

Name: Alert ID: TMML2024033452241 ISTANBUL: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Tuesday congratulated Joe Biden on his victory over Donald Trump in the US presidential election, urging closer ties between the two NATO allies. Erdogan's statement came a full three days after US media called the election in Biden's favor, underscoring the close personal bond the Turkish leader enjoyed with Trump. But Ankara and Washington also experienced tensions during Trump's four years in office, including over US support for a Syrian Kurdish militia that Turkey views as a grave security threat. "I congratulate you on your election success and convey my sincere wishes for the peace and welfare of the US people," Erdogan said in a statement published by his office, urging "strong cooperation" between the sides. Other issues standing between Ankara and Washington include Turkey's purchase of a high-tech Russian missile defense system, and US refusal to extradite a Muslim cleric Erdogan blames for staging a failed 2016 coup. "The challenges we face today, on the global and regional levels, require us to further develop and strengthen those relations, which are based in mutual interests and shared values," Erdogan said. Turkish officials have been alarmed by an interview Biden gave to The New York Times in December in which he called Erdogan an "autocrat." Biden criticized the Turkish leader's policies toward the Kurds and said Washington needed to "embolden" his rivals to allow them "to take on and defeat Erdogan." Erdogan's spokesman said in August that the remarks showed "pure ignorance, arrogance and hypocrisy." The Turkish leader did not directly address them in his statement Tuesday.