center](#)



[Center of Excellence-Defense Against Terrorism](#)



[Military Museum and Culture Complex Command](#)

Foundations



"Mehmetcik" Foundation for aid to soldiers and their families



Foundation for the rehabilitation of wounded soldiers and veterans



Foundation to strengthen the TSK and the national defense industry



TSK Solidarity Foundation to aid families of officers who die on duty



TSK Health Foundation



TSK Education Foundation

English-Language Version



The information offered on the English-language page of the website is more limited, with selected items focusing especially on the international aspect of the TSK.

The main page, under the headline "On Focus," lists press releases pertaining to the Center of Excellence-Defense Against Terrorism, the TSK's activities abroad, foreign visits, and military exercises. The section on speeches by military commanders has not been updated since June 2006.

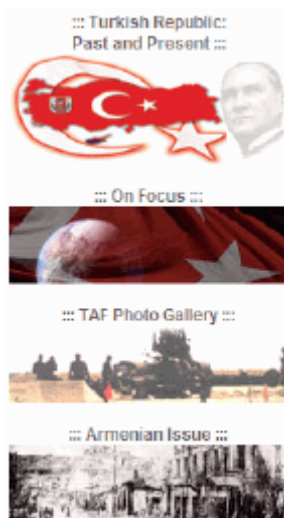
The main menu items on the left-hand column are categorized under the following headings, leading to drop-down menus:

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- General
- International
- Other Issues
- Speeches
- Personnel Issues
- Releases
- Exercises
- Links

The "News and Incidents" section on the main page offers information under the following categories:

- Turkish Forces for UNIFIL Operations in Lebanon
- Contribution to Civil Development Activities
- International Regulations on Combating Terrorism
- The Number of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) and Mine Incidents Perpetrated by the Members of the Terror Organization
- Incidents of Capturing Illegal Drugs



Icons listed on the page connect to the following internal pages:

- Turkish Republic: Past and Present, featuring Ataturk's messages and photographs of the republic's achievements throughout the years
- An archive of the "On Focus" section dating back to 2006
- Photo gallery
- The Armenian issue with archive documents
- The Ataturk Mausoleum, extolling Ataturk, his principles, and his reforms
- Sports Activities

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The individual websites of the Ground Forces Command, the Naval Forces Command, the Air Force Command, the Gendarmerie General Command, the Coast Guard Command, and the War Colleges Command are also accessible through icons on the main page.

Technical Information

A WHOIS search reveals the following data:

Website Title: Genelkurmay Baskanligi Resmi Kurumsal Internet Sitesidir - Anasayfa - Turkish General Staff Official Web Site - Main Page

Alexa Trend/Rank: #58,512: Down 31,295 ranks over the last three months.

Compete Rank: #537,662 with 1,960 US visitors per month

Registry Data

Created: 1997-01-05

Expires: 2009-01-04

WHOIS Server: whois.nic.tr

Server Data

IP Address: 193.110.208.130 Whois | Reverse-IP | Ping | DNS Lookup | Traceroute

IP Location: Ankara - Ankara - Genelkurmay Baskanligi

Response Code: 200

Domain Status: Registered And Active Website

WHOIS Record

Registrant:

Genelkurmay Baskanligi

Genelkurmay MEBS Bilgi Sistemleri Daire Baskanligi

06651

Ankara,

Turkiye

+ 90-312-4022274-

+ 90-312-4022206

Domain Servers

bora.tsk.mil.tr 193.110.208.188

lodos.tsk.mil.tr 193.110.208.189

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