

## **Ambassador Mark R. Parris Named Visiting Fellow and Director of Brookings-TUSIAD Project on Turkey**

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — Mark R. Parris, U.S. ambassador to Turkey from 1997 to 2000, will join the Brookings Institution as a visiting scholar, Brookings President Strobe Talbott announced. Working under the joint auspices of the Center for the United States and Europe (CUSE) and the Saban Center for Middle East Policy, Ambassador Parris will lead a one-year project – “Turkey 2007” – organized jointly by Brookings and TUSIAD, the Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association. Parris will be affiliated with Brookings starting February 1, 2007.

“2007 will be a defining year for Turkey. The spring election of a new President and subsequent fall general elections will set the course of Turkish internal politics for the next decade,” said Carlos Pascual, vice president and director of Foreign Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution. “Developments in Iraq, Iran and the eastern Mediterranean will both interact with Turkey’s election-year politics and clarify the nature and direction of its relations with the United States, the Muslim world and Israel.”

As a career Foreign Service Officer, Ambassador Parris retired in 2001 after 30 years of service that included assignments to Tel Aviv and Moscow, and policy level responsibilities at the State Department and National Security Council. His three years in Ankara were a high point in recent U.S.-Turkish relations. Since leaving government he has remained involved with Turkey as senior advisor with the Washington office of Baker Donelson, PC and as chairman of the Board of Directors of the American Friends of Turkey and the Advisory Board of the American Turkish Council.

TUSIAD, a co-sponsor of “Turkey 2007,” is an Istanbul-based association that represents Turkey’s largest and most prestigious private companies. For many years, it has been a leading voice in Turkish civil society for socio-economic and political reforms in Turkey and for Turkey’s EU candidacy. “We’re pleased to partner with Brookings in contributing to a better dialogue between the U.S. and Turkey at such a critical juncture,” stated TUSIAD Chairman Omer Sabanci. In addition to TUSIAD, “Turkey 2007” will be supported by individual contributions from Turkey’s private sector.

“Turkey 2007” will seek to encourage a focused, informed discussion in the U.S. on developments in and around Turkey during what will be an unusually full and important year for this pivotal country. “By bringing to Washington on a timely basis some of Turkey’s best political analysts and commentators, the project will provide an opportunity to move beyond stereotypes that have recently characterized analysis in this country of Turkey’s political dynamics,” Ambassador Parris said.

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