# Erdoğan Disadvantage

## NOTES

The thesis of the DA is that Erdogan (the president of Turkey) is facing a lot of backlash now because of the economy. That normally would TKO the DA on uniqueness, but the trick is that the way he’s dealing that is ramping up anti-NATO rhetoric and actions to divert the attention of the Turkish public. The AFF would be a flip flop by having him accept American aid and cooperation, which would cause a) him not be able to campaign on this and b) cause his base to backlash. In order to regain support with his constituents, he will start a war with Greece which escalates.

Links and thumpers — this DA is based around generic cooperation, most of the AT: Thumpers (in the link section) are also independent link arguments you can make. If you are trying to diversify, look there even if they don’t read the thumper

One strength of the argument is that NATO cohesion is absolutely wrecked by a Turkey-Greece war.

One weakness of this argument is that if Turkey says no to the plan, there is no DA link and there’s potentially a link turn.

## 1NC

### 1NC

#### “Say yes” means Erdogan caves to a US-led NATO initiative. That wrecks his current political strategy that requires distancing from the West and absolute prioritization of the Turkish-led agenda

Daou 6/22 — Mark Daou is a political activist and politician. He cites David Rigoulet-Roze, a Doctor of Political Science, teacher and researcher, who specializes in the Middle East region. “With an eye on re-election, Turkey’s Erdogan risks the ire of Western partners," France 24, 6-22-2022, https://www.france24.com/en/middle-east/20220622-with-an-eye-on-re-election-turkey-s-erdogan-risks-the-ire-of-western-partners, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

Between stalling Sweden and Finland’s bids for NATO membership and threatening a fresh military offensive against Kurds in northern Syria, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan seems to be capitalising on the world’s focus on Ukraine to strengthen Ankara’s geopolitical standing – even at the expense of NATO and Western partners. Such moves may be targeting a domestic audience ahead of June 2023 presidential elections, with Erdogan trying to galvanise nationalist sentiment as a worsening economic crisis threatens his popularity at home.

In recent weeks, Erdogan has once again complicated Turkey’s relationship with its NATO allies – stalling Swedish and Finnish plans to join the bloc; threatening another military incursion into northern Syria; refusing to join Western sanctions against Russia; and reviving tensions with perennial rival Greece over the Aegean islands.

The Turkish president seems keen to take advantage of the West’s focus on the Ukraine war, using bellicose rhetoric in defence of Turkey’s interests and imposing his own conditions on top of European and US priorities.

Talks in Brussels on Monday on the latest NATO accession bids led to “clear progress” on some issues, a Finnish presidential aide said. But Turkey threw a spanner into the works – demanding Sweden and Finland take action against the "terrorists" of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) before approving their accession – ahead of next week’s NATO summit in Madrid.

Erdogan is all too aware that Swedish and Finnish accession would be a landmark expansion for the transatlantic alliance, with both nations jettisoning their longstanding Cold War neutrality amid a re-emergent Russian threat.

‘Imposing his agenda’

Ankara sees both countries – and Sweden, especially – as too close to the PKK, which has been waging a guerrilla war in Turkey since 1984 punctuated by periodic ceasefires. A militant insurgency that dreams of an independent Kurdish state uniting southeastern Turkey, northern Syria, northern Iraq and a small slice of northeastern Iran, the PKK has been designated a terrorist group by both the EU and the United States.

Erdogan says he wants “concrete” and “serious” steps from Sweden and Finland before he allows them into NATO. In effect, he wants them to bargain with him directly to get the green light.

The Turkish president also wants Western countries to lift the restrictions on arms and technology exports imposed in late 2019 after a Turkish attack on Kurdish forces in northern Syria. The Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG) were instrumental in defeating the Islamic State group in Syria and a key ally of the US-led international coalition battling the jihadists.

“By raising the prospect of a new offensive against Kurdish forces in northern Syria and threatening to block Sweden’s and Finland’s NATO applications, Erdogan is trying to show that he won’t compromise on Turkish nationalist causes – and that he can impose his agenda and priorities in the international arena,” said David Rigoulet-Roze, a Middle East specialist at the IRIS (French Institute for International and Strategic Affairs) think-tank in Paris.

Moreover, Erdogan is “trying to compensate for his disastrous management of the Turkish economy, to shore up his electoral base and mobilise voters ahead of the forthcoming elections, which look rather complicated for him”, Rigoulet-Roze continued.

‘Like a poker player’

With both presidential and parliamentary elections coming up in a year’s time, Erdogan’s geopolitical chess game with the West could well offer him an electoral boon.

A German Marshall Fund poll published in April showed that 58.3 percent of Turks see the US as the “biggest threat” to Turkey’s “national interests” while 62.4 percent believe European countries want to “divide and disintegrate Turkey as they had the Ottoman Empire in the past”. An even bigger number, 69.8 percent, believe European countries have helped strengthen separatist organisations like the PKK.

“Erdogan is a real political animal; he acts like a poker player on the world stage,” said Rigoulet-Roze. “But there’s often a domestic agenda lurking behind his games with the West – and his various postures in the global arena are nothing more than a response to domestic problems and a reflection of his desire to keep his grip on power.”

The Turkish president is more than happy to pursue policies with an eye on the domestic agenda even if it means irritating the West – as witnessed in recent years by the decision to drill in disputed parts of the Mediterranean and the controversial purchase of an S-400 missile system from Russia.

Erdogan makes such moves on an “ad-hoc” basis, Rigoulet-Roze said, instead of working from an overarching strategy.

“For the most part, they’re provocative acts – Erdogan knows he can’t burn bridges with the West or remake the world on his terms.”

Indeed, Erdogan is all too aware that the EU is still Turkey’s largest trading partner (it is part of the customs union) and that the US became Turkey’s third-largest export market in 2020.

‘Extremely vulnerable’

More recently, Erdogan has refused to join Western sanctions on Russia. Ankara does not want to “antagonise Russia” because the beleaguered Turkish economy is “extremely vulnerable” to a loss of Russian wheat and energy supplies, according to Howard Eissenstat, a Turkey specialist at St. Lawrence University in New York and the Middle East Institute in Washington, DC, speaking in a March interview.

Erdogan also riled Western leaders over the past few weeks by hosting Venezuela’s autocratic far-left President Nicolas Maduro for talks on June 8; neither the EU nor the United States recognises Maduro’s regime as legitimate.

A further provocation to the West came in early June, when the Turkish president announced he would end regular bilateral meetings with the Greek government aimed at building co-operation after decades of antagonism between these historic enemies. Ankara claims that Athens is stationing troops on Aegean islands near the Turkish shore in violation of peace treaties and has threatened to reopen a debate on ownership of the islands.

“On the surface it sometimes looks like Erdogan is the master of this game against the West – but in reality he’s testing them each time, seeing how far he can go, seeing if he can make some sort of geopolitical win on the regional chessboard or an economic win to try and relieve the financial pressure Turkey is under,” Rigoulet-Roze said. “Erdogan’s position isn’t as comfortable as it looks, because he risks really antagonising all the other NATO members and making Turkey the black sheep of the alliance.”

Erdogan is trying to make Turkey a great power again – on the global as well as regional stage.

“Erdogan is very nostalgic for Ottoman imperial grandeur, which has a profound resonance in the contemporary Turkish psyche – this idea that Turkey must once again be recognised as a great power, even if it can’t have an empire,” Rigoulet-Roze said. “Unfortunately for Erdogan, reality constrains these ambitions, because Turkey’s considerable economic difficulties mean it can’t afford to be isolated.”

Over the previous two decades, Erdogan’s moderate Islamist Justice and Development Party (AKP) has won and kept power because it “assured Turks of sustained improvements in living standards”, Rigoulet-Roze said.

But that reputation for economic competence is gone, putting Erdogan at odds with millions of transactional voters he has relied on for support. Hence his diplomatic overtures to the wealthy Gulf petro-monarchies he previously scorned.

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman began his first official visit to Turkey on Wednesday, with several agreements expected between the two Middle Eastern powers. Erdogan went to Saudi Arabia at the end of April after three and a half years of vexed relations between Ankara and Riyadh following the 2018 murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul.

For all his troubles, Erdogan knows that Turkey’s geographic location – at the crossroads of Europe, the Black Sea, the Caucasus and the Middle East – makes it essential to the West from a strategic perspective. The Cold War is long gone, but the factors that motivated NATO to make Turkey the only Middle Eastern member of the Alliance in 1952 have not gone away. As much as Erdogan’s threats to the Swedish and Finnish accession bids rile NATO members, they know they need to engage with him.

But while much remains the same, the nature of Turkish politics has changed a great deal since the Cold War, Rigoulet-Roze observed. Back then, Turkey was “secular, anti-communist, pro-Western and pro-European; things have become very different since Erdogan and the AKP took power, making Turkey into a nation dominated by an Islamo-nationalist party that is, at the very least, non-aligned”.

#### NATO cooperation decimates Erdogan’s support

Tremblay 22 — Pinar Tremblay Professor in the Economics department at California State Polytechnic University - Pomona (Brendan Tremblays mom lol) "Turkish public support for NATO declines," Al-Monitor, 3-8-2022, https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/03/turkish-public-support-nato-declines, accessed 6-20-2022 WMK

Public opinion also seems to support President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s policy on the conflict. Indeed, perceptions of NATO in Turkey are rather negative, even at a time when countries like Finland and Sweden are considering joining the organization.

While there have not been polls on support for NATO since the invasion began, in recent years Turkey has consistently ranked as having the lowest support for NATO among member states.

In January 2022, Metropoll polling agency released an interesting finding. When asked the question, "In its foreign policy, should Turkey give priority to Russia and China or to the US and the EU?” 39.4% opted for the Russia and China options, while 37.5% said the EU and the US. And recent statements by various figures seem to indicate sentiments are not changing.

For example, a Turkish businessman known for his outspoken love for Erdogan traveled to Moscow last week, where he described NATO as a “cancer.”

Speaking to Russian media, Ethem Sancak, who is a former member of Erdogan's ruling party, also accused NATO of supporting coups against the various Turkish governments, including the 2016 coup attempt against Erdogan’s government.

Sancak also claimed that Turkey “did not know” that the combat drones supplied to Ukraine by Turkey “would be used like this" against Russia.

So far, there has been no comment on Sancak’s remarks from ruling party officials in Turkey.

Yet anti-NATO sentiment is prevailing in large segments of Turkish society from both sides of the political spectrum.

Erkan Bas, the leader of the leftist Turkey Workers Party (TIP), also described the alliance as a terrorist organization while he was calling for peace in Ukraine. The sentiment has been growing steadily in the last decade.

Indeed, at a time when foreign policy experts question whether Erdogan’s “both Russia and Ukraine are our friends” policy is sustainable, there are divisions within the ruling party bigwigs as well.

While Erdogan’s son-in-law’s family, the manufacturer of the Bayraktar drones supplied to Ukraine, openly supports Ukraine and stands up against the invasion, Erdogan’s ultranationalist allies rally for Russia.

Not much support for NATO comes from Islamists, ultranationalists or leftists. Rather, anyone who might dare to make a positive comment about NATO could be placed under the label “pro-American” or a “foreign agent.”

Indeed, 2019 PEW research reveals that the Turkish public has the lowest favorable ratings of NATO among member states, with only 21% of those polled stating a positive view of the alliance. In the same year, non-NATO member countries such as Ukraine and Sweden held 53% and 63% favorable ratings of the organization, respectively.

There is only one non-NATO country, Russia, where the public holds a less favorable rating of NATO than Turkey, with 16%.

The Turkish public’s low-level approval of NATO has been consistently the lowest among member countries since 2011, according to PEW, ranging between 15% to 25%. PEW’s findings confirm left and right uniting in their disdain of NATO.

What are the causes of this unfavorability of the organization?

Political scientist Burak Ozpek told Al-Monitor one of the potent reasons is the lack of credible information about NATO in the news.

“Populist politicians and even academics appear on TV making rather childish and slogan-styled comments about international relations. Media is overrun by these appearances. We do not hear the facts. We do not hear NATO is a security alliance. We do not hear Turkey is a long-time member. We do not hear the benefits of being a NATO member. In the last couple of years, anti-American rhetoric is on the rise in Turkish politics and authoritarian tendencies find support in Russia,” Ozpek told Al-Monitor. “All the marginal voices about NATO and conspiracy theories have become mainstream. Hence, now the invasion of Ukraine is not perceived as a smaller state being attacked by a stronger one, but rather a battle between NATO and Russia.”

#### Erdogan starts a diversionary war against Greece to regain popular support

Choulis et al. 21 — Ioannis Choulis Assistant Lecturer Department of Government, Marius Mehrl Postdoctoral Researcher at the Geschwister Scholl Institute of Political Science, University of Munich. Kostas Ifantis is Professor of International Relations, Department of International, European and Area Studies, Panteion University of Athens. (2021) Arms Racing, Military Build-Ups and Dispute Intensity: Evidence from the Greek-Turkish Rivalry, 1985-2020, Defence and Peace Economics, DOI: 10.1080/10242694.2021.1933312 WMK

Despite not being a top security priority, Greek-Turkish relations are still regarded as a serious external threat in Ankara (Gürsoy 2017:6). The Aegean dispute, especially contests over territorial waters and airspace, is present in every Turkish National Security Policy Document (Gürcanli 2014). Moreover, a series of surveys between 2017 and 2019 reveal that 43.2% of Turks consider Greece a threat to Turkey and 59.7% oppose mending the Greek-Turkish relations (Aydin et al. 2020:66–69). The importance of Greece in Turkish strategic considerations is also evident from the increased number of airspace violations throughout the last decade. Violations of the Greek-claimed airspace offer significant benefits to Ankara, both internationally and domestically. In the international arena, the continued Turkish objection to the status of the Aegean islands will be helpful for future negotiations or arbitration since they act as a proof of Turkish claims in the region. Additionally, airspace violations bring the issue of territory on the bilateral agenda to force Greece to acknowledge the dispute over the island status and engage with it. What’s more, airspace incursions serve as Ankara’s direct challenge to Greek sovereignty over the area and are seen as part of long-term planning to ‘Finlandize’ Greece and Cyprus (Williams 2010; Ifantis and Triantaphyllou 2018). Internationally, the airspace violations thus serve as a tool to project Turkish sovereignty claims on the contested territory. Domestically, the incursions may allow the ruling party to gain points with its constituents. Particularly in the last years, the AKP has become challenged electorally and had to accept the ultranationalist MHP as junior coalition partner (Ulgen 2018). Likewise, the Turkish economy has stagnated and inflation is soaring. In such times of domestic challenges, governments have an incentive for diversionary behaviour, and given the historic rivalry, Greece is a particularly likely target for Turkish acts of diversion (Mitchell and Prins 2004; Mitchell and Thyne 2010, Tir 2020). To that end, Mehrl and Choulis (2021) find that the number of Turkish incursions in the Greek-claimed airspace increases when leader approval ratings are low. Incursions into the contested airspace may thus also serve as acts of diversion for Ankara, benefitting its domestic position. Turkish incursions in the Greek claimed airspace also enable the Turkish armed forces to gather data on Greek air defences, such as response times, that may be useful for future military endeavours. Consequently, as long as the risk of an escalatory response is sufficiently low, the costs of Turkish airspace incursions, namely operational costs and potential accidents, are outweighed by the benefits.

#### Greece war goes nuclear – accidental and intentional escalation is likely

Psaropoulos 18 (John Psaropoulos, independent journalist based in Athens, with two decades of experience covering Greece, Cyprus and southeast Europe. Freelance correspondent for Al Jazeera International, NPR, the Daily Beast and others; “Greece vs. Turkey: Are We Headed for an Intra-NATO War?”; Washington Examiner; 3/28/18; https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/weekly-standard/greece-vs-turkey-are-we-headed-for-an-intra-nato-war kp)

The Aegean Sea between Greece and Turkey hosts one of the world’s highest concentrations of high-tech weaponry. Sixty-seven surface ships and two dozen submarines are deployed on a body of water the size of Lake Superior. The two air forces command 448 fighter jets armed with smart bombs and guided missiles. On land, 832 heavy tanks and more than 2,500 lighter artillery vehicles—as much tank firepower as in all the rest of Europe combined—could rapidly be brought to bear along a Greek-Turkish border only 105 miles long.

These arsenals, built up over decades and constantly modernized, were not merely a boon to U.S. and German defence contractors. Western policymakers wanted to believe that loyalty to NATO’s mission of containing the USSR, rather than regional rivalries, motivated this exemplary level of Greek and Turkish defense spending. After the Soviet Union collapsed, good diplomacy and Turkey’s EU aspirations made it possible, most of the time, to overlook the downsides of an arms race between uneasy neighbors. Recently, however, the Aegean has become a dangerously narrow sea.

For decades, Turkish military aircraft have regularly violated Greece’s 10-mile airspace around its islands, on the grounds that Greece’s territorial waters extend only six nautical miles from shore, and that air and sea borders should match. Turkish ships also ignore the territorial waters around a number of small islands whose Greek ownership Turkey questions. These ships and planes are intercepted by their Greek counterparts, and mock dogfights result. Occasionally fatal accidents occur.

Kostas Grivas, who teaches advanced weapons systems at the Hellenic Army Academy, calls it a “a unique theater of confrontation,” where “land, sea and air forces are simultaneously in use in a very confined area, and there is an enormous amount of weapons systems and men-at-arms in deployment.” In the event of war, he believes, it would be very difficult to maintain command-and-control systems because of the intensity and speed of activity, meaning heavy fratricidal losses. In such chaos, the outcome might ultimately be up to local commanders’ ability to take intelligent initiatives. An Aegean war, Grivas says, would resemble “a mini-nuclear war because there will be so much high-tech ordnance discharged it will cause a huge amount of damage.”

The prospect of such hostilities has been suddenly brought closer this year, following events that are individually and as a series without parallel in recent decades.

Last autumn, Greek foreign minister Nikos Kotzias expressed concern that Turkey had become an “irritable power.” What inspired this concern was a record 3,317 airspace and 1,998 territorial water violations recorded in the Aegean last year—respectively double and quadruple the previous year’s numbers. “Our job is to behave responsibly,” Kotzias declared, so he invited Recep Tayyip Erdogan to become the first Turkish president in six decades to visit Greece.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s December 7 visit was a disaster. On its eve, Erdogan gave an interview calling for revisions of the Lausanne Treaty of 1923. This is the treaty that defines the borders of the modern Turkish state, while guaranteeing the rights of Greek and Muslim minorities in the two countries. It has kept Greece and Turkey at peace for a century and forms the bedrock of their détente. No Greek or Turkish head of state or government had ever publicly called for its revision. Greece’s President Prokopis Pavlopoulos reacted by overstepping his role as ceremonial head of state to lecture Erdogan. Lausanne, he asserted, was “non-negotiable.”

"It has no gaps. It needs neither revision nor updating. It stands as it is, it covers absolutely the issues that it needs to cover, and stresses that among other things it leaves no leeway for gray zones or minority issues," Pavlopoulos said.

Erdogan gave as good as he got. Greece had plunged its Muslim minority into poverty, he said, and is racially prejudiced against it. Erdogan also demanded of Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras the extradition of ten Turkish military officers who fled to Greece after the failed July 2016 coup. The Greek Supreme Court had barred their extradition on the grounds that their lives would be endangered in Turkey. The government cannot overrule the decision and there is no higher court of appeal, but Erdogan insisted: “What I told Mr. Tsipras is that these putschists may be returned to Turkey, a country that has abolished the death penalty, a country where torture does not take place.”

Kotzias’s charm offensive has since collapsed. A planned February revival of the Greek-Turkish Supreme Council, a diplomatic forum, never took place, and a May visit to Athens by the Turkish foreign minister is very much in doubt. But there is worse.

On February 12, a Turkish coast guard vessel rammed a Greek one while performing what the Greek coast guard called “dangerous maneuvers inconsistent with international collision avoidance practices.” Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim called Tsipras to explain that the ramming was accidental; but the fact that it happened near Imia, a pair of Greek islets whose ownership Turkey has disputed for 20 years, suggests to the Greeks a territorial power play.

Turkey upped the ante on the last day of February, arresting two Greek officers who apparently strayed into Turkish territory while on a routine patrol on the Thracian border. The standard practice for both sides during the last three decades has been to return wayward patrols at the nearest checkpoint after a routine procedure. Turkish authorities instead jailed the men and charged them with illegal entry. More serious charges may follow. Greek Defense minister Panos Kammenos refers to the two soldiers as “hostages,” and Greek public opinion takes for granted their seizure as connected with the ten Turkish military fugitives.

Since these incidents, polls say 92 percent of Greeks believe Turkey constitutes Greece’s biggest threat. Is Turkey generating grievances as a pretext for war? Who would gain from such a war? How would America react? And why has Erdogan chosen this moment to escalate tension?

Brinkmanship in 1996: preview of a far worse confrontation?

“What I worry about is the risk of an unintentional confrontation,” says U.S. ambassador to Athens Geoffrey Pyatt. Greece and Turkey nearly did stumble into war two decades ago. On Christmas Day 1995, the Figen Akat, a small Turkish cargo ship, ran aground on the western twin islet of Imia. A Greek tug was dispatched to refloat her, but the Turkish captain refused Greek help, saying he was in Turkish territorial waters. He eventually accepted Greek assistance, but not before the Turkish government had voiced a claim to the Imia islets as Turkish.

In the new year, the mayor of the largest nearby Greek island, Kalymnos, hoisted a Greek flag on Imia. The owners of a newly-licensed Turkish television channel CNN Turk decided to boost ratings by filming two journalists replacing the Greek flag with a Turkish one. Prime Minister Tansu Ciller fueled the fire. “We can’t let a foreign flag fly on Turkish soil. The flag will come down,” she said.

“The Turkish claims have no basis at all. There is no space for negotiations in … matters which concern our sovereignty,” said Greek Premier Kostas Simitis. Greece landed special forces on one of the two islets while Turkish frogmen took the other. As many as 20 Greek and Turkish ships and submarines converged on Imia (or Kardik, as the Turks call it).

On January 31, the United States intervened to avert an unintended war. “In 1996 the Americans stepped in and that sobered both sides,” says retired ambassador Christos Rozakis, one of Greece’s leading experts on international law. “We parted under the understanding, “no ships, no flags,” and reverted to the status quo ante. It wasn’t exactly that, but until the latest incident it was almost that. Greek shepherds didn’t herd their goats there any more, but neither did Turks go there.”

Treaties vs. politics

Imia stands as a textbook case of calculated escalation leading to the brink of an unintended war, and conditions now are even more conducive to such a war than they were in 1996, because new causes of instability have been added to older ones.

## Uniqueness

### UQ — Erdogan Support Fine

#### Erdogan popularity is sufficiently high now. His anti-Western rhetoric and actions are boosting public support.

Ghitis 6-16-2022, world affairs columnist and a regular contributor to CNN and The Washington Post (Frida, “Sensing Opportunity, Erdogan Is Back to Playing the Spoiler,” World Politics Review, <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/30615/under-erdogan-turkey-is-back-to-playing-the-spoiler)//BB>

So what exactly is going on with Ankara’s foreign policy?

To understand Erdogan’s seemingly contradictory maneuvers, it’s important to notice the calendar, the polls, the economy and the current state of geopolitics.

Presidential elections are scheduled for exactly one year from this week, on June 18, 2023. With Turkey’s economy limping—partly as a result of the explosive inflation rates produced by Erdogan’s own misguided monetary meddling—the polls show the president’s Justice and Development Party neck-and-neck with the opposition. In this context, the effort to repair Turkey’s relations with neighbors was partly driven by the need to boost foreign investment. Erdogan also wanted to avoid being excluded from an emerging new alliance in the Middle East that includes regional economic powers like Israel and the United Arab Emirates.

And yet, openly irking the West and defying former rivals is still effective in boosting support at home. Crucially, Erdogan now finds himself in possession of valuable new leverage. Turkey’s hand has been strengthened by Russian President Vladimir Putin’s assault on Ukraine, which has unified NATO in a way nothing had in decades. Supporting Ukraine and denying a victory to Putin has become NATO’s most urgent priority—but the alliance operates by consensus. That means that Turkey, which has long played an obstructionist role in NATO, is suddenly in a position to make demands.

#### It’s neck and neck now

Turkish Minute 6/6 — Turkish Minute, "Slim majority of respondents believe Erdoğan would not win re-election: survey," Turkish Moment, 6-6-2022, https://www.turkishminute.com/2022/06/06/majority-of-respondents-believe-erdogan-would-not-win-re-election-survey/, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

A narrow majority of respondents of a public survey conducted by the Ankara-based Metropoll company believe that incumbent President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan would not win re-election if a presidential vote had been held in May.

"Would Erdoğan win re-election if the presidential election was held this Sunday?" was the question asked to respondents in Metropoll's "Turkey's Pulse" survey conducted in May.

A slight majority of respondents, 49 percent, said they believed Erdoğan would not win re-election, while 46 percent said they thought he would. Most undecided voters also felt Erdoğan would not win re-election.

Erdoğan was first elected president for a five-year renewable term in 2014 by a direct vote under the parliamentary system. Turkey switched to presidential system of governance with a referendum in 2017 and held snap presidential and parliamentary polls in 2018, when Erdoğan was elected president again.

Metropoll has been asking people regularly since August 2020 about their views concerning Erdoğan's chances of winning the next presidential election.

Erdoğan and his Justice and Development Party (AKP) have been losing public support in public surveys at a time when a staggeringly high cost of living has become the new normal in Turkey, where recent increases in food and utility prices are pushing up inflation, further crippling the purchasing power of citizens.

#### Ignore polls—lack of opposition unity and election reform boosts Erdogan

Malik and Curran 4/7 — Hasnain Malik is Strategy & Head of Equity Research @ Tellimer Research Patrick Curran Senior Economist "Turkey's electoral reform improves the prospects of ruling AKP," Tellimer 4-7-2022, https://tellimer.com/article/turkeys-electoral-reform-improves-the-prospec, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

Turkey's parliament passed a law reducing the threshold for votes won in the general election for a party to enter parliament from 10% to 7% on 30 March and President Erdogan gave his approval on 6 April.

This change suits the MHP, the parliamentary ally of AKP. This is because the MHP's support in opinion polls has dropped below the old 10% threshold to nearer 8%.

The next election is due before June 2023. When the bill was initially presented in mid-March it was expected that it would take a year, once the bill became law, for it to come into effect. This makes an early election unlikely.

The ongoing economic crisis gives the opposition a chance to defeat President Erdogan and the AKP-MHP parliamentary coalition, but only if they unite first.

The evidence for that unification is patchy. The joint declaration on 28 February by six opposition parties – including the largest, the CHP – to campaign for a shift back to a parliamentary system, was a start. But the third-largest party, the pro-Kurdish HDP, was absent.

The largest opposition party, the CHP, has three politicians with opinion poll support that, in aggregate, matches that of Erdogan. But as yet there is no sign of clear unity behind one of them.

Investors cannot be confident yet that an opposition presidential candidate and parliamentary coalition that espouse a return to orthodox monetary policy and are competitive enough to unseat Erdogan and the AKP are in place. And this electoral law change makes the opposition's challenge tougher.

Erdogan and the central bank seem resolute in their aversion to rate hikes and that means the disinflation process is likely to be slow and painful. Rising political pressure and the deteriorating inflation and current account outlook are unlikely to be sufficient to prompt a policy reversal.

Without a full-blown currency or balance of payments crisis, we think such a shift is unlikely, and any tightening would more likely rely on unconventional methods rather than direct rate hikes.

Against this backdrop, we maintain our Sell recommendation on the TRY, TRY-denominated government debt, and cannot ground a sustainable investment case in Turkish equities. 5x forward PE and 5% forward dividend yield are not that appealing when the most recent inflation reading is over 60%.

Lower election threshold suits AKP-MHP

The MHP won 11% of votes in the 2018 election, but its support in opinion polls has dropped to nearer 8%. Hence the reduction of the legal threshold to 7% works in the AKP-MHP's favour.

#### It’s close—the thinnest margins matter

KirişCi and Esen 21 — Kemal KirişCi and Berk Esen, "Might the Turkish Electorate Be Ready to Say Goodbye to Erdoğan After Two Decades in Power?," Just Security, 11-22-2021, https://www.justsecurity.org/79306/might-the-turkish-electorate-be-ready-to-say-goodbye-to-erdogan-after-two-decades-in-power/, accessed 6-25-2022, WMK

However, there also are obstacles in the way of opposition parties winning the next elections. There still is not a common presidential candidate against Erdoğan. Akşener is the only leader who has openly stated that she would not be a presidential candidate and that she prefers becoming the prime minister in the new parliamentary system. As the leader of the main opposition party, Kılıçdaroğlu is the opposition’s most likely candidate who could be trusted to oversee the dismantlement of Erdoğan’s presidential system and its replacement with a parliamentary one. However, in a country that is heavily polarized and impacted by Erdoğan’s narratives emphasizing Sunni Islam, Kılıçdaroğlu’s Alevi identity (Alevis are considered by many from the Sunni majority as a heterodox group somewhat like the Shia) makes him a questionable candidate for conservative Sunnis. The popular mayor of Istanbul, Ekrem Imamoğlu, appears to be interested in presenting himself as a candidate, while the mayor of Ankara, Mansur Yavaş, is also cited as a potential contender. Both names performed better than Kılıçdaroğlu or Erdoğan in recent polls. While the existence of several viable candidates could be an asset for the opposition, the candidate selection process may open rifts between the CHP and İYİ Party.

Another challenge arises from the fact that there is a large pool of undecided voters, many of whom supported AKP and MHP in the past. Although these voters are hurt by the economic crisis and the government’s limited social assistance during the pandemic, the opposition parties have not yet secured their support. Erdoğan still enjoys considerable popularity among older voters with a pious background who are worried about losing the benefits and privileges they have received under AKP rule. In a polarized country where elections are won or lost with small margins, these voters may determine whether the opposition is able to defeat Erdoğan and win a sufficient number of seats to secure a transition to the “strengthened and improved” parliamentary system.

The toxic and divisive climate that Erdoğan has created against the Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP) by associating them with the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), the Kurdish separatist organization that now also controls large swaths of northeastern Syria, makes it difficult for the opposition to openly engage the pro-Kurdish party. Yet, HDP is critical to winning elections. The party played a decisive role in defeating the AKP candidates in the 2019 local elections in large metropolitan centers including Ankara and Istanbul.

#### Erdogan is a shrewd politician who can set an agenda—don’t count him out

Duran 22 — Burhanettin Duran is General Coordinator of SETA Foundation and a professor at Ibn Haldun University. He is also a member of Turkish Presidency Security and Foreign Policies Council. Burhanettin Duran, "Dangerous myths ahead of the Turkish election process," Daily Sabah, 01-08-2022, https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/columns/dangerous-myths-ahead-of-the-turkish-election-process, accessed 6-25-2022, WMK

The 2019 municipal elections, coupled with Turkey’s economic hardship over the last couple of months, notably boosted the opposition’s confidence. It is perfectly normal for any political party (or alliance) to aspire to win the next election. I maintain, however, that two phenomena have devastated the psychology of opposition voters: Primarily, those folks, who engaged in a harsh brand of opposition and ignored the government’s accomplishments, have turned their supporters into fanatics. One could observe that situation by glancing at pro-opposition news websites: From their perspective, everything is horrible! Let aside the critique of inflation or those columnists whose job is to insult others or be "doomsday preachers." Opposition outlets even portray major projects such as the indigenously developed electric car Togg and the COVID-19 vaccine Turkovac, or the armed drone program’s success and normalization in foreign policy, as negative developments. Needless to say, the opposition’s propaganda of uncertainty, concern and imminent devastation, which incessantly references negative points, undermines the spirit of its own base.

Misplaced confidence

Secondly, the opposition’s confidence in Erdoğan losing the 2023 election translates into exaggeration and propaganda that take a toll on their own voters. Luckily, opposition leaders now realize that their lack of policy proposals and an actual platform cannot be concealed by joining forces on the basis of anti-Erdoğanism. That realization, however, gives rise to another negative and problematic – albeit more sophisticated – claim that the pro-government People’s Alliance has run out of tricks and will, therefore, move to securitize politics or resort to extraordinary measures. Still, they say, the outcome won’t change.

Nowadays, Western media outlets give a platform to those people who go beyond that speculation and tell their readers stories about the “collapse" of Turkish democracy, civil war and a coup d’etat. Of course, one could not reasonably take issue with the opposition motivating itself by saying that “we can win unless we make mistakes.” It is a source of concern, however, that their overblown cockiness fuels the illusion that “the government will resort to election fraud or reject the outcome instead of stepping down in case of a loss.” Indeed, they have already voluntarily dragged their supporters into the most inescapable pitfall of polarization. That effort alone attests to the opposition’s fear that they won’t win the 2023 election.

Let us recall that the single most important outcome of the Justice and Development Party's (AK Party) 19 years in power has been to ensure that the Turkish people, rather than domestic and foreign "guardians," decide Turkey’s future. The campaign is just beginning. Erdoğan is on the stage and he will demonstrate his ability to set the political agenda in 2022.

### UQ — Turkey = Anti American

#### Erdogan is strongly anti-American now in order to appease his base BUT its not set in stone — the AFF would be a sudden reversal in policy which

Ward 19 — National Security Reporter at POLITICO Ward, Alex. “How America’s relationship with Turkey fell apart” April 11th, 2019. <https://www.vox.com/world/2019/4/11/18292070/usa-turkey-trump-erdogan-s400> WMK

And Erdoğan’s rhetoric during local elections last week stoked anti-American sentiment among his base throughout the campaign. There has long been anti-US feeling within the Turkish government and public — partly because of rampant conspiracy theories about America secretly plotting to crush Turkey, and Washington’s much-disliked Middle East policies — but the autocrat ratcheted up the language to a whole new level.

“What’s unique now is that even when US-Turkish relations were turbulent, there was never such a systematic attempt to smear the US from the highest levels of the Turkish government or state-run media,” Erdemir, who is now at the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies think tank, told me. “There has never been this level of conspiracy theories spread by government circles or such a level of threat against US officials and troops.”

#### There are strong anti-Western sentiments in Turkey because of opposition to US domination

SWP 22 — Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP"Deciphering Turkey’s Geopolitical Balancing and Anti-Westernism in Its Relations with Russia," May 20th, 2022. <https://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publication/deciphering-turkeys-geopolitical-balancing-and-anti-westernism-in-its-relations-with-russia> WMK

Anti-Imperialism, Anti-Westernism: Varieties of Discontent with the West

As a major driver of Turkey’s geopolitical balancing policy, anti-Westernism or dis­content with the West has come to mean different things during different times for Turkey. However, nuance is called for: Dis­content with the West and anti-Westernism are not necessarily interchangeable. Dis­content tends to be issue-based, whereas anti-Westernism describes a more comprehensive political and ideological stance. Yet an accumulation of discontents, as is the case in Turkey, feeds into and sustains the broader anti-Westernism at the elite and societal levels. This can make these two terms indistinguishable at times. Addition­ally, elites can exploit discontent on indi­vidual issues to serve wider anti-Western political and ideological outlooks. While there are similarities between the Turkish and Russian anti-Western narratives, their policy responses and geopolitical aspirations differ. And that prevents their respective anti-Westernism morphing into a shared vision of and stance on the global order.

There are basically two sides to Turkey’s discontent with the West: political and geo­political. In the political realm a whole series of political factors have driven wedges between Turkey and the West, and gener­ated mutual discontent, if not animosity: from Europe’s often identity-centric oppo­sition to Turkey’s EU membership to the personalisation of power and the authoritarian turn in Turkish domestic politics; from the West’s tepid response to the attempted coup of 2016 to the evisceration of the rule of law in the post-coup era.

Ankara’s geopolitical discontent with the West has multiple sources. Washington’s support for the PYD-dominated Syrian Kurds and Turkey’s disputes with the EU and European powers over the Eastern Mediter­ranean conflict are two major issues. The West, for its part, takes issue with Turkey’s military operations in Syria, its drilling activ­ities in disputed waters and its military posturing in the Eastern Mediterranean. Many in the West saw Turkey’s acquisition of the Russian S-400 air defence system as a manifestation of a new geopolitical identity premised on balancing, rather than merely a defence purchase. It is noteworthy that Tur­key has recently made moves to purchase military equipment from Western sources. Turkey reached out to the US to purchase 40 new F-16 fighter jets and modernisation kits for its existing fleets, and to France and Italy about a potential cooperation on the joint production of Eurosam SAMP/T defence systems. These initiatives are important and can be seen as Ankara’s indirect recognition of the limits of its bal­ancing policy, which included defence industry cooperation with Russia.

Fundamentally, the current anti-West­ern­ism of both Turkey and Russia is pri­marily US-centric. Both experience status anxiety concerning the US/Western-centric inter­national order. However, as indicated above, what matters – in terms of the im­plications of their anti-Westernism on their approaches towards the global order– is the difference in their policy responses and aspirations.

#### Structural Anti-American Turkish sentiment — ensures backlash

Grigoriadis 10 — Dr. Ioannis N. Grigoriadis is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Political Science, Bilkent University Ioannis N. Grigoriadis Middle East Journal , Winter, 2010, Vol. 64, No. 1 (Winter, 2010), pp. 51-66 Published by: Middle East Institute Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20622982> WMK

Anti-Americanism in Turkey failed — until recently — to produce an enduring effect on Turkish politics. Unlike other Mediterranean countries where a legacy of anti Americanism grew out of historical reasons and had a persistent negative effect on their relations with the United States, such a trend did not appear in Turkey's case.8 With regard to Spain, a long historical rivalry in Latin America and the Pacific, along with US support for the authoritarian Franco regime in the aftermath of World War II, created a legacy of anti-Americanism. In the case of Greece, US involvement in the civil war (1946-9) and firm US support for the 1967-74 military regime created a strong popular predisposition against the United States. Despite the rise of the Turkish left in the 1960s and 1970s, such a legacy of persistent anti-Americanism did not find fertile ground. This was prob ably because the United States also had strong allies within Turkey who wielded clout disproportionate to their numbers, as Turkey's influential military and bureaucratic elites maintained a clear pro-US position. They prioritized Turkey's strategic alliance with the United States and saw it as the strongest security guarantee for the country as well as its best link to the West. This became more pronounced after the September 1980 military coup, which dealt a heavy blow against the Turkish left and political Islam, and meant that opposition to US policies and the improvement of US-Turkey relations would be dispersed and politically ineffective. As Turkey's democratic consolidation remained un finished, elites could afford to dismiss public opinion. The US-Turkey strategic alliance developed to the point of Turkey forming a regional alliance with Israel in the 1990s, de spite the opposition of a large segment of the Turkish public, spearheaded by supporters of the Welfare Party (Refah Partisi), which won a plurality of votes in 1995. This reaction was not considered more important than the strategic benefits which this alliance would garner Turkey — mainly the consolidation of the US-Turkey alliance, access to military technology, intelligence, and training, improved economic relations, and a strengthening of its strategic position vis-a-vis Greece, Syria, Iraq, and Armenia. US policies in the Middle East were not always popular within Turkish public opinion. Many Turks felt sympathy for the Palestinians and opposed what they saw as an overtly pro-Israeli US stance in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Nonetheless, this did not seriously affect the formation of Turkish regional strategy and policymaking. Stra egic alliance and cooperation between the United States and Turkey meant that Turkey would support US strategic priorities in the Middle East, even when this came to the point of forging a strategic alliance with Israel and thus alienating the Arab states and Iran. This equilibrium was disturbed by what followed the terror attacks of September 11, 2001. The relapse of violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the rise of the Jus tice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi, AKP) to power in 2002, and the US invasion of Iraq in 20039 brought this alliance under considerable pressure. As the interests of US foreign policy shifted towards the Middle East, it became increasingly clear that the strategic and tactical aims of both states could diverge in some of the region's conflicts. The situation became further complicated with the occupation of Iraq by the United States and its allies. The expansion of the Kurdish-controlled zone in northern Iraq and the subsequent creation of a Kurdish federal entity there facilitated the re-emergence of the PKK as a significant security threat for Turkey. A milestone in the deterioration of US-Turkey relations was the refusal of the Turkish Parliament on March 1, 2003 to allow US troops the use of Turkish territory in preparation for their invasion of Iraq.10 As the United States was preparing an invasion of Iraq in early 2003, it became clear that the chances of a swift victory over Saddam Husayn's armed forces would drastically increase if a second front was opened on the Turkish-Iraqi border. This led to a formal US request for the deployment of US military forces within Turkish territory. Many in Turkey felt that the country would have to pay the price of US adventurism in the Middle East for a second time ? the first being in 1991. While Turkish public opinion was firmly against the US invasion of Iraq,11 the AKP government, led by Abdullah Giil, decided to support the US request, trying to trade agreement for a generous US military and monetary aid package. As time was pressing, a major logistics operation was already on its way when the Turkish Parliament voted on March 1,2003 on a bill permitting the use of Turkish territory by US troops. Despite the wide parliamentary majority which the AKP enjoyed in the Parliament, the bill failed to collect the necessary majority of votes and was thus rejected. About 90 AKP delegates took advantage of the secret character of the vote to express their opposition to the bill and US policies in the region in general. They apparently included in their ranks delegates as high-ranking as the Speaker of Parliament Biilent Anng and Deputy Prime Minister Ertugrul Yalgmbayir.12 The blow against US war planning and prestige was heavy. The US troops ready to de ploy on Turkish territory had to abandon their operations after weeks of preparations, and the planning of the US invasion of Iraq was upset. The war followed suit without a second front in the north. It was only due to the unexpectedly weak resistance of Iraqi troops and the relatively easy victory of US forces on the battlegrounds of southern Iraq that the issue received less attention. This refusal of the Turkish Parliament has been considered a case where anti-Americanism produced tangible effects which harmed US interests. While Keohane and Katzenstein argue that anti-Americanism has failed to pro duce strong global effects on US diplomacy, they add that the March 1, 2003 vote showed how anti-Americanism can be consequential in specific conjunctures.13 Such a change of Turkish policy could not go unattended in the United States. In fact, it alienated Turkey from many of its longstanding allies within US policymaking circles. Prominent Neoconservative figures and think tanks which had traditionally supported Turkish positions and constituted a key part of the US Turkish lobby felt betrayed and exposed by Turkey's decision.14 What made the situation even harder to accept was that opposition to the US campaign did not emanate solely from the AKP government, but also from the Turkish military and bureaucratic elites, old and trusted partners of the United States. While the AKP government had formally endorsed the bill, the military failed to take an open position in favor of US operations. At the critical meet ing of the National Security Council (Milli G?venlik Kurulu, MGK), on February 28, 2003, just a few days before the March 1, 2003 voting, no clear support for the US request was expressed. In the words of the then-US Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz: [M]any of the institutions in Turkey that we think of as the traditional strong sup ort ... were not as forceful in leading in that direction. ... particularly the military. I think for whatever reason they did not play the strong leadership role on that issue that we would have expected.15 Turkey's refusal to join the US "coalition of the willing" had a major consequence. The absence of Turkish troops meant that the leverage Turkey had to influence devel opments in post-war Iraq was limited. In contrast, Iraqi Kurds gained increasing sig nificance due to their role as the most stable and trustworthy ally of the United States in Iraq. In addition, the proclamation of the new Iraqi Constitution turned the country into a federal state with a predominantly Kurdish Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in the north. The growing relative significance of the Iraqi Kurds as key regional allies of the United States also meant that US-Turkey interests found a new point of contention. While Turkey initially had opposed any plans for Kurdish autonomy in Iraq, it later moderated its stance to conform with post-war reality. On the one hand, it accepted the prospect of a federal system, while stressing its full opposition to any partition plan. On the other hand, it included support for Turcomans in its Iraq agenda.16 By assuming the role of the guard ian of Iraq's Turcoman minority, Ankara hoped to gain additional leverage in domestic Iraqi politics. This became evident when Turkey openly took sides in the domestic Iraqi dispute over the future status of the city of Kirkuk. However, playing the Turcoman card yielded little to Turkish foreign policy, as many of the Turcomans ? particularly those who were Shi'ites ? remained indifferent to Turkish sponsorship. Ankara's involvement in Kirkuk became an additional thorn in US-Turkey talks over Iraq.17 The Kirkuk province, in which the second biggest oilfield in the world is located, was claimed by the Iraqi Kurds who pointed at Saddam's intensive and violent efforts to alter the demographic balance of the city in favor of Sunni Arabs. In the aftermath of the 2003 war, Kurds started repopulating it, allegedly in an effort to restore the previous demographic balance.18 Consequently they claimed it for the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government. Controlling oil-rich Kirkuk was thought to be a crucial lifeline for the Kurdish federal entity, and potentially could financially support an independent Kurdish state. Turkey vehemently objected to these plans, fearing that such a development would destabilize Turkey's Kurdish-inhabited southeastern and eastern provinces. Instead, it championed the rights of Kirkuk's sizable Turcoman minority. While the future status of Kirkuk was set to be decided by a referendum, Turkey objected to any measure which could lead to the incorporation of Kirkuk into the KRG. An event whose details still remain unclear triggered a major crisis in US-Turkey relations and further fueled anti-Americanism. On July 4, 2003, US soldiers arrested 11 Turkish special forces officers in the northern Iraqi city of Sulaymaniya, who were suspected of planning the assassination of a local Kurdish politician.19 The arrested Turkish officers were hooded and led away from their headquarters for questioning. When this news became public, the media and popular reaction was unprecedented. Such treatment was deemed disgraceful and a national insult coming from a traditional ally.20 The fact that the victim of the insult was the Turkish army made things even worse for US-Turkey relations. The military has traditionally enjoyed high popularity and esteem in Turkish public opinion, and it also was among the most pro-US actors in Turkish domestic politics. The Sulaymaniya incident alienated even some of the most loyal supporters of the US-Turkish strategic alliance. It was added to claims that the United States was considering partition plans of Iraq and the establishment of a fully independent Kurdish state in the north of the country, or even a large-scale redrawing of the map of the Middle East which would entail territorial losses for Turkey. These added fuel to existing nationalist conspiracy theories and further aroused anti-US feel ings in Turkey, which for the first time appeared significantly among secularist elites. This shift was clearly documented in opinion surveys.21 According to the 2006 Pew Global Attitudes Survey, the number of Turks who had a favorable view of the United States fell from 32% in 2004 to 23% in 2005 and to a mere 17% in 2006. The corresponding numbers were 27% in Pakistan, 36% in Indonesia and Egypt, and 38% in Jordan.22 Support for the US-led War on Terror fell from 37% in 2004 to 17% in 2005, and 14% in 2006.23 At 3%, Turkey recorded the lowest level of confidence in President George W. Bush among the 15 countries of the survey.24 In 2007, the results of the same survey were even more telling. The number of Turks who had a favorable view of the United States fell to a tiny 9%, the lowest among all states and considerably less than even the Palestinians, of whom 13% expressed a favorable view of the United States.25 Eighty-one percent of Turks expressed their dis like of US ideas about democracy, while 83% expressed their opposition to US "ways of doing business" in international affairs.26 Twenty-two percent expressed positive views of US movies, music, and television, 37% for US science and technology, but only 4% for the spread of US ideas.27 The situation slightly improved in the following years. The election of Barack Obama to the US presidency was a primary reason for that. As in most countries, Turkish public opinion favored Obama, who was seen as a harbinger of change in US foreign policy, particularly in the Middle East. His decision to visit Ankara in early April 2009 made Turkey the first Muslim country that he visited. This was well received in Turkey. In his address to the Turkish Grand National Assembly, Obama took the opportunity to send a message to the Muslim world. He argued that The United States is not and will never be at war with Islam. In fact, our partnership with the Muslim world is critical not just in rolling back the violent ideologies that people of all faiths reject but also to strengthen opportunity for its people. ... America's relationship with the Muslim community, the Muslim world, cannot be based just on the opposition to terrorism. We seek broader engagement based on mutual interest and mutual respect.28 Nonetheless, the visit proved to be of little avail regarding the restoration of the US image in Turkey. According to the 2009 Pew Global Attitudes Survey, the number of Turks with a favorable view of the United States rose to 14% in 2009 — up from 12% in 2008.29 These were still the worst ratings for the United States among all sur veyed countries. According to the same survey, 40% of Turks saw the United States as an enemy while only 18% saw it as a friend.30 Mistrust of US foreign policy remained strong. Only 19% of Turks expressed the view that Obama would be fair in the Middle East, while 52% argued the opposite.31 Although 33% of Turks expressed confidence in President Obama ? compared to only 2% for President Bush in 2008 ? 52% showed little or no confidence in Obama.32 These findings seem to confirm that anti-American ism in Turkey is not ephemeral, but tends to establish its position33 and is becoming an important component of contemporary Turkish nationalism. ANTI-AMERICANISM IN MEDIA AND POPULAR CULTURE The rise of anti-Americanism in Turkish society also can be documented in the media and popular culture. Beyond the legitimate reaction to US wrongdoings in Iraq, wide publicity was given to unfounded claims or conspiracy theories regarding the US role in the Middle East and the actions of US troops in the region. The Abu Ghraib prison scandal of 2003 was presented as evidence of the evil character of the US occupation and of the United States itself. Accusations that US soldiers were harvesting organs from Iraqi prisoners and insurgents and selling them abroad found a following in Turkey.34 Scathing attacks against the United States during the bloody operations for the recapture of the city of Fallujah in November 2004 were followed by the publication of official statements in which US operations were called genocide and compared to the Holocaust.35 The alleged role of Israel in post-war Iraq also stirred the ire of the Turkish press. Widespread claims appeared that Israel was actively involved in northern Iraq36 to support Iraqi Kurds and the creation of a Kurdish state as an Israeli client between Turkey, Iran, and the Arab world. This often resulted in the coupling of anti-American and anti-Semitic feelings in parts of Turkish society. These attacks were not only limited to the Islamist media. Anti Americanism was crossing political and ideological lines.37 In the field of popular culture, books and films in which Turkey came into direct — and successful — military confrontation with the United States met with unprece dented commercial success.38 The fictional book Metal Storm (Metal Firtina), narrated a war between Turkey and the United States in the near future.39 According to the plot, the United States invades Turkey from Iraq. Operation "Metal Storm" results in the occupation of Turkey's large cities. In a second phase, Operation "Sevres,"40 Turkey's archenemies — Greece, Armenia, and the Kurds — plan the partition of the country. The Turks then forge a global anti-US alliance with China, Russia, and Germany, while a Turkish agent detonates a nuclear device in Washington, DC. This brings the occupation to an end, and Turkey triumphs.41 The book, which ran to ten editions and sold about 500,000 copies in the first 18 months of its publication in late 2004, was a prominent example of a best-selling book characterized by rampant anti-Americanism. The authors skillfully capitalized on emerging anti-American feelings and existing phobias in Turkish society. They created a nationalist epic, in which Turkey defeats new — the United States — and the Kurds — and old enemies — Armenia and Greece – to trium phantly reclaim its independence. The commercial success of the book led to the pub lication of a sequel, which also was well-received by the public.42 The commercial success of a movie based on a popular TV series was an addi tional manifestation of rising anti-Americanism in Turkey. The Valley of Wolves: Iraq (Kurtlar Vadisi: Irak) was, at the time of its release, the most expensive production in the history of Turkish cinema and eventually became its biggest commercial success as well. It featured the adventures of Polat Alemdar, a Turkish intelligence agent who operates in Iraq, defending justice, restoring Turkish honor, and avenging American atrocities in Iraq. The movie combines nationalist, Orientalist, and Occidentalist stereo types.43 Alongside anti-American and anti-Semitic tones, the movie depicts the Iraqis as backward, cowardly, overtly religious, and clearly inferior to Turks. The only groups that enjoy a positive portrayal are the Turcomans, Turkey's alleged ethnic brethren in Iraq, and those Kurds who collaborated with Turks. Positive critiques of the film were found not only in the nationalist media but also came from high-ranking ministers and MPs.44 The spectacular commercial success and popular appeal of a book and a movie replete with nationalistic and anti-American messages comprised a clear signal of the growing popular anti-American nationalism in Turkey.

### UQ — US-Turkey Coop Low

#### Biden is keeping his distance from Turkey—relations are low

Evans and Coskun 6/11 — Dominic Evans and Orhan Coskun, "Erdogan's summit with Biden clouded by bitter disputes," Reuters, 6-11-2021, https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/erdogans-summit-with-biden-clouded-by-bitter-disputes-2021-06-11/, accessed 6-25-2022, WMK

No stranger to rocky relations with Washington, President Tayyip Erdogan holds his first meeting with President Joe Biden next week overshadowed by bitter disputes and by the new U.2. "Will it be an easy meeting? Not very much, but nobody is without hope either."

The United States has also sanctioned Turkish defence industry officials over the S-400 deal. Rejecting U.S. concerns, Turkish officials say they will keep the equipment and have called for a joint examination of the issue.

"It is not possible to take a step back on these matters that are Turkey's national security issues," one senior Turkish official told Reuters, speaking on condition of anonymity.

That leaves little prospect of a breakthrough, even though the two sides have kept talking.

"Turkey wants to negotiate how it could use the S-400s, whereas the Americans want to negotiate how Turkey can get rid of the S400s. Which means there is no common base for negotiations," said Ozgur Unluhisarcikli, director of the German Marshall Fund research group in Ankara.

#### They’re going through a messy divorce now but cooperation is still possible

Tekines 6/11 — M. Hasim Tekines worked in the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He now regularly writes about Turkey and Middle Eastern politics. Hasim Tekines, "Can the United States and Turkey Avoid a Messy Split?," National Interest, 6-11-2022, https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/can-united-states-and-turkey-avoid-messy-split-202895, accessed 6-25-2022, WMK

A transactional relationship is increasingly seen as the only solution for the future of U.S.-Turkey relations. As the relationship has lost its values-based spirit and diplomatic crises have exhausted both sides, a business-like understanding has emerged as a last attempt to keep the relationship alive. Yet, as even transactional relations have significant shortcomings, Washington and Ankara should be prepared for a messy divorce.

The last decade has seen an unprecedented decline in U.S.-Turkey relations, going from a model of strategic partnership to the level of “so-called allies.” America’s partnership with the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) in northern Syria, Turkey’s relations with radical groups and its purchase of Russian S-400 air defense systems, and democratic backsliding in Turkey are only some of the issues that have harmed the relationship.

On top of that, deep anti-American and anti-Western sentiments that cut across different political cleavages in Turkish politics, revisionism in Turkish foreign policy, and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s opportunist understanding of diplomacy have not only undermined both sides’ trust but also the perception of shared values.

Given this grim picture, a transactional relationship comes forward as the only viable option to manage the issues that still necessitate cooperation on both sides. As Washington aims to allocate its resources to great power competition and broaden its alliances, reaching an understanding with Turkey, albeit on a limited basis, has a number of advantages. Moreover, Erdogan’s short-sighted opportunism seems quite suitable for such an interest-based understanding. Yet, the characteristics of U.S.-Turkey relations and their bilateral expectations complicate a transactional turn in relations. Instead of a business-like exchange of interests, policymakers in Washington must be ready to put up a stiff fight for every bit of America’s interests vis-a-vis Ankara.

Transactional relations have mostly been associated with populist authoritarians like former President Donald Trump and Erdogan. Instead of pursuing long-term grand strategies with defined goals and principles, these leaders prefer give-and-take relationships primarily based on short-term economic interests, rendering values, shared goals, or bilateral commitments no longer relevant. In this respect, Turkey’s relationship with Europe is a typical example of such a transactional relationship. Although values and principles played a key role when European Union (EU) membership was a serious goal for Ankara, Turkey-EU ties have evolved into an interest-based relationship in which the sides respect each other’s red lines. Ankara’s systematic human rights violations and Erdogan’s authoritarianism still draw criticism from the European leaders, but Turkey-EU trade, European investments in Turkey, the Turkish diaspora in Europe, geographic proximity, and cooperation on stopping the flow of refugees keep the relations working. In this respect, the economic and social characteristics of the relationship have helped the sides reach an understanding, while the most significant challenge has been a geopolitical conflict in the eastern Mediterranean.

However, U.S.-Turkey relations have different dynamics. First, they rely more on geopolitical calculations and less on economic interests, which makes a trade-off much more difficult, if not impossible. The disagreements over Syria policy, the U.S.-YPG partnership, Turkey’s military operations against the Kurds, and Erdogan’s flirtation with Putin are mostly about core national interests, security perceptions, and grand political strategies. If Turkey maintains its aggressive interventionism and the United States stays in the region, these conflicts will further increase and make bargaining more complicated. Besides, as the problems between Washington and Ankara have increased both quantitatively and qualitatively, a transactional relationship has become more complicated. Although economic sanctions might bring great harm to the weak Turkish economy, they are unlikely to ensure a change in Turkey’s strategic orientation.

The geopolitical and strategic character of U.S.-Turkey relations also complicates the compartmentalization of the relationship. The issues that are more convenient for making trade-offs—Halkbank’s involvement in Iranian sanctions evasion, S-400 and F-16 fighter jet deals, and the incarceration of U.S. citizens in Turkey—are mostly extensions of broader strategic conflicts. The sides consider all these issues to be in the same basket, which makes them all interconnected and thus more difficult to solve. As recently seen, Ankara has brought up the issue of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party and Gulenists as Sweden and Finland pursue NATO membership.

Another difficulty for a transactional relationship is both sides’ expectations of each other. Despite the difficulties in relations, neither Washington nor Ankara seem ready for a split. The Biden administration still expects Turkey to turn away from Russia and return to NATO. “We have an interest in trying to keep Turkey anchored to the West,” Secretary of State Antony Blinken said last year. Indeed, the war in Ukraine has shown that a Turkish “charm offensive” can still be very influential in improving Ankara’s image and turning the tide of its relations with the United States.

In return, Ankara expects its strategic autonomy, regional influence, and global role to be recognized and accepted by the United States. Yet, Ankara still cannot digest America “working around” Turkey’s geopolitical importance by substituting Incirlik Airbase with Greece or partnering with the Kurds in northern Syria. So long as these strategic expectations dominate the nature of U.S.-Turkey relations, it will continue to be difficult to establish a transactional understanding.

Moreover, Erdogan’s hot-tempered and undiplomatic character is a constant threat that can blow up a business-like exchange of interests. Statecraft is useful for establishing an understanding, particularly when values and strategic interests do not align. Yet, acts like beating U.S. citizens during an official visit to Washington or insulting counterparts as “Nazi remnants and fascists” might increase the challenge of reaching a diplomatic tradeoff.

On the other hand, transactional relations are not a completely new phenomenon within the context of U.S.-Turkey relations. The relationship has always had a strong transactional character, particularly after the Cold War. Conflicting values and ideals have never been a serious obstacle between Washington and Ankara. As Cihan Tugal eloquently argued, the United States and other NATO countries have long been accustomed to turning a blind eye to Turkey’s authoritarianism and human rights violations, particularly against the Kurds. Besides, communication channels have always been open in order to keep relations and negotiations functioning. However, despite all that, the relationship has remained dysfunctional for the last few years.

U.S.-Turkey relations are more like an endless, messy divorce in which even trivial matters can cause fights. But at the same time, it is not possible for Washington and Ankara to go completely separate ways either. As the Ukraine crisis has shown once again, Turkey is not a country to be discarded. Turkey will continue to be an attractive option for balancing Russian and Iranian influence in the region. Moreover, thanks to Ankara’s foreign policy activism, Erdogan will do much to draw international attention. Instead, U.S. policymakers must be ready to fight for their interests vis-à-vis Ankara.

#### Erdogan is not cooperating now—Finland and Sweden proves—throw-out old evidence this is a new start

bne IntelIiNews 6/16 — "‘Election mode’ Erdogan ain’t for budging over Finland and Sweden’s Nato applications," bne IntelIiNews, 6-16-2022, https://www.intellinews.com/election-mode-erdogan-ain-t-for-budging-over-finland-and-sweden-s-nato-applications-247669/, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

The big suspicion that Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is playing hardball in refusing to accept the Nato applications of Finland and Sweden because he needs to reassert his nationalist credentials ahead of his country’s national elections is not something Western diplomats are likely to point to as things stand, with difficult negotiations aimed at getting Ankara on board at a delicate stage. However, that explanation for Erdogan’s intransigence looked even more like the right explanation by the end of June 15, a day in which Turkey rejected invitations by Nato to participate in trilateral talks with Finland and Sweden.

If set up, the talks would be aimed at finding a solution to Turkey’s threat to veto the Nordic countries’ applications to join the Western military alliance, which are supported by all other Nato countries. But Erdogan’s domestic woes are immense. The president of nearly three decades is accused by many Turks mired in their country’s excruciating economic crisis of having mismanaged the economy. His opinion poll ratings are dire and his bid for re-election must take place by June next year at the latest. Erdogan is likely to do far more muscle-flexing on the Nato expansion issue before giving ground, while – as the authoritarian cranks up the hard power politics he perceives as attractive to his core voters – a Turkish invasion of northern Syria in pursuit of Kurdish militants remains on the cards and Ankara’s war of words with Greece over certain Aegean islands could grow ever more alarming.

#### US-Turkey cooperation is low but malleable

Bechev 21 — Dimitar Bechev is Visiting Scholar at Carnegie Europe as well as lecturer at the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies, University of Oxford. Dimitar Bechev, "US and Turkey: It is not over yet," Aljazeera, 10-31-2021, https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2021/11/13/us-and-turkey-it-is-not-over-yet, accessed 6-21-2022 WMK

On October 31, US President Joe Biden and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan met on the margins of the G20 gathering in Rome, ending weeks of speculation about whether such a summit would take place. Earlier that month, a short-lived diplomatic crisis had demonstrated just how strained ties between the two countries are.

The US ambassador to Ankara David Satterfield and nine other Western envoys had been threatened with expulsion after they called for the release of jailed Turkish philanthropist Osman Kavala – an act the Turkish government perceived as meddling in its internal affairs.

Biden and Erdogan’s meeting – their second this year – indicated that lines of communication are still open. But it cannot be denied that Turkish-American relations are at an all-time low.

From the Turkish side, the perception that the US is an unreliable ally and is in fact seeking to undermine Ankara has been growing and feeding anti-Americanism over the past five to six years. Washington’s decision in 2015 to arm Kurdish forces in Syria affiliated with the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), which Ankara – and its Western allies – consider a “terrorist” organisation, and allegations of US involvement in the attempted coup against Erdogan’s government in 2016 have all fuelled this sentiment.

From the US perspective, Turkey’s decision to foster closer ties with Russia has caused concern. The Turkish purchase of Russian-made S-400 defence systems in 2017 sent shockwaves through Washington, which has been wary of Russia’s resurgence.

The delivery of the advanced weapons to Ankara in 2019 triggered sanctions against Turkish officials under the Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) a year later. More importantly, it resulted in Turkey’s expulsion from the international consortium behind the development of a new generation of fighter jets, the F-35. Erdogan’s recent statements that the Turkish government is looking to buy another batch of S-400 surface-to-air missile systems further incensed Washington.

So with all this tension between them, are Turkey and the US on the cusp of a breakup? Probably not. Neither Biden nor Erdogan is pushing for a complete decoupling. Indeed, the Turkish government is hoping to clinch a deal with the Biden administration for the purchase of 40 F-16 fighter jets and 80 modernisation kits to upgrade older military aircraft. Turkey is keen to bring up-to-date its air force which is largely composed of F-16s. It is also keen to recoup the $1.4bn advance payment it made for the F-35 project.

#### Cooperation is low now—Biden won’t even visit

Al-monitor 5/27 — "Biden didn’t go to Turkey, and things aren’t okay with Erdogan ," Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East, 5-27-2022, https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/05/biden-didnt-go-turkey-and-things-arent-okay-erdogan, accessed 6-25-2022, WMK

Asked on May 18 how he would convince Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to agree to Finland and Sweden joining NATO, US President Joe Biden said, "I’m not going to Turkey, but I think we’re going to be OK."

Nine days later, all is not yet OK. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on May 27 that “an approach of ‘we’ll convince Turkey in time anyway, we are friends and allies’ would not be correct," and that Sweden and Finland "need to take concrete steps.”

The Biden administration’s position that "this is not a US issue," meaning it can be worked out among Sweden, Finland and Turkey, may require a rethink. Direct negotiations this week in Ankara ended without resolution. Erdogan is dug in that the two Nordic countries must take "concrete steps" to crack down on the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which Turkey, as well as the United States, consider a terrorist organization.

#### Biden is giving Erdogan the cold shoulder

Soylu 21 — MEE’s Turkey correspondent based in Ankara. Previously he was a correspondent for Turkish media outlets Daily Sabah and ATV from both Washington DC and London. He has also contributed work to various news organisations, including CNN and Foreign Policy. Ragip Soylu, "Biden cold shoulders Erdogan as request for call left unanswered," Middle East Eye, 1-14-2021, https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/us-turkey-biden-erdogan-call-unanswered, accessed 6-25-2022, WMK

With just seven days until Joe Biden assumes office, the US president-elect is yet to respond to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's offer of a phone call, an unusual snub for a powerful Nato ally.

Three people familiar with the issue told Middle East Eye that Erdogan's office requested a call with Biden last month, but weeks later no conversation has been arranged.

Biden’s decision not to pick up the phone is hardly surprising considering his remarks last year to the New York Times, in which he said that Washington should take a different approach towards Erdogan and support the Turkish opposition.

Erdogan also wasn’t particularly quick to congratulate Biden on his 3 November election victory, as Ankara was mindful of its warm relations with the Trump administration. The Turkish president was one the last world leaders to do so, in a message sent in November.

Both Biden’s transition team and the Turkish presidency have avoided giving MEE direct answers to queries on the issue.

A spokesperson for Biden said that his team would continue to read out any congratulatory calls the president-elect takes part in. “Beyond that we’ll decline to comment,” the spokesperson said.

Likewise, a spokesperson for the Turkish presidency said his office would release a readout if Erdogan had a phone call with Biden.

Beyond the phone call issue, Turkish officials in Ankara have publicly said that they are willing to establish a constructive relationship with the new administration.

Ibrahim Kalin, the chief adviser and the spokesperson for Erdogan, told Turkish TV on Sunday that Ankara’s contacts with the transition team so far were “very positive”.

“They say they want to develop good relations with Turkey and turn a new page,” Kalin added.

However, reluctance to talk to Erdogan, while calling up all the leaders of major allies, from South Korea to Australia to New Zealand, suggests Biden won't be quick to turn a page with the Turkish government.

“Everyone understands the importance of Turkey for this part of the world, and the Biden administration, too, will seek to have a problem-free relationship with Ankara,” Asli Aydintasbas, a senior policy fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), told MEE. “But there are outstanding issues and a toxic narrative in bilateral ties.”

Aydintasbas said the new administration’s first instinct will be to have a little distance in the relationship: “Neither uphold Turkey as a model for the region nor target Turkey as a geopolitical troublemaker. Just neutrality and distance.”

Biden and Erdogan’s personal history goes back to 2011, when the then-vice president paid a visit to Erdogan in his personal residence after he had undergone surgery.

On many occasions during the Obama presidency, Biden played the role of interlocutor, channelling Erdogan’s frustrations to the administration over the years, and their friendship got closer.

In 2014, Biden blamed Turkey and the UAE for strengthening the Islamic State group through their policies, particularly highlighting Ankara’s failure to seal the border to prevent the flow of foreign fighters in Syria. An angry Erdogan said in response that Biden should apologise or he would become “history to him”. And the vice president followed through.

Then in 2016, after the coup attempt in Ankara, Biden visited Erdogan and publicly apologised for not making a trip sooner and showing support for the Turkish government.

But Biden's warm and conciliatory sentiments began to change out of office, particularly when Turkey staged an offensive in October 2019 against US-backed Kurds in Syria.

“Turkey is the real problem here,” Biden said at the time, during a televised Democratic Party debate. “And I would be having a real lockdown conversation with Erdogan and letting him know that he's going to pay a heavy price for what he has done now. Pay that price.”

### UQ — AT: Low Polls

#### Low polls is our argument — Erdogan needs to appeal to anti-Western nationalism to overcome them

Abdelbary 6/3 — Mohammed Abdelbary, Journalist at CNN. "Why Turkey changed its name: populism, polls and a bird," CNN, 6-3-2022, https://www.cnn.com/2022/06/03/middleeast/turkey-name-change-mime-intl/index.html, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

There may be political motivations behind the move as Turks return to the polls next June amid a biting economic crisis.

This is "another strategy deployed by the Turkish government to reach out to the nationalist voters in a crucial year for Turkish politics," said Francesco Siccardi, senior program manager at the Carnegie Europe think tank.

The timing of the name change is "crucial" to next year's elections, he said. "The decision on the name change was announced last December, when President Erdogan was trailing in all opinion polls and the country was navigating one of the worst economic crises of the last 20 years."

Erdogan's position in the polls has dropped significantly over the years. Polls from late last year show support for the ruling AK party at around 31-33% according to Reuters, down from 42.6% during the 2018 parliamentary elections.

Ulgen however said the name change was more of a rebranding strategy to boost the country's international standing rather than a pre-election stunt.

Turkey's foreign trade deficit climbed 98.5% year-on-year to $6.11 billion in April, Reuters reported, citing the Turkish Statistical Institute. Annual inflation jumped to 73.5% last month, a 22-year high.

Analysts say that at times of crisis, the president tends to resort to populist moves to deflect attention from problems at home. The economic turmoil, having already brought people into the streets, has been a headache for the government.

"The new name will both distract the domestic audience from more concrete, pressing problems and offer President Erdogan another argument for his case for a stronger, more traditional Turkey," said Siccardi.

In another populist move in 2020, Erdogan issued a decree to convert Istanbul's historic Byzantine Hagia Sofia Museum into a mosque.

"In the absence of concrete policies to handle the country's economic and political problems, Erdogan seeks salvation in populist identity politics," Political analyst Seren Korkmaz wrote of the move at the time. "He boosts Turkish nationalism and Islamism and targets opposition figures."

### UQ — AT: Election Reform

#### It’s uniqueness for us—it stabilizes his lower polling

Fraser 22 — Correspondent for AP. Suzan Fraser, "Turkish parliament approves contentious election law changes," AP NEWS, 3-31-2022, https://apnews.com/article/europe-middle-east-elections-turkey-recep-tayyip-erdogan-9029c293f9cec436e72a69a5c15179b3, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

Turkey’s parliament on Thursday approved electoral law amendments that critics maintain could pave the way to election fraud and aim to curtail an opposition alliance’s chances of wresting control of the house in the next elections.

Parliament endorsed the changes by a show of hands after a three-day debate. The reforms were approved by legislators from President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s ruling party and his nationalist allies, which have a majority in parliament.

Among other things, the reforms lower the parliamentary entry threshold from 10% to 7%, amend the way legislative seats are distributed among members of an alliance, and entrust the overseeing of challenges to election results to judges selected by lot. The changes would come into effect next year.

Opposition parties have slammed the changes as a desperate attempt by Erdogan’s ruling Justice and Development Party, which has been sliding in opinion polls, to stay in power.

### UQ — AT: Base Low

#### His base support is strong despite bad polls

Tremblay 22 — Pinar Tremblay Professor in the Economics department at California State Polytechnic University - Pomona (Brendan Tremblays mom lol) "How Erdogan could emerge stronger from war in Ukraine," Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East, 3-15-2022, https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/03/how-erdogan-could-emerge-stronger-war-ukraine, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

Indeed, for the first time in years, Turkey’s prominent pollsters show a steady decline in AKP support. In the June 2018 elections, the AKP’s vote share was 42.56%; now it ranges in polls between 25-35%. But while the AKP is on a losing streak, it has a solidified base of die-hard supporters.

### UQ — AT: “Any Rival Wins”

#### The rival matters—its dead even

BIA 4/28 — Poll: The margin between Erdoğan and his rivals narrows," 04-28-2022, https://bianet.org/english/society/261168-poll-the-margin-between-erdogan-and-his-rivals-narrows, accessed 6-25-2022, WMK

The Metropoll Research company has measured the margin of votes between President and ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) Chair Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his potential rival in Presidential elections.

In the March poll of the company, the respondents were asked, "Would you vote for Erdoğan or his rivals in the Presidential elections?"

While 33.4 percent opted for President Erdoğan, 33.7 percent said that they would vote for Erdoğan's rival. 28.1 percent of the respondents answered that "it would depend on who the rival would be."

### UQ — AT: Erdogan Alienates Kurds

#### He’s making peace with Kurdish people in Turkey to focus on nationalism

Duran 6/11 — Burhanettin Duran is General Coordinator of SETA Foundation and a professor at Ibn Haldun University. He is also a member of Turkish Presidency Security and Foreign Policies Council. Burhanettin Duran, Burhanettin Duran, "Identity politics or national identity debate?," Daily Sabah, 6-11-2022, https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/columns/identity-politics-or-national-identity-debate, accessed 6-25-2022, WMK

Indeed, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan delivered a strong message at a public ceremony in Van regarding the Kurdish community’s rights and his stance during the resolution process: “For me, there is absolutely no difference between my Kurdish brothers and sisters and my Turkish brothers and sisters. For we love the created due to the creator. We cannot engage in discrimination. We haven’t discriminated in the past. We are not discriminating today. Nor will we discriminate in the future. Whereas some people hid behind terrorist groups and exploited democracy, we fought to grant you the rights and liberties that you deserved without question. Wherever you see those, who exploit your identity when they open their mouth, grab them by the collar and ask them: Who asked you to re-embrace the guns and end the resolution process?”

On the second level of the identity debate – the national identity – we will witness intense discussions.

The government and the opposition will engage in a fierce rhetorical competition over how to treat questions of foreign policy and security vis-à-vis Turkey’s national interests/identity.

The decision to block Sweden and Finland’s NATO membership, Greece’s militarization of the Aegean islands, military operations against PKK-YPG in Syria and Iraq, and dialogue with the Western governments over those issues immediately come to mind. Again, an important issue will be which definition of ‘national interest’ and ‘national identity’ would best prepare Turkey for its next century.

At a time when great power competition leads to war – in Ukraine, which is just the beginning – and emboldened nationalism fuels fresh uncertainty in the international system, the discourse of “defending national interests” cannot be treated as a simple discourse of national survival.

Politicians must refrain from alienating any groups in Turkey while engaging in a rhetorical competition over “defending the national identity and interests.” The political parties and candidates, which discriminate against the various identities that collectively form Turkey, cannot possibly make the electorate accept their definition of national interest.

### UQ — AT: Erdogan Won’t Run 2023

#### He just announced he’s running

Hacaglu 6/9 — Selcan Hacaoglu, Reporter for Bloomberg News, "Turkey’s Erdogan Declares His Bid for President in 2023 Election," Bloomberg, 6-9-2022, https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-06-09/turkey-s-erdogan-declares-his-bid-for-president-in-2023-election, accessed 6-20-2022 WMK

Turkey’s longest serving leader, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, all but kicked off his bid for re-election in a year’s time, as the popularity of his ruling party is hit by a cost-of-living crisis with inflation at its highest in nearly a quarter century.

Erdogan, who has dominated Turkish politics for almost two decades, has turned the once-ceremonial post of president into the nexus of executive power. His AK Party controls parliament along with its ally, the nationalist MHP.

“The elections will be held in June next year,” Erdogan told supporters in the Aegean port city of Izmir, dismissing speculation of an early ballot. “Now, I am saying that I am the candidate of the People’s Alliance.”

## Link

### Link — Must Read — 2NC

#### Erdogan will cut cooperation with the West now to divert attention from economic failures—anti-West is his last political escape hatch BECAUSE he is cooperating with everyone else—the AFF makes him change his tactics — independently the PIC avoids and solves

Ghosh 6/20 — Bobby Ghosh is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering foreign affairs. Previously, he was editor in chief at Hindustan Times, managing editor at Quartz and international editor at Time. Bobby Ghosh, " US Should Brace for More Pushback From Erdogan," Washington Post, 6-20-2022, https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/us-should-brace-for-more-pushback-from-erdogan/2022/06/17/88e89f1e-ee03-11ec-9f90-79df1fb28296\_story.html, accessed 6-25-2022, WMK

Turkey’s allies and rivals, along with Turks themselves, might want to buckle up for 12 months of turbulence. The US and Europe should brace themselves for even more mudslinging and contrariness from Erdogan at a time when they need his cooperation in containing Russian adventurism.

Ornery in the best of times, Erdogan has grown even more quarrelsome with the West as he has become politically vulnerable at home. His fortunes are now at their lowest ebb since he first took the reins in Ankara in 2003. He and his party have slipped in opinion polls over the past couple of years, as Turkey’s economy has been hammered by a combination of the pandemic and the president’s economic policies.

Although the lira has tanked and inflation has soared, Erdogan has stubbornly resisted calls to raise interest rates. “Turkey is again stuck in a vicious cycle. High inflation causes the lira to weaken, which results in even higher inflation” said Ziad Daoud, chief emerging markets economist at Bloomberg Economics. “Lifting interest rates would break this cycle, but that’s unlikely to happen.”

With little prospect of an economic turnaround in time for the vote, the president must find other ways to make his case for re-election. All the early signs are that he will dip into the old populist’s playbook, appealing to ethno-nationalism at home and raising alarms about foreign enemies — real and imagined.

Some of his favorite bogeymen are now out of bounds: Turkey’s economic troubles have forced Erdogan to make nice with the Gulf Arab states he used to pillory, to popular acclaim. He can’t very well portray the ruling families of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates as perfidious reactionaries while pleading with them for investment and trade deals.

Erdogan has also softened his rhetoric against Israel, thanks in no small part to a friendship he has struck with President Isaac Herzog.

This leaves him with one familiar fall guy: the West. He has already begun to ratchet up his rhetoric against the US and Europe. In a carefully choreographed meeting with young Turks last week, he denounced the West as mendacious and untrustworthy. He has lashed out at another old bugbear, demanding that Greece demilitarize islands in the Aegean Sea, adding that he was “not joking.”

In the months ahead, expect Erdogan to build on the general themes of Western duplicitousness and to double down on his conspiracy theory that Turkey’s woes are the result of a deliberate campaign by “global barons of politics and money.” Turks groaning under the twin burdens of inflation and currency depreciation will be encouraged to blame the US and the Europe rather than their president.

In addition to using progressively more astringent rhetoric, the president will be less cooperative in his dealings with the West. We’re already seeing this in his refusal to budge on NATO expansion: By framing his objection to Sweden and Finland as a matter of national security (he accuses them of harboring Kurdish terrorists) Erdogan is exaggerating the threat as well as portraying his recalcitrance as patriotic resistance in the face of foreign bullying.

There is no point in expecting reasonableness from any politician who has their back to the wall, and certainly not from one who has decided intransigence is in his best interest. As frustrating as it will be for President Biden and European leaders, they should recognize where Erdogan is coming from, and act accordingly. Threats won’t work since they will only play into his narrative of heroic defiance.

Their best bet might be to signal to him that if Turkey won’t join the consensus, they will devise workarounds. This may require the NATO powers to build a separate security architecture for Sweden and Finland outside the alliance — at least until next summer, when they will either be dealing with a new Turkish president or with a victorious Erdogan who no longer needs them as bogeymen.

#### Erdogan needs an absolute stand-off with the West to ensure his popularity

AP 22 — Associated Press, "Explainer: Why is Turkey wary of Nordic states’ NATO bid?," Al Arabiya English, 3-24-2022, https://english.alarabiya.net/News/world/2022/05/17/Explainer-Why-is-Turkey-wary-of-Nordic-states-NATO-bid-, accessed 6-21-2022 WMK

The Turkish leader is seeing a decline in his domestic support due to a faltering economy, skyrocketing inflation and a cost of living crisis.

A standoff with Western nations over the emotional issue of perceived support to the PKK could help Erdogan boost his support and rally the nationalist vote before elections that are currently scheduled for June 2023.

“With dwindling domestic support at a time when Turkey is entering a critical electoral cycle, Erdogan is looking for a higher international profile to demonstrate his global importance to Turkish voters,” analyst Asli Aydintasbas wrote in an article published in the European Council on Foreign Relations.

### Link — Generic — Cooperation

#### Erdogan is dependent on anti-Americanism to divert attention from economic problems—the AFF’s cooperation him to flip which alienates the Turkish electorate and outweighs the economy

Bekdil 17 — Burak Bekdil is a Fellow at the Middle East Forum and has covered Turkey for the U.S. weekly Defense News since 1997, "The Turkish Love-Hate Relationship with America," Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, 10-10-2017, https://besacenter.org/turkey-america-relationship/, accessed 6-20-2022 WMK

Turks often expose degrees of confusion when asked about their foreign policy preferences. A public opinion poll in the mid-2000s found that most Turks viewed the US as a threat to world security – but the same poll found that Turks expected the US, before every other ally, to come to Turkey’s help if needed.

Conspiracy theories have always been abundant in the Turkish psyche. Schoolchildren grow up hearing maxims like “A Turk’s only friend is another Turk” and “Our Ottoman ancestors had to fight seven worlds (the big powers).” According to this worldview, the world’s major powers construct intricate conspiracies as they tirelessly plot to stop Turkey’s rise.

In an age of rising populism, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has systematically fueled the common thinking that “the entire world is conspiring against us.” His Islamist, anti-western, isolationist narrative is creating a vicious circle that threatens to take Turkey’s foreign policy calculus hostage – not only today, but well into the future.

Until Erdoğan came to power in November 2002, most Turks would not have known or even been interested in the names of their foreign ministers. In the 1990s, I saw a group of party supporters clamor to kick the then foreign minister out of a party meeting, mistaking him for a journalist.

Erdoğan’s ambitious neo-Ottoman ideology introduced foreign policy into Turks’ daily lives. Coffeehouse talk changed from standard ruminations on inflation, joblessness, economic hardships, and football to pontifications about the Arab-Israeli dispute, the Arab Spring, the Syrian civil war, America, the EU, and Russia.

Two different surveys in 2011, conducted just after Erdoğan’s party had won 49.5% of the national vote in a general election, found the following:

75% of Turks thought problematic relations between Islamic countries and the West were the West’s fault

53% blamed poverty in Muslim countries on the West and America

82% had a negative opinion about Christians

only 9% believed Arab groups had carried out the 9/11 attacks

41% thought the most violent religion in the world is Judaism

65% said they approved of Erdoğan’s foreign policy

In August, the Washington-based Pew Research Center’s global survey found that 72% of Turks saw America as a threat to their country’s security. In Turkey, a NATO member state, the US is perceived as a greater threat than Russia or China. “America’s influence is a top concern in Turkey,” the survey read. “This figure [72%] is up 28 percentage points since 2013, when just 44% named US power and influence as a major threat.”

Bizarrely, similar numbers of Turks view the US and ISIS as a threat to their country. Pew did not ask Turks about their perceptions of ISIS this year, but its 2015 research found that 73% of Turks had a negative opinion of ISIS and 72% had a negative opinion of America. (In that poll, 8% of Turks had a favorable opinion of ISIS while 19% had no opinion.)

The explanations for anti-Americanism vary in different countries. For instance, in Greece, the sentiment is a largely historical phenomenon, as many blame the violent Greek civil war on the US. In Turkey, it has a different nature. As Turkish society becomes more and more ethnically and religiously conservative and xenophobic, anti-American thinking gains ground and spreads to more segments of the society. Erdoğan’s populist rhetoric only makes things worse.

“It [the presumed American hostility toward Turkey] is because we are Muslim,” a schoolteacher explained to me when I asked her why she thought America was conspiring against Turkey. Her husband, a government banker, broadened the issue: “Also because we [Turkey] stand against the Jewish oppression of the Palestinians … America doesn’t like this.”

Such theories, pumped up by Erdoğan and his powerful media machinery, are quite palatable to the conservative masses, making this kind of manipulation a winning game for Erdoğan. The more Turks feel “imperial” again – the more they believe they have a strong leader and government at long last – the more votes Erdoğan can garner.

In this game, Erdoğan has to show that he really cares about “my nation’s foreign policy preferences” – a concern he does in fact share. The deal he offers is to make voters feel proud again in exchange for their support. All Erdoğan has to do is give the impression that he is fighting the world powers, America included. He then tells the world powers in private that they should ignore his rhetoric, which is only for domestic consumption.

#### Turkey needs to remain strongly anti-American in order to shore up political support. Cooperation would be a major reversal of policy which undercuts Erdogan’s base messaging

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Over the past decade, the Turkish government has slowly consolidated its power; media outlets have been shut down, opposition politicians have been jailed, and Turks have been arrested for social media posts deemed critical of government policies.[i] As the country has shifted away from an open society and democratic government, so too has it shifted away from its alliance with the country that long encouraged these values: The United States. In recent years, Turkey under current President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, has not only reoriented itself away from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and its relations with the U.S., but has also actively engaged in anti-American messaging. The anti-American propaganda employed by Turkey’s government and pro-government allies has served to stoke anti-Americanism in Turkish society that has enabled the country’s movement away from strategic alignment with the West. This strategic shift has geopolitical implications for the United States’ strategic interests in NATO and in the Middle East.

Turkey first aligned with the United States in the early years of the Cold War. Joining NATO gave Turkey the promise of collective security in reaction to a threatening Soviet Union to the north, while the United States gained an ally strategically located on the Black Sea and the Turkish Straits. However, this initial alliance did not mean that Turkey always had strong pro-American feelings. At the height of the Cold War, strong anti-American factions emerged within the Turkish ruling elite. These factions were representative of a strong anti-American sentiment within the population that originated from Leftist circles.[ii] After the Cold War, anti-American feeling reemerged in Turkey over the 2003 US invasion of Iraq. The Turkish parliament under the Justice and Development Party (AKP) government—the first Islamist party to successfully take and hold power and the party of Erdoğan—rejected by three votes an agreement that would have allowed American troops and military logistics to pass from Turkey into Iraq.[iii] US favorability with Turks dropped from 52% in 2000 to only 15% in 2003. Turkish opinion of the U.S. has not changed since 2003, despite changes in US leadership. [iv]

Turkish leaders have capitalized on the strong anti-American sentiment in the population to make the U.S. a scapegoat in domestic messaging both directly—through statements and public comments—and indirectly—through surrogates in the Turkish media. Directly through government statements and comments, Erdoğan and his allies have blamed the United States for being behind domestic problems in Turkey. For example, in 2016, many government officials labeled the U.S. as a major player in planning a failed coup d’état in the country by a faction within the military.[v] Turkey interpreted the Obama Administration’s slowness to condemn the unsuccessful coup as tacit approval, souring relations between the two countries and encouraging the use of anti-American rhetoric by authorities.[vi] American support for Kurdish forces in Syria, too, has drawn intense condemnation from Turkish officials who accuse the U.S. of supporting terrorism and of seeking to “encircling [Turkey] from the south” by enabling a proxy force along Turkey’s Syrian border capable of launching cross-border incursions.[vii] Erdoğan has even hinted that the Turkish military might target American forces embedded in Kurdish-held areas if they do not withdraw.[viii] Indirectly, the government has used its influence over Turkish media to further spread anti-American messages. Recent years of crackdowns against opposition media and censorship of reporting have reinforced the ability to spread these messages across the Turkish media landscape.[ix] Pro-government newspapers, such as Yeni Şafak, spread unsubstantiated claims that the United States government actively broadcasts propaganda of the Gülen movement, the religious-political movement that the government blamed as behind the 2016 coup attempt.[x] Even outlets once deemed independent or even politicly opposed to the Erdoğan government, such as the liberal Hürriyet, publish uncorroborrated claims that the United States controls Kurdish terrorist groups opposed to the Turkish state.[xi] These media proxies enable the Turkish government to amplify and promulgate anti-American rhetoric.

The rise of anti-American rhetoric poses challenges to U.S.-Turkey strategic relations. Turkey has long been a strategic ally for the U.S., both with its location south of an antagonistic Soviet Union—now a Russian Federation seeking to restore its global clout—and with its position to influence and project power into the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean. However, anti-American messaging from the Turkish government has coincided with the country’s broader shift away from its ties with the U.S. Since the 2016 coup, the government has purged large numbers of pro-NATO and pro-American military personnel from the Turkish Armed Forces. Their replacements have been those who support stronger ties with Russia, China, and “Eastern” countries. These “Eurasianists,” who increasingly hold sway in top circles of Turkish leadership, reject strong ties with the West, which they see as a threat to Turkey’s strength and independence.[xii] As this view becomes more prominent in Turkey, it has challenged the cohesion of the NATO alliance. Without this cohesion, the alliance will cease to serve the security interests of its constituent members and could be compromised from within. For example, The Turkish government recently leaked sensitive NATO intelligence, including the locations of U.S. Special Forces bases in northern Syria.[xiii]

The Turkish government’s anti-American messaging serves as a tool to influence the domestic Turkish audience and gives justification for a strategic reorientation away from the U.S. and the West. At the same time as it has pushed the country away from the U.S., Turkey has sought to improve relations with Russia, at a time when U.S.-Russian relations and NATO-Russia relations have reached a nadir.[xiv] President Erdoğan has also publicly floated the idea of joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a security arrangement of Eurasian states led by China and Russia.[xv] By railing against the United States in the domestic information environment, the Turkish government primes its population for geo-strategic shifts away from the alignment with the U.S. and the West with minimal domestic opposition. If anti-Americanism in Turkey continues, and the government’s antipathy towards the U.S. does not change, the United States’ strategic interests in NATO and in the Middle East will be seriously threatened.

### Link — AI Catch All

#### Erdogan uses AI-independence as point of national pride and prestige. Plan undermines it

Shkurti, 21 — PhD candidate at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University (September 27, 2021, Gloria Shkurti, “Can Turkey’s Artificial Intelligence Strategy Be a Game Changer?; Turkey's publication of the national artificial intelligence strategy is vital as it "officially" brought Turkey into the AI race,” <https://politicstoday.org/can-turkeys-artificial-intelligence-strategy-be-a-game-changer/>, JMP)

For Turkey, declaring its own national AI strategy is an important step to becoming more influential in international affairs and is highly important for tangible reasons. First and foremost, there is an ongoing AI race between several countries, with the U.S. and China at the forefront. At this point, the publication of the national strategy of a country is vital as it “officially” brought Turkey into the AI race, bolstering its competitiveness regionally and globally. Having a leading role in the AI industry is key for a global leadership role and a determinant in power struggles. Countries with an effective national AI strategy will have higher chances to leapfrog towards global leadership.

Most national AI strategies focus mainly on maximizing societal benefit. However, AI is a military trump card with a major impact on global AI competition and the concomitant strengthening of national security. It is very important that Turkey’s national AI strategy takes into account the military aspect. Leading countries in AI R&D such as the U.S., China, and Russia have indicated their intentions to use AI in the military field and increase their advantage. Turkey’s current national AI strategy does not have specific indications on how AI will be applied in the military, and it is imperative that in the following years Turkey announces a road map on how it intends to do so.

Another reason why the announcement of a national AI strategy is important is related to R&D. The strategy itself, by providing a road map, prompts research, development, and the adoption of AI. In this regard, Turkey’s national AI strategy is extremely adequate as it clearly specifies the main steps that need to be followed by respective institutions. Specifically, it prescribes the creation of new institutions that will use AI R&D including the Department of Big Data and Artificial Intelligence Applications under the Digital Transformation Office and the TÜBİTAK Artificial Intelligence Institute.

Furthermore, to increase AI R&D, Turkey declared that AI-oriented venture capital funds will be established and scaled up. This is a very important step considering that the global AI funding has increased extensively in the last years.

Seen from such a perspective, Turkey’s national AI strategy seems to be effective; however, as mentioned previously, the announcement of a national AI strategy is only a first step. Now, Turkey has to focus on the application of AI and the maximization of its benefits. It is noteworthy to mention that the more efficient the adoption of the national strategy, the greater the gains will be for Turkey.

In terms of AI application in Turkey, there are several successful examples that can be mentioned, especially in terms of military application. AI-augmented unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) produced by Turkey’s state-owned company STM such as KARGU®, ALPAGU®, and TOGAN® are great examples of Turkey’s capabilities in the AI race. At the same, STM is developing two other very promising projects based on AI: the Swarm Intelligence UAV Project and the Kerkes Project.

In the same context, as announced in April 2021 by Selçuk Bayraktar, the CTO of Baykar, Turkey aims to be among the first countries to have an entirely AI-controlled unmanned warplane, which is expected to become operational in 2023. If successfully developed, these projects will be a game changer in warfare and, without any doubt, will provide Turkey with a strategic advantage both regionally and internationally.

These examples show that Turkey places great importance on AI R&D and its application, especially in the military field. The newly published national AI strategy, reveals that Turkey aims to be among the leading countries in the field. Indeed, this is very important as it coincides with the independent foreign policy that the Turkish government has been following in recent years.

Specifically, Turkey has tried to decrease its political, economic, and military dependence on other great powers, such as the U.S., considering that in many cases, the interests of Turkey and global powers have clashed – for example, in the cases of the F-35s, the PKK/YPG, the S-400s, etc.

Turkey has developed an independent and pragmatic foreign policy with its national interest at its core. Being successful at AI application could decrease Turkey’s dependence on other countries even more, further improving its regional role and performance.

### Link — Ethical AI

#### Turkey uses LAWs now — the AFF would have major public backlash

Gurcan 21 — Metin Gurcan is a columnist for Al-Monitor's Turkey Pulse. He has a PHD. Metin Gurcan 6-8-2021, "Turkish drone sets off international buzz over 'killer robots'," Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East, <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/06/turkish-drone-sets-international-buzz-over-killer-robots> WMK

Turkey’s flourishing drone industry is back in the international spotlight following a UN report suggesting that Turkish-made artificial intelligence-based drones might have been used to kill enemy troops in Libya last year. If confirmed the incident would mark the debut of “killer robots” in the global theater of war.

The report by the UN Panel of Experts on Libya indicates that a Kargu-2 kamikaze drone manufactured by Turkey’s state-owned company STM was likely used in March 2020 in clashes between the forces of the Turkish-backed Government of National Accord and the Libyan National Army of eastern warlord Khalifa Hifter following the latter’s besiegement of Tripoli. Logistics convoys and retreating Hifter forces “were hunted down and remotely engaged by the unmanned combat aerial vehicles or the lethal autonomous weapons systems such as the STM Kargu-2 and other loitering munitions,” the report says. “The lethal autonomous weapons systems were programmed to attack targets without requiring data connectivity between the operator and the munition: in effect, a true ‘fire, forget and find’ capability,” it noted without specifying whether anyone was actually killed.

Turkish military sources familiar with the matter confirmed that Kargu-2s had been used in Libya on multiple occasions, but denied that the drones — which have both autonomous and manual operation modes — were allowed to use artificial intelligence to select and hit targets. The drones operated autonomously only to reach target areas, after which operators on the ground made the decisions to strike, the sources told Al-Monitor on condition of anonymity.

STM describes Kargu-2 as a loitering rotary-wing attack drone with real-time image processing capabilities and embedded machine learning algorithms that are also equipped with swarming capabilities that allow up to 20 drones to work together. In its autonomous mode, Kargu-2 can be programmed to attack targets without data connectivity between the ground unit/operator and the munition.

The UN report was met with nationalist euphoria in Turkey’s pro-government media, which lauded Kargu-2 as further proof of how far the domestic defense industry has progressed under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan with drone sales to Azerbaijan, Qatar and Ukraine. Foreign observers, meanwhile, focused on the global ramifications of the events in Libya and the advance of drones in theaters of war across the region.

### Link Mod — Western U-Turn Modular

#### “U-turn” to the West decks Erdogan’s base approval—Ukraine makes it a particularly salient issue and will flip support

—Cooperation is incredibly unpopular

—Anti China and Russia policy is another link

Dağı 22 — Ihsan Dagi is an associate professor of international relations at Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey, İhsan Dağı "Faced with public resistance, Erdoğan finds little support for U-turn to West," Ahval, 4-25-2022, https://ahvalnews.com/turkey-west/faced-public-resistance-erdogan-finds-little-support-u-turn-west-ihsan-dagi, accessed 6-20-2022 WMK

Ever since the outbreak of the Ukraine-Russia war, the Turkish government under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has been busy trying to restore its alliance with the West after a period of discord following its acquisition of Russian S-400 missiles. Appearing at the NATO summit in Brussels and hosting a number of Western leaders in Ankara since the invasion, Erdogan seems eager to go back to business as usual with Turkey’s Western allies. However, the Turkish public is not as fast in readjusting its position vis-à-vis the West as its president who had been galvanising anti-Westernism up until very recently.

A poll conducted by Metropoll in January shows that Russia and China have outdone the US and the EU in winning the sympathy of ordinary Turks. While 37.5 per cent of respondents say that Turkey should prioritise the EU and the US in its foreign affairs 39.4 per cent prefer Russia and China. Even after the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, according to a Metropoll survey in March, 29.5 per cent of Turks still think that relations with Russia and China should be given priority. It seems that, in recent years, an eastern foreign policy orientation for Turkey has gained significant acceptance in a NATO member and EU candidate country. The poll also reveals that not only the voters of Erdogan’s AKP but also the base of opposition parties favour Russia and China.

Western scepticism surfaces even in the context of the Russian aggression in Ukraine. A recent survey reveals that only 33.7 per cent of Turks think Russia is responsible for the war in Ukraine while 48.3 per cent say that it is the responsibility of the US and NATO.

These figures reflect a deep-rooted anti-Westernism among the Turkish people that has been stirred under the rule of Erdogan’s Justice and Development Party (AKP). The scope of anti-Westernism raises questions about the prospect of Turkey as an ally of the West in the long run. Given the prevailing scepticism toward the West and emerging sympathy for Russia and China, a rehabilitation of the alliance with the West may be too optimistic – even in a post-Erdogan Turkey.

While the Erdogan government presented the West as the mother of all evils, plotting against Turkey’s economy, sovereignty, and security until very recently, the impact of the AKP’s anti-Western narratives could have remained limited if it had not established a propaganda network controlling all communication channels except social media. The Turkish public has never been exposed to such continuous and orchestrated narratives about how the West plotted against Turkey. The AKP has built a discursive hegemony effectively delegitimising any expression of favourable views of the West.

As the masses were manipulated by Erdogan’s propaganda machine, opposition parties were also trapped to echo the prevailing negative perception of the West, effectively normalising and further popularising the AKP’s anti-Western narrative.

Besides, the growing anti-Westernism in Turkey can also be attributed to the successful efforts of a minor but resourceful Eurasianist clique, especially among the retired military officers, with whom the Erdogan government has formed a political alliance after the 2016 coup attempt.

Since the late 1990s, they have been consistently calling for a strategic move of abandoning the West and embracing the East. Invigorated by Turkey’s growing strategic ties with Russia and China and as a partner of the ruling party, the Eurasianists gained a new position of influence in the public debate on the question of Turkey’s direction towards the West or the East. Often appearing on government-controlled media, the Eurasianists have turned the anti-Western rhetoric of the ruling party into favourable views towards Russia and China.

While the anti-Western narratives dominated the public debate, there has been no significant political actor, ideological or social group that would defend Turkey’s traditional Western vocation.

Turkish leftists have always been critical towards the West and understood it as the hotbed of imperialism, a position that helped spread and further legitimise the AKP’s anti-Western stand, especially among the secularists. The secularists, in turn, with their leftist and rightist variants, have developed a strong distaste for the West despite their apparently Western lifestyle. They tend to believe that the Western powers pursued a ‘green belt’ policy during the Cold War years working together with Islamists throughout the Middle East and more recently have supported moderate Islamists including the AKP in Turkey.

Finally, there’s a widespread belief among the Turks that Western states and organisations have been aiding the separatist Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) in Turkey and its offspring, the People’s Defense Units (YPG), ) in Syria. This has spurred and cemented anti-Westernism across the political spectrum.

Despite President Erdogan’s very recent U-turn, it is extremely rare to see public advocacy for a Western outlook in Turkey’s foreign policy. Those who remain committed to Turkey’s traditional Western-oriented foreign policy represent a silent group without political and intellectual representation or the institutional backing of the military, once a staunch defender of Turkey’s Western direction. Public debates continue to be dominated by anti-Western and Eurasianist personalities and ideas.

As the Ukrainian crisis evolves, the Turkish president makes overtures to Turkey’s Western allies. But the anti-Westernism that he has fostered among the Turkish people remains an obstacle to usher a new era of cooperation.

### Link Magnifier — Coop Restores Relations

#### The AFF restores the US-Turkey partnership---leads to more future cooperation

CoşKun 22 — Alper Coşkun is a senior fellow within the Europe Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. His research focuses on Turkish foreign policy, especially in relation to the United States and Europe. Alper CoşKun, "Making the New U.S.-Turkey Strategic Mechanism Meaningful," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 5-12-2022, https://carnegieendowment.org/2022/05/12/making-new-u.s.-turkey-strategic-mechanism-meaningful-pub-87117, accessed 6-20-2022 WMK

If Ankara and Washington can advance cooperation in some of these areas, that would qualitatively improve a U.S.-Turkey partnership that has traditionally been set in a straitjacket of sometimes divergent security and defense interests. The Strategic Mechanism can help broaden this relationship and make it more resilient. The proposal’s added value would lie in introducing structure and continuity to different strands of engagement between the two countries and in its potential to swiftly elevate ripe schemes to political decisionmakers for their endorsement. In short, if the objectives are set right, the Strategic Mechanism could hasten both the incubation and implementation of useful ideas.

### Econ Link Mod/AT: Thumper

#### Erdogan running on anti-Americanism to overcome economic problems—the AFF takes away his pivot forcing him to find a new diversion

Cengiz 5/30 — Mahmut Cengiz is an Adjunct Faculty at the Department of Criminology, Law and Society of George Mason University Mahmut Cengiz "Sweden, Finland, and NATO: Pawns in Erdogan’s Bid for Re-election Amid a Tattered Domestic Economy?," Hstoday, 5-30-2022, https://www.hstoday.us/featured/sweden-finland-and-nato-pawns-in-erdogans-bid-for-re-election-amid-a-tattered-domestic-economy/, accessed 6-20-2022 WMK

When Turkish voters go to the polls in coming elections in 2023, Erdogan’s political future will be decided. It is a critical election for a man who loathes losing an election and despairs of what the future holds for him if the voters reject his bid for re-election. A relaxing life in retirement would not await him after having violated the human rights of thousands of Turkish citizens, been the subject of the anti-corruption investigations based on solid evidence, and been responsible for financing and sponsoring jihadist groups operating in conflict zones.

Erdogan’s domestic politics are based on the consolidation of power into himself through three distinct actions. First, Erdogan works to send a strong message to the people that his leadership of the country is an insurance of Islamic freedom for his followers who for many years have complained about the pressures of a secular system. The people who fall for this message strongly believe that, under Erdogan’s rule, mosques will be open and women will be allowed to wear headscarves in schools and in state institutions. Second, Erdogan used economic-development projects during the early years of his presidency to send a message that Turkey and its citizens are prospering financially thanks to his leadership. Third, Erdogan works to craft a foreign policy message that portrays him as a powerful leader who can defy all of Turkey’s “Western enemies.” An example of this message in practice is Erdogan’s stance on the expansion of NATO. To win the support of Turkey’s nationalistic voters, Erdogan stresses his opposition to allowing Finland and Sweden to join NATO.

In the face of an uncertain outcome in the coming elections in 2023, Erdogan knows that with the financial situation in Turkey he cannot play the economy-is-booming card to rally voter support for his re-election. All Erdogan has left is his political Islamist identity and a rowdy attitude toward the world. Erdogan’s strategy of not focusing on the economy may serve him well in his bid for a return to office because Turkey’s nationalist voters increasingly tend to agree with Erdogan’s approach to foreign politics.

To conclude, the world will be watching to see whether Erdogan can succeed by openly playing his trump cards in the arena of international politics. Putin’s threat to veto NATO expansion most likely will force Finland and Sweden to knock even louder on NATO’s door, which in turn will create more leverage for Erdogan to get what he wants from EU and U.S. The world also will be watching to see how much the EU and U.S. will surrender to Erdogan’s self-interest wishes. If Erdogan succeeds at striking several pigeons with one bean, then other authoritarian leaders around the world will emulate the Turkish leader’s strategy and usher in a new playbook for international politics with instructions on how authoritarian leaders can achieve their goals at the expense of the country and the people who live there.

#### Erdogan campaigns against NATO to distract from economic problems

Rubin 2019 — Michael Rubin "WHY THE TURKISH PRESIDENT REVELS IN CONSPIRACY THEORIES" March 7, 2019. advance-lexis-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5VKJ-XJ71-JCBF-S2RN-00000-00&context=1516831. Accessed June 23, 2022. WMK

It was simply the latest temper tantrum for Turkey's mercurial leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan. "What kind of NATO alliance is this?" he said in mid-February during an election rally ahead of March's local elections. "You give terrorists around 23,000 truckloads of weapons and tools through Iraq, but when we asked, you won't even sell them to us," he added.

On its face, this is nonsense. The United States began supporting Syrian Kurds fighting the Islamic State against the backdrop of the 20142015 Siege of Kobane , in which Syrian Kurdish fighters stood their ground and ultimately rebuffed an Islamic State assault on the border town. Not only did Turkey refuse to support the resistance to the Islamic State for the bulk of the siege, but it also allowed its border to be used to support and supply the Islamic State; and 90 percent of Islamic State foreign fighters during the period traversed the Turkish border, often with Turkish government facilitation.

While Erdogan considers Syrian Kurdish militias to be terrorists because of their links to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in Turkey, his insistence that all Syrian Kurds be stigmatized as terrorists because of their ethnicity has undercut the seriousness with which his diplomatic entreaties are accepted. So too has the tendency of his own forces to engage in ethnic and cultural cleansing of historically Kurdish towns and villages in Syria occupied on supposed counter-terror grounds.

A broader reason for Western and European cynicism toward Erdogan's complaints is the growing evidence that much of the terrorism about which Erdogan complains is actually sponsored by Erdogan himself as a means to demonize political enemies and fuel the emergencies which allow him to consolidate power. In effect, Erdogan has become the twenty-first century's chief peddler of the "Reichstag Fire" strategy. Just as Germany's Nazis blamed rivals for burning down Germany's Reichstag (parliament) building and used the crisis to suspend civil liberties and deepen Nazi control of the state, so too does Erdogan repeatedly promote false conspiracies in order to consolidate his control.

The Turkish government (initially perhaps with the support of its then-allies in exiled cleric Fethullah Gulen's movement) promoted two patently false coup plots in order to marginalize secularists within the Turkish military. By the time the conspiracies had unraveled, Erdogan had succeeded in ruining his opponents' careers and utilizing the accusations to fast-track the dismantling of the check-and-balance system that saw the military act as guarantors of the constitution.

It's not a coincidence that the worst terrorist attacks in Turkey occur before elections. Consider the bombing of an October 2015 peace rally in Ankara. While the Islamic State perpetrated that attack, the notion that Erdogan was responsible was not a conspiracy. Ahval, a professionally-operated independent portal that reports news which Erdogan no longer allows Turkish newspapers to cover, revealed a European Union intelligence report which assessed that "forces within the AKP commissioned the Da'esh [Islamic State] operatives."

There was the July 2016 abortive coup attempt , which Erdogan used both to launch a purge of opponents and to declare a state of emergency which allowed him to achieve in practice what Turkish law prohibited. While Erdogan blamed the coup on one-time ally gulen (and some gulenists may, indeed, have participated), the narrative Erdogan embraces and insists the Turkish press amplify seems no more real than the earlier alleged coup plots and the Ankara bombing. Indeed, many questions remain unanswered .

The inexcusable (though now resolved) detention of Pastor Andrew Brunson and then continued detention of other American and Turkish Americans like NASA scientist Serkan Golge reflects more on the desire of Erdogan to fan anti-Americanism and fuel the paranoid fantasies of his followers than any notion of evidence or justice.

Erdogan may now spin conspiracies about alleged U.S. and NATO support for terrorism. And, he will fuel the already endemic anti-Americanism inside Turkey by doing so. There is nothing to be done about that other than clear, persistent, and daily pushback to expose reality to Turks conditioned by Erdogan's lies. But with the Turkish economy teetering and Turkish forces increasingly bogged down in Syria and Iraqi Kurdistan, Erdogan, of course, has no interest in the truth. His only real goal remains to fan the flames of hatred in order to distract from his own sorry economic and military record.

### Ukraine Link/AT: Ukraine Thumper

#### Ukraine does not help Erdogan

Tharoor 5/20 — Ishaan Tharoor “Turkey’s awkward role in the Russia-Ukraine war” Washington Post, 5-20-2022, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/05/20/turkey-ukraine-erdogan-russia-nato/, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

Of more pressing concern for Erdogan and his colleagues are the country’s mounting economic woes and political pressures ahead of elections next year that may actually be competitive. For them, the sooner the war finds a diplomatic conclusion — and the faster the economic disruption triggered by the conflict stabilizes — the better.

“Senior Turkish officials are quietly concerned that the conflict is now turning into a NATO-Russia war and that the risk of escalation is growing, fueled by greater arms support for Ukraine and the absence of a negotiations framework,” wrote Asli Aydintasbas, senior policy fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations. “They are also disappointed with the West’s reluctance to rally behind Turkish-brokered ceasefire talks. High-level Turkish officials have accused ‘some NATO countries’ of not wanting the war to end in order to harm Russia.”

#### But it enflames anti-Americanism—the public wants to cut cooperation with the West, the aff would be their worst fears

SWP 6/4 — Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), "Perceptions in Turkey about the War in Ukraine," 6-4-2022, https://www.swp-berlin.org/10.18449/2022C25/, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

Anti-Western narratives that the war has accentuated echo within far-left circles as well. At the center of the denunciation of the West is anti-Americanism.

Following the acquittals of various politi­cal and security factions in the early 2010s in the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer trials, it is no coincidence that they did not shy away from endorsing and even shaping – implicitly and explicitly – some of the AKP’s foreign policy adventures, and that they are now watching the invasion closely. As important carriers of Eurasianism in today’s Turkey, these actors see the war in Ukraine first and foremost as a proxy war between the US (in cooperation with Europe and NATO), on the one hand, and Russia and China on the other. They also approach the war as the new militarized phase of a process through which the cen­ter of gravity is shifting to Asia.

A general bitterness about the US underlines this view. The perceived attempts by the US to push Turkey away from Russia by utilizing the war in Ukraine are seen as part of a longstanding trend to pull Turkey into the American sphere of influence following the fall of the Soviet Union (a view para­doxically shared by Islamists as well). The post–Cold War history of US-Turkey rela­tions is accordingly one of resistance by the Turkish Armed Forces against the US and the collaborative Turkish governments attempting to get Turkey to act as a satellite country to further American interests in the Middle East. Not only are the undue Sledge­hammer and Ergenekon trials, which led to the arrest of many high-ranking military officers on allegations of coup-plotting against the AKP government, seen as an American conspiracy, but also the failed 2016 coup attempt.

As the logic of the narrative goes, the Turkish military’s objection to unconditional alignment with US interests during the post–Cold War era was a direct chal­lenge to “US hegemony, furthering Ameri­can interests behind the cover of a rule-based international order.” This desire to withstand perceived US unilateralism is the root cause of aspirations to build close ties with Russia and China.

Anti-American narratives also spread beyond the Eurasianists and echo among the secularist nationalist far left (the so-called ulusalcılar). Russia is generously spared criticism and NATO is perceived as the main culprit of the war. Security anxieties abound over the belief that the US is instigating the war as an opportunity to pressure Turkey to apply the Montreux Convention liberally in order to enhance the “NATO presence in Black Sea,” which would in turn harm “Turkish-Russian co­operation.”

For these actors, the denunciation of the US and NATO has deeper roots and reflects long-standing Cold War grievances. Accord­ingly, Turkey’s participation in NATO is seen as the core reason behind the growth of ultranationalism (associated with the Grey Wolves) and political Islam as the ideo­logical currents that formed the back­bone of anti-communist rhetoric as well as the organizational networks that undergirded anti-communist mobilization in Turkey. The original sin – the rise of anti-communism and the simultaneous fall of the Turkish left – according to this view continues to ensure that pro-NATO atti­tudes dominate Turkish politics, even today.

Even though the possibility of a growing American influence over Turkey through Erdoğan’s seeming rapprochement with NATO remains a concern for different fac­tions of the far left, Ankara’s ongoing emphasis on Turkey’s autonomous foreign policy and Erdoğan’s recalcitrant, critical tone of the West appear to have partially eased these anxieties for the moment.

### AT: Ukraine Fixed Ties

#### Ukraine did not fix Western ties—Turkey went back to Russia

Gaber 6/22 — Yevgeniya Gaber is a non resident senior fellow at the Atlantic Council in Turkey, "Turkey's wartime bridge to the West is collapsing," Atlantic Council, 6-22-2022, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/turkeysource/turkeys-wartime-bridge-to-the-west-is-collapsing/, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

Russia’s unprovoked war of aggression in Ukraine has forced countries around the world to reexamine their geopolitical choices. Turkey, a strategic partner to both of the states at war, has been affected more than most nations. Caught in a lose-lose situation where taking any side in the conflict would lead to a major rupture with the other partner, it has tried to maintain amicable relations with both Russia and Ukraine.

At the same time, the war has given Turkish leadership a chance to turn the challenges of this shaky equilibrium into an opportunity by positioning Ankara as a potential mediator between Moscow and Kyiv.

While brokering a quick peace or even a ceasefire in this war is highly unlikely in the short term, Turkey nonetheless had a unique opportunity to mend its shattered relations with the West.

However, nearly four months into the war, hopes for such a rapprochement are starting to fade, as Turkey’s balancing act gives way to a tilt toward Moscow. If Turkey wants to use the crisis to build bridges with the West, its time is running out.

Promising start

Prior to Russia’s invasion, Turkey and Ukraine had begun to develop a defense industry partnership that served as a security boost for both nations. It also drew praise for anchoring Turkey in the West, seemingly at the cost of deeper military ties between Ankara and Moscow.

Turkey has been firm in its political support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine and has consistently refused to recognize Russia’s illegal annexation of Crimea. Over the past few months, it has dismissed Russian criticism to deliver “Bayraktar” drones to Ukraine. In the early stages of the war, it closed off the Bosporus and Dardanelles straits to Russian ships, further raising hopes that it would align with the rest of NATO in Ukraine’s defense.

Meanwhile, Turkey’s active diplomatic efforts for a peaceful resolution of the conflict have also garnered public praise from its NATO allies—something Turkish leadership highly appreciated after years of frosty relations with the West and with national elections looming in 2023. Senior American diplomats have made several visits to Turkey since the April launch of a new US-Turkey Strategic Mechanism aimed at normalizing bilateral relations. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu has traveled to the United States to meet Secretary of State Antony Blinken in the first bilateral meeting of cabinet officials since President Joe Biden took office.

For the first time in a while, Turkey was not only acting in line with transatlantic allies but also taking a lead in the region in a way that has bolstered its importance as a key NATO member. US officials have gone as far as to suggest that Turkey transfer its S-400 missile-defense systems to Ukraine in a bid to finally solve the problem of Russian air defense systems stationed in a NATO member state and the consequent Western sanctions imposed on Ankara.

Turkey has bluntly rejected that proposal.

Instead, it has slowly allowed domestic problems, regional geopolitics, and pragmatism to dictate its approach to the war. As a result, Turkish leadership once again appears eager to continue business as usual with an increasingly isolated Russia.

Shifting winds

Though only obliged to close the Bosporus and Dardanelles straits for the naval ships of states at war under Article 19 of the Montreux Convention, Ankara has denied access to non-littoral NATO states as well. Turkey’s fears of losing out to the West in its ambitions for a kind of regional ownership of the Black Sea prevailed over the security threats posed by Russia.

Turkey’s desire to limit the presence of NATO vessels in the Black Sea, which might lead to further escalation with Russia, is understandable—even if not in line with the Alliance’s objectives. It is harder to justify the statements of Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar wondering whether mines discovered in the Black Sea had been laid there deliberately to create an excuse for NATO minesweepers to enter those waters.

Turkey is also blocking the quick addition of Sweden and Finland to NATO, trying to use the situation to solve its own problems and voice its own security concerns. It is highly unlikely that Turkish leadership will block the membership of the two Nordic countries in the long term. Nevertheless, its current diplomatic bargaining has revealed major differences in threat perceptions as seen from Ankara and other capitals. While for most of the European states, the major threat on NATO’s eastern borders is a revisionist Russia, for Turkey it is Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG) and Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) fighters operating in Syria and allegedly finding a safe haven in Finland and Sweden.

Obviously, skyrocketing anti-American sentiments in Turkey and a traditional mistrust for the West limit the possibilities for cooperation on Ukraine. Whereas the majority of Turks support Ukraine in this war, polls show that more than 48 percent blame the United States or NATO for the conflict while only 34 percent hold Russia responsible. There is a widespread belief in Turkish society that the war in Ukraine is just another regional conflict instigated by Western powers after Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and others. Russia’s invasions and aggression in in South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Nagorno Karabakh, Transnistria, and more recently in Ukraine and Syria don’t evoke a similar response among Turks.

Populist rhetoric, burgeoning ahead of next year’s elections, as well as massive anti-Western propaganda on Turkish media mostly featuring retired generals, nationalist pundits, and (pro-)Russian experts with a strong Eurasianist agenda, do not help either.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s economic and strategic agendas also depend on close coordination with Moscow. Russia supplies almost half of Turkish domestic gas demand, provides technology for the country’s first nuclear power plant in Akkuyu, and serves as the source of more than five million tourists annually. The Kremlin’s support is also vital for Turkey to maintain its presence in the South Caucasus and Middle East.

The recent meeting of Çavuşoğlu with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov in Ankara clearly showed that Turkey is keen to stick to mechanisms for cooperation with Russia, like the Astana Platform in Syria or the 3+3 format in the South Caucuses (which also involves Iran, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan). Instead of using this crisis as a chance to decrease its strategic dependence on Russia, Turkey seems eager to bind itself even more to Moscow within new formats.

Money matters

Ukraine has so far largely respected Turkey’s sensitivities and not pushed too hard on sanctions, instead focusing on arms supplies and Ankara’s mediator role. However, that dynamic is coming under stress with Russian oligarchs using Turkey as a safe haven to bypass European Union restrictions.

According to Lavrov’s recent statements, Russia-Turkey bilateral trade doubled in the first quarter of 2022, and there are now ongoing talks on expanding the use of Russia’s MIR payments system in Turkey. In March, Erdoğan suggested to Putin that their countries switch to national currencies or gold in commercial deals instead of the dollar or euro. Izzet Ekmekcibashi, the head of the Turkish-Russian Business Council (DEIK), said that more than one thousand new Russian companies opened in Turkey in March alone. Most recently, a well-connected Turkish journalist reported on a Russian-Turkish agreement to move the European headquarters of forty-three leading Russian companies including Gazprom to Turkey.

Turkish-Russian cooperation in tourism has also quickly developed. Turkish media outlets have reported that Turkish carriers are operating 438 flights per week to Russia this summer at a time when sanctions have made it difficult for Moscow to arrange flights. According to the pro-government Sabah newspaper, Turkish Airlines has signed a deal to bring 1.5 million Russian tourists over in 2022. The newspaper’s report suggests that Ankara also plans to issue loans under state guarantees to support Turkish travel companies working with Russian tourists and back a new airline with the specific mandate of transporting Russian tourists to Turkey.

Ankara, which earlier called on Moscow to end its blockade of Ukrainian ports so grain exports could restart, is now taking a more pro-Russia position, advocating for the international community to help unblock not only Ukraine’s but also Russia’s trade in grain and fertilizers through safe logistics, ship insurance, and a return of Russian banks to the SWIFT system. During Lavrov’s recent visit to Turkey, Çavuşoğlu said that Turkey considered Moscow’s demands “reasonable” and “feasible” and backed easing Western sanctions against Russia.

There is also ample evidence of Ankara’s involvement in the illegal shipment and trade of Ukrainian grain stolen by Russian forces to the Middle East via the Turkish ports of Samsun, Derince, Bandırma, and Iskenderun. So far, despite strong evidence of Russian crimes and official appeals from Ukraine, Turkish authorities have remained silent on these cases.

These moves by Turkey don’t just undermine its credibility as a mediator between Ukraine and Russia but also raise questions about Ankara’s geopolitical choices in a broader regional and transatlantic framework. As it leans toward Russia in a bid for stability at home, Turkey risks finding itself estranged from the West and aligned with a pariah state on the international arena. The Ukrainian case will become a major test for Turkey. Whether Ankara prefers to use it to bridge the gaps with the West or to burn the bridges remains to be seen.

### Security Mechanism Link Mod/AT: Thumper

#### Security mechanism fails now because of lack of US security cooperation — BUT this is another link because the AFF would make it credible

CoşKun 5/12 — Alper Coşkun is a senior fellow within the Europe Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. His research focuses on Turkish foreign policy, especially in relation to the United States and Europe. Alper CoşKun, "Making the New U.S.-Turkey Strategic Mechanism Meaningful," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 5-12-2022, https://carnegieendowment.org/2022/05/12/making-new-u.s.-turkey-strategic-mechanism-meaningful-pub-87117, accessed 6-24-2022 WMK

The mechanism grew out of an understanding reached between Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and U.S. President Joe Biden during their meeting on the margins of the October 2021 G20 summit in Rome. Though the idea is said to belong to Biden, the U.S. readout after the meeting lacked any reference to the mechanism, whereas it was the highlight of the Turkish narrative. This difference in emphasis initially triggered rumors that the United States might be dragging its feet.

After the initiative was announced, U.S. Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade Marisa Lago visited Turkey to explore opportunities in commercial relations and to discuss how Turkey’s Russia-dependent energy mix could be diversified. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu will travel to the United States to meet with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on May 18 in the first cabinet-level bilateral visit between the two countries since the Biden administration took office. The initial plans had been to have this meeting in Washington, DC, but the venue has been moved to New York, and the program has been curtailed, reportedly at the behest of the United States and probably in reaction to the conviction of Turkish philanthropist Osman Kavala. While the process hasn’t been derailed, this experience serves as a reminder that the mechanism is vulnerable to different dynamics. Its sustainability and potential to have a positive impact depend on Ankara and Washington making the right choices to facilitate and not undermine policy convergences.

Turkish and American sources talk of the Strategic Mechanism as a structured platform in which all matters can be discussed, with an emphasis on advancing practical bilateral cooperation. The level of ambition that Ankara and Washington will set for the mechanism is yet to be seen and will be important, particularly in view of the failure of some past attempts. The two governments established working groups in 2018 to resolve disputes on consular affairs, Syria policy, and Turkey’s purchase of the Russian S-400 air defense system, but these efforts failed to deliver results and were quickly forgotten. The United States had been reluctant to go forward with the idea at the time, and the lesson from that experience is that, unless the parties have a shared sense of understanding of and joint commitment to the process, its chances of success are slim.

If the Strategic Mechanism is to avoid the fate of the 2018 working groups, Washington and Ankara will need to invest seriously in the process and display real political ownership; agree on clear, shared, and diverse objectives; and simultaneously work to resolve or at least minimize their bilateral disputes.

DEMONSTRATING POLITICAL OWNERSHIP

The mechanism will be dead on arrival unless there is shared commitment in Ankara and Washington. Geopolitical considerations are currently driving this commitment in both countries. Russia’s brazen war in Ukraine and the global divide of systemic rivalry have affected how Turkey and the United States view each other. These events have changed their calculus in favor of closer relations and, in turn, have nurtured the idea of such a mechanism.

For Turkey, balancing Russia has consistently been a consideration. From Ankara’s perspective, the reality is that its security, deterrence, and economic livelihood are bolstered by its membership in NATO, its alliance with the United States, and its albeit shaky inclusion nowadays in the family of liberal democracies. Meanwhile, the Turkish economy is in dire straits as the country’s 2023 parliamentary and presidential elections loom on the horizon, forcing the government into looking for international success stories. The United States, on the other hand, is grappling with the fact that Turkey is a significant geopolitical middle power in its immediate region and beyond. Having Turkey as an ally has started to matter more again. In short, realpolitik calculations are at play for both sides.

For the purposes of optics and practicality, the Strategic Mechanism would benefit from being designed and seen as something more than a bureaucratic exercise. For this to happen, it needs a meaningful political embrace from both sides. Underscoring the mechanism’s importance with a meeting between the two countries’ presidents would give it a big boost. It is no secret that the Biden administration has been cold-shouldering Turkey. This has been evident in the choice Biden and his senior team have made to limit their interactions with their Turkish counterparts, something that Erdoğan has publicly lamented.

#### Nothing has happened—it’s just words—we read after their evidence ends

Ertan 4/6 — Nazlan Ertan is Al-Monitor's former culture editor. She is a Turkish blogger, journalist and editor who has worked in Ankara, Paris and Brussels for various Turkish and international publications, including the Hurriyet Daily News, CNN Turk and BBC Turkish Service."Turkey, US launch new strategic mechanism amid Ukraine crisis," Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East, 4-6-2022, https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/04/turkey-us-launch-new-strategic-mechanism-amid-ukraine-crisis, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

“The launch of the mechanism is certainly the prelude to a more constructive era in the relationship,” Sinan Ulgen, a former diplomat and visiting fellow of Carnegie Europe, told Al-Monitor. “It will not be a cure-all to all the tough spots in the relations - from the US policy on Syria to Turkey’s acquisition of Russia’s S-400 missile defense system - but neither should it be dismissed as window dressing. The mechanism provides a comprehensive platform, with consultations at different levels, to deepen cooperation on issues such as trade or regional hotspots.”

The process was accelerated by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Ulgen said. Wendy Sherman, US Deputy Secretary of State, came to Ankara ten days later and underscored the importance of the strategic mechanism.

Disputes between Ankara and Washington include Turkey's acquisition of S-400 missile defense systems from Russia, Washington’s cooperation with the Syrian-Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG) militia, policy differences on Libya and the eastern Mediterranean, as well as human rights issues. Moreover, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has taken US President Joe Biden’s lack of engagement as a personal affront.

Ankara sources say that the reconciliation efforts have intensified with the arrival of new US Ambassador Jeff Flake, a moderate Republican senator who went against his party to endorse Biden’s presidency and a former member of the Senate Foreign Relations, Energy and Natural Resources committees. “He knows how Washington works, and he is eager to use his knowledge, ties, and time here to improve and deepen Turkey’s relations with Washington,” said one diplomatic source in Ankara.

The open line between Onal and Nuland is essential, but it still falls short of the regular contact with US President Joe Biden that Erdogan craves, Cagaptay told Al-Monitor. “The Ukrainian war is a blessing and a curse for Erdogan," he said. "It has acted as a catalyst that has pushed Turkey out of isolation with NATO and its Western allies. But it is also a curse because if the war goes on, it comes with political and economic costs, particularly if Ankara were forced to take steps that would antagonize Russia."

US Department of Commerce undersecretary Marisa Lago visits Ankara on April 5-6 to advance the mechanism’s economic and trade cooperation goals. Given the economic situation in Turkey, Erdogan needs a narrative of good relations with Washington to woo foreign investment, Cagaptay said. “So it would be good for him to be on regular calls with Biden, but Biden has neither the bandwidth nor the inclination at this stage.”

While Nuland said in an interview with Hurriyet Daily News’ Serkan Demirtas that the new mechanism would allow meetings at the ministerial or even presidential level, no Turkish pundit would yet like to bet on a face-to-face meeting between Erdogan and Biden, particularly after such a meeting failed to materialize at the fringes of the NATO summit in Brussels last month, despite Turkish side’s hints.

Such a meeting "is unlikely to happen as long as the S-400 issue remains unsolved,” opined Cagaptay. After Turkey bought the S-400s from Russia, the United States expelled Turkey from the F-35 joint strike fighter program. Turkey’s request to upgrade its existing F-16 fleet and buy new F-16s has been snagged by Congress.

“There is the possibility of progress on the F-16 issue - at least from the administration if not from the Congress,” said Ulgen. In a letter dated March 17, the State Department said the potential sale of F-16 fighter jets to Turkey would be in line with US national security interests and would also serve NATO’s long-term unity, Reuters reported.

But Ulgen cautioned that it would be more difficult for both Ankara and Washington to come to terms on S-400 missiles. “Their current positions seem starkly apart,” Ulgen told Al-Monitor. “Both sides will need to show flexibility there.”

In March, Sherman suggested that Turkey send its S-400 missiles to Ukraine, with whom Ankara has a military cooperation accord. Turkey flatly refused.

#### Sweden/Finland was a reset for the security mechanism

SWP 5/20 — Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), "Deciphering Turkey’s Geopolitical Balancing and Anti-Westernism in Its Relations with Russia," 05-20-2022, https://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publication/deciphering-turkeys-geopolitical-balancing-and-anti-westernism-in-its-relations-with-russia, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

First, Turkey and the West (particularly the US), can take steps to consolidate their geo­political convergence. It is notable in this respect is that the Biden administration has told Congress that meeting Turkey’s request to purchase F-16 jets and modernisation kits would serve US national security inter­ests and NATO’s long-term unity in light of the war in Ukraine. However, on the F‑16 question, Turkey is facing the opposition of a hostile US Congress. But if the Biden administration uses its political capital and this purchase goes through, it could signifi­cantly improve Turkish-US relations and po­tentially pave the ground for more serious engagement to find a formula to address the S‑400 crisis – probably this crisis can not be resolved soon but it can be better managed so that it does not contaminate the overall Turkish – US relations. Another positive development is that the US-Turkey launched a new “Strategic Mechanism” to review bilateral topics to boost ties. But if Turkey’s problematisation of the Swedish and Finnish NATO membership bids is not resolved, ideally before the next NATO meet­ing on 30 June 2022 in Madrid, this can then easily dispel the recent positive atmos­phere in Turkey-Western/NATO relations, which was largely a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. On the Turkey-EU level, launching a more structured foreign policy dialogue between Ankara and Brus­sels, including a potential Turkish role in the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), paired with more clarity on the part of the EU on the role of non-EU NATO members, namely Turkey, the UK and the US, in the new European security architecture can further aid and sustain this process of convergence. Indeed, with­out a presence or contribution of these three actors, no serious European security order can be established, yet their roles remain undefined in the European debate on this prospective order.

### Swinland Link Mod/Swinland Thumper

#### Swinland is calculated Erdogan is framing it as ant western EVEN IF he says yes in order to get concessions

Cropsey 6/23 — Seth Cropsey is founder and president of Yorktown Institute. He served as a naval officer and as deputy undersecretary of the Navy Seth Cropsey , "Diversionary war: Turkey’s actions against Greece are a growing threat to NATO," Hill, 6-23-2022, https://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/3534155-diversionary-war-turkeys-actions-against-greece-are-a-growing-threat-to-nato/, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

Turkey also attempted to position itself as a mediator between Kyiv and Moscow, and it spearheaded a half-hearted attempt (albeit with great public fanfare) to ensure grain exports from Ukraine.

Yet, Turkey’s resistance to Swedish and Finnish NATO memberships is a ploy to extract concessions from Washington: If the Biden administration reinstates Turkey in the F-35 program and approves F-16 sales, Erdogan likely will relent.

#### It proves the link — he’s using it to pander to his base

Erlanger 6/22 — Steven Erlanger, "Analysis: What Turkey Wants to Let Finland and Sweden Into NATO," New York Times, 6-22-2022, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/22/world/europe/finland-sweden-turkey-nato.html, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

Mr. Erdogan is facing elections next June, and his popularity is slipping along with the Turkish economy. The Kurdish issue is an important one in Turkey and he is playing on nationalist sentiment now, while suppressing political dissent and independent journalism.

In an interview on Swedish television, a former NATO official, Stephanie Babst, said that Mr. Erdogan’s real agenda is domestic. “Primarily this is a message toward his electoral base at home,” she said. “He has an election ahead of him. The economic situation in Turkey is pretty gruesome and so he wants to demonstrate leadership. He wants to demonstrate that he is a heard leader and so he is, I am afraid to say, using Sweden and Finland in order to get his strategic messages across.”

### AT: Erdogan Says No to AFF

#### We conceded say yes. It was in 1ac, 1ac c-x, and 1nc tag. No take-backs. Anything else lets the aff re-clarify to moot 1nc positions and evade clash.

#### Erdogan says yes because he thinks he can balance the US and Russia. BUT, it’s a strategic misstep that TKOs his popularity

Syndication Bureau 21 — "Turkey's Frustration with the US in Syria Is Driving a Tactical Partnership with Moscow | Syndication Bureau". 8/29/2021 advance-lexis-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63H4-WMN1-JCNX-31GB-00000-00&context=1516831. Accessed June 23, 2022. WMK

Yet, the facts on the ground point out to a different reality. The latest wave of anti-Americanism in Turkey has a much larger scale and scope than previous ones. Putting Turkish-American relations back on track may prove an insurmountable challenge when both the Turkish body politic and public opinion is caught in an anti-Western nationalist frenzy. Most opinion polls show that about 80 percent of Turks consider the United States the country's top national-security threat. Almost 90 percent support the Turkish military incursion in Afrin, in northern Syria. That operation, though now largely over, could still escalate into a military confrontation between Turkey and the US because American special forces are training the Syrian Kurds in Manbij, not too far from Afrin.

The driving factor of anti-Americanism in Turkey has traditionally been based on conspiracy theories. For decades, Turkish nationalists believed America had a hidden agenda to support Kurdish nationalism in the Middle East. Stories of American military support for the PKK - a Kurdish separatist movement recognized as a terrorist organization by Washington - have long circulated in Turkish nationalist circles. Such rumors came to be accepted as conventional wisdom. Well, this conspiracy theory has now become reality. In the absence of a better alternative, the YPG - the Syrian extension of the PKK - has become America's main military partner on the ground in the fight against ISIS. This, in the eyes of Ankara, makes its Nato ally a supporter of terrorism and it validates the worst conspiracies fueling anti-Americanism.

While the PKK represents an existential threat for Turkey, ISIS does not. In fact, many in Washington believe Ankara has for years turned a blind eye to ISIS sympathizers and has actively supported Syrian jihadi terrorist groups linked to Al Qaeda. Add to the already tense Turkish-American blame game the issue of Fetullah Gulen, a US-based Turkish cleric accused by Ankara of masterminding the failed coup in 2016, and you have an even more toxic mix. Erdogan is infuriated by Washington's reluctance to extradite Gulen. Not surprisingly, the Gulen affair adds an additional layer of conspiracy to arguments that Washington was behind the failed the coup. All these factors enable Erdogan to stoke anti-Americanism as part of his populist nationalist discourse to win the upcoming presidential elections.

What is striking in the anti-Kurdish and anti-American nationalist frenzy in Turkey is the perception of Russia as a potential ally in Syria. Erdogan and the pro-government media are remarkably silent on Russian-Kurdish cooperation in northern Syria. No one in Turkey uttered a word when the Russian commander at Syria's Hmeimim military base and a YPG spokesman appeared before cameras to announce they were conducting joint operations against ISIS. Russian warplanes provided air cover for the YPG while the Kurdish forces protected Russian forces on the eastern side of the Euphrates.

In fact, Russia's support of Syrian Kurds gained much more momentum in 2015 after Turkey shot down a Russian military jet for violating its airspace. Shortly after the incident, Moscow began delivering weapons to the YPG in western Syria. In March last year, despite reconciliation between Ankara and Moscow, reports surfaced that Russia was building a military facility in Kurdish-controlled Afrin, where Russian military advisors were to provide training to Kurdish forces. Russia has also provided diplomatic support to the YPG. Late last year, Moscow proposed a draft constitution for Syria that included Kurdish autonomy, and more recently Russia decided to invite the Democratic Union Party — the political arm of the YPG — to a congress of Syrian ethnic groups in Sochi and announced the party would be included in the Astana talks.

So why is Erdogan silent on such blatant Russian-Kurdish cooperation? Ankara appears reluctant to alienate both Russia and the United States at the same time. Erdogan probably wants to cultivate good relations with Russia in order to gain further leverage in relations with Washington. At a time when Russia is gaining ground in the Middle East and Iran appears to be winning in Syria, he clearly believes American policymakers cannot afford to"lose" Turkey. After all, Turkey is home to a major American airbase as well as to Nato defense shield radars that serve to contain Iran. These are assets give Ankara the leverage it needs with Washington. As usual, there is a strong belief in Ankara than Washington needs Turkey more than Turkey needs America.

#### Erdogan lets his military desires get the best of him

Shipley 21, senior editor @ Bloomberg responsible for the editorial page (David, “Biden Should Cut the Gordian Knot With Turkey,” Bloomberg, <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2021-06-13/biden-should-cut-turkey-loose-from-the-west#xj4y7vzkg)//BB>

But Erdogan also craves the protection of the West’s military partnerships and membership in its economic associations. He wants Turkey to remain within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization even as he buys weapons systems that undermine the alliance’s security and hurls insults at heads of member states. And he seeks “mutual trust” with the European Union even as he threatens to flood it with millions of migrants.

### AT: Foreign Affairs Don’t Matter Domestically

#### Foreign Affairs and Domestic Politics are intrinsically linked — the AFF is viewed as Western Powers constraining Turkey

Ülgen 22 — Sinan Ülgen is a visiting scholar at Carnegie Europe in Brussels, where his research focuses on Turkish foreign policy, nuclear policy, cyberpolicy, and transatlantic relations. Horizons: Journal of International Relations and Sustainable Development , WINTER 2022, No. 20, A Cyber Odyssey: Quantum of Hope (WINTER 2022), pp. 220-229 WMK

The third point of departure relates to the nexus between domestic politics and foreign policy. For a long time, foreign policy in Turkey was viewed as being almost hermetically sealed from domestic political considerations. Foreign policy decisionmaking had been under the prevailing influence of the Foreign Ministry, which was staffed almost exclusively by professional career diplomats. The military was also an influential actor in areas of strategic relevance. The political leadership had the final say, sure, but it was essentially swayed by the calculations, assessments, and recommendations of these two powerful, professional institutions. Under the AKP, the balance of power shifted to politicians—to the detriment of the institutional players. In many ways, Turkey lurched from one extreme to the other. In the olden days, the body politic was heavily influenced by institutional thinking, with little interest in the domestic impact of their calculus. In the new Turkey, the body politic wanted no institutional pressure. Foreign-policy-making disassociated itself from the “weight” of these institutions and increasingly became guided and even led by domestic political concerns.

The shift away from a parliamentary system and back to a presidential one as a result of a April 2017 constitutional referendum accentuated these negative changes and further usurped the institutional underpinnings of Turkish foreign policy. Decisionmaking became opaquer and increasingly driven by a close set of presidential advisors.

As a result, Turkish foreign policy became less predictable, changing its agenda in accordance with fastmoving domestic objectives. This shift was accentuated by a change in the foreign policy rhetoric as well. The highly-polarizing and combative language of Turkish domestic politics began to permeate the country’s foreign policy discourse. The public speeches of the Turkish leadership had made foreign countries and leaders just as much of a target as domestic opposition figures.

Unsurprisingly, the end result of these radical departures from the traditional tenets of Turkish foreign policy proved to be detrimental to Turkey’s aspirations to project its prestige, influence, and power in its neighborhood(s). In fact, Ankara became more isolated and its relations with established partners in the West became increasingly antagonistic.

All this finally compelled the current leadership to recalibrate its approach to Turkish foreign policy. The rhetoric towards the United States and the EU became less incriminating and combative. Ankara has also undertaken de-escalation measures in the Eastern Mediterranean. Diplomatic openings were initiated with a view to improving bilateral relations with the region’s countries including Israel, Egypt, and the UAE—even some type of normalization with Armenia appears to be on the horizon. It is the form and longevity of this recalibration that will determine the future trajectory of Turkey’s diplomacy.

Looking to the Next Decade

Turkey’s foreign policy inclinations in the next decade will essentially be determined by how its political leadership will decide to conceptualize the country’s role as a rising power. A major element of continuity in Turkey’s international relations will therefore be its self-perception of its new role. Regardless of whether Turkey ends up with a different constellation of political leadership after the critical 2023 elections, Ankara’s self-assessment of being a rising power in a multipolar world will be a permanent fixture of Turkey’s future diplomacy

As briefly examined in this essay, this identity has been interpreted over the past decade in a way that encouraged unilateralism. Turkish policymakers intended to demonstrate both domestically and to outside actors that the country had acquired the capability to conduct an independent foreign policy. The tensions inherent to this type of accentuated unilateralism further complicated policymaking and undermined the traditional alliances of a country already exposed to the many instabilities stemming from the Middle East. But these tensions also played an important role in nurturing a domestic narrative about Turkey’s indomitable rise and the negative reactions of outside powers that wanted to constrain and contain Turkey’s foreign policy activism and autonomy.

#### Anti-Americanism DETERMINES Erdogan’s electoral support — fopo is key

Taşpınar 21 — Ömer Taşpınar is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and a professor of national-security strategy at the National Defense University in Washington. "The Domestic Calculations Behind Turkey's Foreign Adventure in Syria” Syndication Bureau. August 29, 2021. advance-lexis-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63H4-WMN1-JCNX-318H-00000-00&context=1516831. Accessed June 24, 2022. WMK

Although Western media likes to portray Erdogan as an Islamist determined to destroy Ataturk's secularist legacy, today the real trend in Turkish politics is not Islamization but nationalism driven by anti-Americanism and anti-Kurdish sentiments. Erdogan is currently riding this nationalist wave with his military adventure in Syria. Once again, it is domestic dynamics of populist, anti-American nationalism that dictates foreign policy. Erdogan needs to galvanize nationalism in order to stay in power. All his calculations, in domestic and foreign policy, are above all motivated by regime survival. Most opinion polls show the Afrin operation helps Erdogan's AKP thanks to the nationalist frenzy it created. Instead of waiting until 2019 for presidential elections, Erdogan is therefore likely to capitalize on such dynamics and call early elections this summer.

In short, if you want to understand Turkey's timing in Syria, look no further than Erdogan's domestic agenda. Finally, Erdogan needed this war because of another urgent domestic problem: the economy. High inflation, growing unemployment and diminished consumer confidence means that time is not on his side. Under such circumstances, Erdogan doubled down on nationalist populism and launched the Afrin incursion.

### AT: Arms Sales Thumper

#### Not happening, but if it does Erdogan spins the sales as concessionary NOT cooperation

Cengiz 6/23 — Mahmut Cengiz is an Adjunct Faculty at the Department of Criminology, Law and Society of George Mason University Mahmut Cengiz "Sweden, Finland, and NATO: Pawns in Erdogan’s Bid for Re-election Amid a Tattered Domestic Economy?," Hstoday, 6-23-2022, https://www.hstoday.us/featured/sweden-finland-and-nato-pawns-in-erdogans-bid-for-re-election-amid-a-tattered-domestic-economy/, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

The United States also appears to be a target of Erdogan’s manipulative behavior aimed at squeezing concessions from other countries and serving his own self-interests. When Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu met with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken in mid-May to discuss bilateral relations, Cavusoglu presented Erdogan’s agenda: “persuade” the United States to follow through on the sale of F-16 fighter jets to Turkey, end its support for Kurdish groups in northern Syria, lift the sanctions imposed on Turkey under Section 231 of the Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, and end the ongoing Halk Bank investigation. Erdogan’s demands are rooted in his unhappiness with the Biden administration and his inability to melt the ice between two countries. Erdogan is particularly annoyed about the Biden administration’s refusal to end the Halk Bank investigation. Under the Trump administration, Erdogan was allowed to exert at least some measure of influence over the case. Erdogan, however, understands the value in repairing relations with the United States. Doing so could create for Erdogan the momentum needed to mend his country’s relations with the Western world. That momentum and mended relations, however, may not materialize. To date, the Western world has been harshly critical of Erdogan’s authoritarian regime and actions such as jailing journalists and destroying democratic constitution of the country. A smiling face from the Western world, Erdogan likely knows, could boost his chances of victory in the coming presidential elections.

## Impact

### Impact — Draws in US

#### Turkey-Greece war draws-in the US

Ted Galen Carpenter 20, Vice President for Defense and Foreign Policy Studies at the Cato Institute. He received his Ph.D. in U.S. diplomatic history from the University of Texas, “An Old NATO Nightmare Returns: Possible War between Greece and Turkey,” 9/10/20, <https://www.cato.org/blog/old-nato-nightmare-returns-possible-war-between-greece-turkey>

U.S. and other Western leaders have long worried about what to do if an armed conflict ever erupted between two NATO members. Rapidly rising tensions between Greece and Turkey, primarily involving a maritime dispute over oil, natural gas, and other resources under the eastern Mediterranean, have brought that nightmare to the surface once again. Germany’s Foreign Minister, Heiko Maas, warned both governments in late August against further military escalation. “Fire is being played with and any small spark could lead to catastrophe,” he stressed. The heart of the North Atlantic Treaty is Article 5, which proclaims that an attack on any member of the Alliance will be considered an attack on all. The underlying assumption is that there would then be a collective response to repel and punish the aggressor. Obviously, that approach would not work if two NATO signatories went to war against each other. Even determining which country was the aggressor and which the victim could be quite challenging. Throughout NATO’s history, the greatest risk of an intra‐​alliance conflict has always been one involving Greece and Turkey. Although both countries joined NATO in 1952, mutual membership in that security partnership did not erase the centuries of animosity between the two populations. Athens and Ankara have nearly come to blows on several occasions, most notably when Turkey invaded majority‐​Greek Cyprus in 1974, proceeded to occupy nearly 40 percent of the island, and expelled Greek Cypriots from that territory. The occupation continues to this day. There have been several lesser, but still worrisome, incidents over the years. Among other problems, Turkish military planes continuously violate Greek airspace. Athens then sends its fighter planes up to intercept and challenge the Turkish aircraft—in some years as many as 2,000 times. Thus far, there have been no armed clashes, but as I’ve written elsewhere, similar games of aerial “chicken” involving the United States and such countries as Russia and China are extremely reckless. One such episode between U.S. and Chinese planes in 2001 resulted in a midair collision that killed the Chinese pilot and created an ugly diplomatic row between Washington and Beijing. All it would take is one miscalculation by a Greek or Turkish pilot to trigger a similar (or worse) crisis between Athens and Ankara. The Cyprus episode suggests what Washington’s reaction would be to the outbreak of a Greco‐​Turkish armed conflict. Under the guidance of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, the United States pressured both countries to dampen their quarrel, and Kissinger used maximum leverage to get the other NATO members to adopt the same position. However, Kissinger’s stance was far from neutral. Even though Turkey had been the aggressor, the [US] United States soon tilted in favor of Ankara’s position. Congressional anger compelled Gerald Ford’s administration to implement sanctions against the Turkish government, but the White House moved inexorably to dilute those measures as quickly as possible. That approach continued under Jimmy Carter’s administration, and by the beginning of the 1980s, the restrictions were effectively moot. Washington’s response reflected the belief that Turkey was a much more important ally than Greece in terms of strategic considerations. There is little reason to believe that the U.S. attitude has changed. Even if a Biden administration would not share Donald Trump’s apparent admiration for Turkey’s autocratic president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, both security and economic calculations would push Washington toward that conclusion. There is one important difference, though, between the Cyprus crisis and a possible new confrontation between Athens and Ankara. Key NATO powers, most notably France and Italy, are not happy about Erdogan’s increasingly undemocratic rule and his government’s maverick, often pro‐​Russian, behavior on security issues. In addition, France has openly challenged Turkey’s territorial and resource claims in the eastern Mediterranean, and in late August, French warships and planes joined a joint military exercise with Greece and Cyprus to convey a blunt message of displeasure to Ankara. Washington may find it far more difficult today to drag its NATO allies into taking a pro‐​Turkish stance in case of an armed confrontation between Greece and Turkey than it did in 1974. The mere prospect of a possible Greco‐​Turkish war underscores one of the major drawbacks of the United States being the leader of a nearly 30‐​member military alliance. America automatically is entangled in the grievances and quarrels of every one of those members. And when two members openly hate each other, that situation can create not only a headache but an outright nightmare for the United States.

#### Turkey-Greece war escalates and the US gets drawn-in

Stratfor 20, Shadow CIA, iykyk, “What's Driving Turkish Aggression in the Mediterranean Sea,” 9/9/20, <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/whats-driving-turkish-aggression-mediterranean-sea>

Turkey is putting its 50-year view on maritime rights into practice through its Blue Homeland Doctrine, growing its naval and commercial presence in Mediterranean waters that it claims are part of its exclusive economic zones (EEZs). Oil and gas exploration is becoming a crucial tool in implementing this strategy. But Ankara's attempts to claim extensive maritime resource rights risk broadening to a wider conflict with Greece and other NATO allies that would bring foreign energy projects, and potentially the United States, into the fray. Turkey's Maritime Ambitions Turkey claims that all of its neighboring waters in the Aegean, Black and Mediterranean seas deserve special treatment under international law, and that the islands in the Aegean Sea (which Greece controls the majority of) should not enjoy the same rights as large countries like Turkey with lengthy coastlines. The international community never adopted these distinctions, which is why Turkey is not a signatory to the United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and prefers to resolve disputes through bilateral negotiations in lieu of not international arbitration. This has so far led to two major disputes with Greece in the Aegean and Mediterranean seas, as well as a major dispute with Cyprus in the eastern Mediterranean. Turkey's most important dispute is in the Aegean Sea, where thousands of Greek islands help boost Greece's maritime claims over Turkey's, and where the two countries disagree on how to even start drawing a maritime border due to the disparity in the number of islands between them. Turkey has just three islands in the Aegean Sea, while Greece claims more than 3,000. Given the higher number of Greek islands, Turkey has long maintained that any expansion of Greek maritime claims from six nautical miles (nm) to 12 nm off Greece's shores would constitute a "casus belli," or cause of war. While Greece and Turkey have nearly gone to war several times over disputes in the Aegean Sea, the two countries have so far avoided declaring full EEZs in the region, as well as claiming territorial waters beyond six nautical miles. But that doesn't mean they can't do so in the future. Ankara has argued that if both Greece and Turkey extended their claims beyond 12 nm, Turkey's percent ownership of the territory would only marginally increase, while Greece would see its territorial control reach nearly three-quarters of the entire Aegean Sea. The use of Greece's islands in the Aegean Sea to demarcate a maritime border for EEZs, which extend up to 200 nm from the coast, would also leave Turkey with virtually no rights to the natural resources and fisheries in the Aegean Sea. Turkey has argued that a more equitable way to split the sea's resources would be by ignoring the islands altogether and starting off with an equidistant line between the Greek and Turkish mainlands. Ankara Takes Action By more aggressively flexing its claims through energy exploration and naval exercises in the eastern Mediterranean, Turkey is trying to both legitimize its declared EEZ claim, as well as delegitimize any potential EEZ claims in the region that Greece has through its islands of Crete, Rhodes and Kastellorizo. Kastellorizo, in particular, has the potential to generate a significant EEZ claim for Greece that could connect to Cyprus's own claimed EEZ, thus significantly limiting Turkish claims to resources between Crete and Cyprus. Further escalation could result in Greece finally claiming its full EEZ in the eastern Mediterranean, which Athens has so far been reluctant to do for fear of spurring a wider conflict. Protected by a Turkish naval convoy, Turkey's Oruc Reis surveying vessel has been active throughout the Mediterranean Sea since the beginning of the year. Turkey's December 2019 maritime agreement with Libya's Government of National Accord aims to legitimize Turkey's claims by establishing a border between Turkish and Libyan waters that ignores Crete and Kastellorizo. On Aug. 27, the Greek parliament ratified a maritime border agreement with Egypt aimed at countering Turkey's pact with Libya by legitimizing a potential EEZ border generated via its control of Crete with Egypt. Greece's deal with Egypt is a first step in potentially declaring a full EEZ in the eastern Mediterranean, but the agreement with Egypt does not legitimize potential claims that Kastellorizo could give Greece rights to. Turkey has also been actively attempting to delegitimize Cyprus' claimed EEZ in the eastern Mediterranean by both conducting energy exploration in waters that Cyprus directly claims, as well as harassing foreign companies that are operating on behalf of the Cypriot government. Turkey has argued that Cyprus' claimed EEZ is not legal because it was not done in coordination with the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which Ankara recognizes as a legitimate government for all of Cyprus. Turkey also argues that, as an island, Cyprus cannot claim a full EEZ. Turkey's Yavuz vessel is currently drilling off the coast of Western Cyprus. Turkey's Barbados vessel is also currently researching in the Northern Cyprus territorial waters that Turkey recognizes as a part of an oil exploration block held by the state-owned Turkish Petroleum Corporation. In 2018, the Turkish navy prevented the Italian oil firm Eni from drilling on its Cuttlefish prospect in an exploration block the company received from Cyprus. The Specter of War Turkey's increased provocations will continue to drive the United States and other NATO countries, including France and Greece, to boost their own naval presence in the eastern Mediterranean. Both Turkey and Greece will try to refrain from crossing red lines that could spur a larger confrontation that neither wants, but the higher presence of ships in the eastern Mediterranean will nonetheless increase the possibility of incidents, as evidenced by the Aug. 10 collision between the Greek frigate Limnos and the Turkish frigate Kemal Reis. International mediation would likely avoid further escalation to a military conflict between Greece and Turkey, but is unlikely to result in a diplomatic solution to their dispute. In the case of a wider crisis, most NATO members would view Turkey as the aggressor and would likely back Greece. This would likely reinforce Ankara's overall pursuit of its maritime strategy and intensifying national security push by offering Turkey further proof that NATO does not prioritize its national security priorities. Countries can only leave NATO on their own accord, which Turkey remains is unlikely to do. Instead, Ankara would probably continue to reduce collaboration with NATO countries. Despite Cyprus and Greece's calls for a more significant response to deter Turkey's behavior, the European Union will likely be hesitant to impose more drastic measures for fear of prompting Ankara to reduce cooperation on migration and other EU priorities. Unless Turkey starts to more directly protect its claims in the Aegean Sea, fires upon a Greek or another European vessel, or conducts drilling or exploration activities around Crete, Brussels will likely limit its sanctions pressure to companies and individuals supporting Turkish activities in the Mediterranean. Decisions on implementing EU sanctions require unanimity among the bloc's member states. And some countries, such as Germany, are more concerned about aggressive sanctions only inflaming Brussels' tensions with Turkey. If the European Union does not take significant action on Turkey, Cyprus is now threatening to veto proposed EU sanctions against Belarus amid the country's ongoing political crisis. This may result in slightly stronger EU sanctions that target more Turkish individuals and companies, but more broad-based economic sanctions against the Turkish government remain unlikely. Energy Projects in the Crossfire The United States will likely let the European Union continue to take the lead in responding to Turkey's attempts to delegitimize Greek and Cypriot maritime claims, but Chevron's recent entry into the eastern Mediterranean could eventually draw Washington more directly into the conflict. On July 20, Chevron announced an agreement to acquire the Houston-based oil and gas firm Noble Energy, which operates both the Leviathan gas field off the coast of Israel and the Aphrodite gas field off the coast of Cyprus. Ankara, however, will likely adopt a more hands-off approach to U.S. companies operating in the region, as the United States would be more willing to impose hardline sanctions in response to American firms being drawn into its maritime disputes. By continuing to increase the cost of developing resources in Cypriot waters, Turkey's ongoing harassment of foreign energy firms will drive its neighbors closer together on both maritime security and energy exploration issues. But it could also potentially halt their construction of the proposed East Med pipeline. Cyprus, Egypt, Greece and Israel created the East Mediterranean Gas Forum in 2019. The quartet has since collaborated to construct the roughly $6 billion pipeline project, which would carry natural gas from the eastern Mediterranean to Europe. Under international law, Turkey is technically required to allow other countries to build pipelines through its EEZ. But Ankara retains the power to demand that any constructors of the East Med pipeline adhere to its environmental reviews and oversight, which would be de facto recognition of Turkey's EEZ. Otherwise, Turkey could send its navy to harass or intercept vessels involved with construction as Ankara did in 2018 with a drillship planning to spud a well in Cypriot waters.

### Turns Case — Cohesion

#### Even if it doesn’t escalate it destroys NATO cohesion

Salacanin 20 — Stasa Salacanin, Author for Inside Arabia. 10/21/2020. “NATO’s Dilemma Over Greece-Turkey Friction”, Inside Arabia, https://insidearabia.com/natos-dilemma-over-greece-turkey-friction/ WMK

Tensions between Turkey and Greece have increased after a series of disputes over the interpretation of international maritime law and territorial waters in the Eastern Mediterranean, where rich gas deposits have been found. Last month, Greek and Turkish military ships collided in contested waters near the Greek island of Kastellorizo, which lies just 2 km (1.2 miles) from the Turkish coast. Turkish military vessels guarded the country’s seismic research ship. This flexing of military muscles has raised concerns of confrontation between the two NATO members, who share a long history of disputes.

In short, while Greece has insisted that a country’s continental shelf should be measured from islands that belong to a particular state – an interpretation that has been supported by the UN Law of the Sea –Turkey builds its case by claiming that a nation’s continental shelf should be measured from its mainland coast.

Turkey’s exploration of the Mediterranean for hydrocarbons has pushed it at loggerheads over energy resources with many other countries in the region. Ankara has been criticized for its foreign and security policies, which have often been seen as incompatible with the interests of NATO members. Many analysts suggest that one of the main causes for the current discord with Turkey lies in Ankara’s implementation of the Blue Homeland Doctrine developed over 15 years ago, that seeks to expand Turkey’s influence in the Mediterranean as well as the Black Sea, and to exploit energy and other resources.

The disagreement grew when Greece signed a maritime deal with Egypt in August, to counter Ankara’s agreement with the Tripoli-based Government of National Accord, which defines the maritime border between Turkey and Libya, and permits Turkey to jointly exploit energy sources in the Mediterranean. The accord has triggered a series of incidents in the Mediterranean, adding to the list of Turkey’s unilateral moves in Syria and Libya as well as the decision to buy Russian S-400, and pushing Ankara in serious odds with NATO and the EU.

NATO has tried to de-escalate the situation. Its Chief, Jens Stoltenberg, encouraged the Greek and Turkish sides to engage in dialogue, along with Germany and the US—two influential NATO members seeking to take a mediator role in the dispute. The EU, however, explicitly threatened Turkey with sanctions if it continues with its unilateral drilling activities and aggressive moves.

Although NATO has never been designed to adjudicate disputes between its members, the alliance has developed some basic deconfliction arrangements, such as minimum distances between aircrafts and ships and the establishment of hotlines.

The later has been set up as a military mechanism to prevent serious clashes following talks between Turkey and Greece at the NATO headquarters in Brussels. The hotline will enable direct communication between the two sides, similar to one that was installed during the Cold War between Moscow and Washington.

While current initiatives may calm the brewing tension in the short run, it is obvious that NATO faces much deeper dilemmas, which seriously undermine its cohesion.

According to Barah Mikaïl, Founding Director of Stractegia – a Madrid-based consultancy specializing in Middle Eastern geopolitics, this is why NATO’s Secretary-General is trying to mediate between the two countries. “NATO – and most of its members – know that they need to calm things down if they want to maintain NATO’s image of cohesion. They also know that Turkey is an important military, geographic, and strategic partner, and that if they don’t handle all this with care, they could be facing a fierce and aggressive reaction from Turkey,” he told Inside Arabia.

It seems that Turkey is trying to write a new set of rules while testing the patience of the alliance, knowing that it is an important geostrategic member of NATO. On the other hand, Tarik Basbugoglu, a PhD candidate at Glasgow Caledonian University in Scotland and an expert on Turkey’s foreign policy, explained that although Turkey does not want to leave NATO, it has been disappointed over the lack of understanding and solidarity it received regarding the Gulenist military coup, Turkish military operations in Syria against Syrian Kurds, and Turkish policy in the broader MENA region.

In Mikaïl’s view, Turkey is trying to get the maximum benefit before it takes a break and considers negotiations, recognizing that it is in a position of power. “It did so in Libya; it tried to do so in Syria; it is pushing in the same way on Nagorno Karabakh—of course, Ankara/Erdogan could always push things beyond some red lines and create a risk zone, but Turks also know where to stop,” Mikaïl explained. “And they know how to pressure NATO in order to get what they want, and to make themselves feared and taken [seriously],” he added.

Nevertheless, it seems that NATO has become ~~paralyzed~~ [immobilized] over the Turkey-Greece issue—two nominal allies that have never been very friendly.

Basbugoglu observes that although the Trump administration seemed to be neutral towards the recent Turkish-Greek tensions, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo went to Cyprus and Greece to calm down both sides. He recalls that Pompeo warned the Turkish government to not escalate the friction by sending the Oruc Reis survey vessel to the East Mediterranean during his Cyprus visit.

Yet, Basbugoglu noted, the US Embassy in Turkey expressed its support to Ankara by saying that the US did not accept the Sevilla map which increases the maritime border zones of Greece. Therefore, according to Basbugoglu, “the Trump leadership sought to play a constructive role in decreasing the tensions in the East Mediterranean.”

However, in Mikaïl’s opinion, it is impossible to broker between Greece and Turkey without taking sides, as their demands are diametrically opposed. “This is why an ‘external’ mediation may be needed, but there is not much NATO can do since it also cares about keeping in its ranks a country [Turkey] that is essential for both its military and geographic projection – especially towards Russia, the endless raison d’être for NATO,” he added.

Moreover, by being overly obsessed with Russia and focusing primarily on its eastern flank, NATO has long neglected its southern flank that is highly vulnerable and exposed to the destructive impact of Middle Eastern conflicts and growing tensions among its members.

Furthermore, in the absence of firm leadership, NATO has not been able to respond to the particular interests of some of its larger members. Thus countries like Turkey often pursued their own geopolitical tactics which collided with the aims of other members of the alliance, causing frictions that seriously undermine the stability and very foundation of the organization.

### AT: No Greece Divisionary War

#### Erdogan divisionary war escalates and collapses NATO

Cropsey 6/23 — Seth Cropsey is founder and president of Yorktown Institute. He served as a naval officer and as deputy undersecretary of the Navy Seth Cropsey , "Diversionary war: Turkey’s actions against Greece are a growing threat to NATO," Hill, 6-23-2022, https://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/3534155-diversionary-war-turkeys-actions-against-greece-are-a-growing-threat-to-nato/, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

Turkish obstructionism against Swedish and Finnish NATO membership, its limited offensive in Iraq, and its prospective offensive in Syria have grabbed international attention. But more significant is Turkey’s growing diplomatic tension with Greece, an ever-festering lesion that threatens to burst.

Considering Turkey’s domestic situation and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the United States must be wary. Turkish President Recip Tayyip Erdogan could capitalize on international distraction and wage a diversionary war to boost his popularity, a conflict that would disrupt NATO’s cohesion and threaten the alliance.

Washington should act now to resolve the current incarnation of this long-standing Mediterranean dispute.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan has dominated Turkish politics since 2001, when his AKP party first won a two-thirds parliamentary majority. Although Erdogan was banned from Turkish politics for anti-secular incitement, his prime ministerial — and, later, presidential — predecessor, Abdullah Gül, until the mid-2010s at least, was functionally a stand-in for him. Erdogan may have restricted his Islamist proclivities and international assertiveness until he consolidated power in 2014-2016. However, Turkey’s break with the United States over the latter’s invasion of Iraq, and Turkey’s growing hostility towards Israel, indicated a deeper rift between Washington and Ankara. Erdogan consistently sought a greater regional role; through diplomatic pressure against Israel culminating with the Gaza Flotilla — a bald-faced attempt to prompt a confrontation with Israel — Erdogan hoped to position himself as the spiritual leader of the Islamic world.

The Arab Spring, however, transformed the regional balance. No power could pretend that the “Palestine Question” still defined regional politics. The Libyan and Syrian civil wars, and the subsequent rise of ISIS, thrust Islamism to the fore once again, while Iranian expansion in Iraq, Syria and Lebanon demonstrated the relevance of traditional coalition competition, rather than religious rivalry.

Turkey’s response has been to sharpen its shift away from the United States by alternating between Russophilic and Russophobic policies.

The Levantine maelstrom that began in Syria and exploded in Iraq stoked Turkish fears of Kurdish revanchism. Even before that, Russian presence in Syria prompted Turkey to pursue a more aggressive policy, supporting Islamist elements in the Syrian opposition and destroying a Russian Su-24 that briefly violated Turkish airspace. Two years later, Turkey agreed to purchase S-400 anti-air systems from Russia that, in 2019, prompted its ejection from the West’s F-35 fighter-jet program and U.S. sanctions.

More generally, Turkey asserted itself militarily since 2016, intervening directly in Syria and Libya. In the latter conflict, Turkey aligned with the Tripoli-based Government of National Accord, opposing the Tobruk-based French-, Russian-, Emirati- and Egyptian-supported House of Representatives. Although fighting there has subsided, tensions may again explode — and by striking a territorial deal in Libya, Turkey can lay claims to the Eastern Mediterranean’s natural gas deposits, threatening Israel, Egypt and Greece.

Turkish actions during the Ukraine war have indicated Ankara’s desire to return to the Western fold. Initially, Turkey refrained from engaging, likely seeking to determine if Ukraine would collapse within days. However, three days into the war, when it became apparent Ukraine would resist, Turkey closed the Bosphorus Straits to Russia; Russian Black Sea Fleet warships in the Levantine Basin can still return to their home port in Sevastopol, but their inability to sortie from Sevastopol into the Mediterranean will disrupt Russian outer naval defenses in the long-term.

Turkey also attempted to position itself as a mediator between Kyiv and Moscow, and it spearheaded a half-hearted attempt (albeit with great public fanfare) to ensure grain exports from Ukraine.

Yet, Turkey’s resistance to Swedish and Finnish NATO memberships is a ploy to extract concessions from Washington: If the Biden administration reinstates Turkey in the F-35 program and approves F-16 sales, Erdogan likely will relent.

Buying Turkish acquiescence is no way to ensure a long-term strategic partnership, however. Indeed, Erdogan is laying the groundwork for another Greco-Turkish confrontation.

The focal point, once again, is Cyprus. Greece and Cyprus are linked by ethno-linguistic ties, political history and strategic interest. If Crete “caps” the Aegean, Cyprus provides Greece a pressure point against any Anatolian or Near Eastern power that would threaten it. Greece maintains a small military force in Cyprus, is a supplier to Cyprus’ small National Guard, and is a crucial Cypriot trading partner. However, in 1974, Turkey invaded Cyprus, capturing a third of the island and collapsing the Greek military junta that had organized a coup in Cyprus earlier that year. Turkey has not annexed Cyprus outright, instead establishing a satellite state on the island’s north that only Ankara recognizes. The current situation is tenable, although Turkey has used Northern Cyprus to tacitly extend its presence in the Levantine Basin.

Turkey’s agreement with Libya solidified its claims to the Eastern Mediterranean’s petrochemicals. With the Libyan civil war’s apparent conclusion, and Turkey’s desire to return to the Western camp, Erdogan might be expected to refrain from spoiling Greco-Turkish relations with moves in Cyprus or elsewhere — but he has done the opposite. Turkey has struck a major economic deal with Northern Cyprus that would increase Ankara’s direct leverage over the statelet; it would list Ercan airport, Northern Cyprus’s international aerial hub, as a domestic destination on Turkish flights. Cypriot authorities fear this is the first step towards outright annexation, which would shatter a UN-brokered ceasefire and undoubtedly prompt a Greek military response. Erdogan has also leveled threats over Greece’s alleged militarization of Aegean islands, despite Greece’s long-standing military presence in the Aegean.

In turn, an escalating economic crisis is ravaging Turkey. Food and energy supply disruptions have sharpened inflationary pressures with which Turkey has grappled since 2017. Erdogan’s refusal to increase interest rates and tighten the money supply is an advanced form of macro-economic foolishness; in 2021, the Turkish lira’s value was slashed by half. Yet inflation remains at 60-plus percent and is likely to climb.

Erdogan’s AKP lost ground in nearly all major cities in the 2019 local elections. As the 2023 parliamentary and presidential elections approach, Erdogan may seek to distract domestic attention with a major foreign policy crisis, such as a confrontation with Greece.

#### Erdogan starts a war with Greece if there is voter backlash to his policies

Solomou 6/13 — John Solomou "Erdogan escalates rhetoric against Greece and mobilizes Imams in his re-election bid," ThePrint, 06-13-2022, https://theprint.in/world/erdogan-escalates-rhetoric-against-greece-and-mobilizes-imams-in-his-re-election-bid/994307/, accessed 6-25-2022, WMK

As Turkey is facing a serious economic crisis, Erdogan, seeing his popularity falling rapidly in repeated opinion polls, is trying to win votes by escalating his rhetoric against Greece and by mobilizing the big network of imams to persuade Turkish expatriates to vote for him.

Speaking after watching military exercises in Izmir, on the same day he confirmed that he will run in the June 2023 elections, Erdogan increased tensions with Turkey's neighbour Greece, warning Athens to stop arming Aegean islands that do not have a military status.

In Turkey's view, the Aegean islands were given to Greece under the 1923 Lausanne Treaty and the 1947 Paris Treaty on the condition that they would not be armed. Ankara accuses Greece of having military units and weapons systems mainly on the Dodecanese islands in East Aegean.

"I warn Greece to avoid dreams, acts and statements that will result in regret. Come to your senses, " Erdogan said and added that Turkey will not renounce its rights in the Aegean and will not back down from using rights that are established by international agreements when it comes to arming islands."

Erdogan's coalition partner and leader of the ultra-nationalist MHP Party Devlet Bahceli also accused Greece of escalating tensions and said that the Greeks are playing with fire.

"The question of the Dodecanese islands, which is the continuation of Anatolia, is a wound that has not yet closed," declared Bahceli and ominously added: "The stolen items must be returned to the owner, whether voluntarily or by force."

Furthermore, Bahceli claimed that the nine military bases that the US has set up in Greece are a threat to Turkey's national identity. "Greece's request for F-15 and F-16 aircraft from the US is not an invitation to peace, but to polarization, " he said.

The response of the Greek Government is that Turkey deliberately misinterprets the treaties regarding armed forces on these Greek islands and insists that it has legal grounds to defend itself in the face of Ankara's hostile actions.

Ankara has recently launched a barrage of violations of Greek airspace. Greek aircraft always identify and intercept the Turkish fighter jets.

It is noted that in the summer of 2020, the ongoing dispute between Athens and Ankara over significant gas deposits in the eastern Mediterranean almost led to a military conflict after Turkish research ships had been crossing Greek waters for many days.

Erdogan in the past few weeks has kept lashing out at Greece, trying to "put it in its place", threatening it with severe consequences. He does this because, on the one hand, he sees Athens as a soft and easy target, and, on the other, he increases tensions with NATO ally Greece as a leverage on the United States regarding his plans to invade northern Syria and to get recognition of his demands on the energy resources of Eastern Mediterranean.

The Turkish President and his ultra-nationalist ally Bahceli have seen their popularity falling in opinion polls and fear a voter backlash, as Turkey's inflation keeps soaring at 73 per cent, while energy and food prices are reaching unprecedented heights, unemployment keeps rising and the value of the Turkish Lira is declining rapidly.

That is why on March 31, the Turkish Parliament, where Erdogan's AKP and Bahceli MHP currently control the majority, voted to lower the election threshold from 10 to 7 per cent, because polls showed that MHP will remain under the 10 required per cent threshold in a possible election.

Erdogan is also greatly worried about the declining popularity of his own party AKP, because the latest opinion polls show that the support it enjoys has fallen to 27.7 per cent, from the 42.6 per cent it scored in the 2018 elections. So, Erdogan needs every single vote he can get to narrow the gap with the opposition parties.

#### Erdogan uses Greece as a diversionary target

Ellis 6-22-2022, international advisor at RIEAS (Research Institute for European and Amerian Studies) in Athens (Robert, “Is Turkey a Committed NATO Member?,” National Interest, https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/turkey-committed-nato-member-203153)//BB

Facing presidential and parliamentary elections next June, it is essentially Erdogan’s future that hangs in the balance, not to speak of Turkey’s. Sagging behind in the polls, Erdogan faces defeat from two of his rivals, Kemal Kilicdaroglu, leader of the CHP (Republican People’s Party), Atatürk’s old party, and Ekrem Imamoglu, the mayor of Istanbul. It was Imamoglu who three years ago defeated the AKP’s candidate in a re-run of the mayoral election, engineered by Erdogan. Now an attempt is being made to nobble Imamoglu’s candidacy with a charge of “insult,” carrying a four-year jail sentence. Ten years ago, Erdogan declared it was the government’s intention to raise “a pious generation,” but already the following year his plan backfired with the Gezi Park protests, which spread to most of Turkey. Therefore, it must come as a disappointment that more than half of Turkey’s first-time voters have declared they will never vote for him. The overriding issue for most Turkish voters is the economy, which in the view of former Turkish economy minister, Ali Babacan, is on the verge of bankruptcy. The Turkish lira is in free fall and raging inflation, which in May reached 73 percent, has left 90 percent of the population struggling to make ends meet. As the Bipartisan Policy Center earlier pointed out, Erdogan relied on the narrative of a booming economy for electoral success but now he is facing the backlash. Russian economist Sergei Gurlev writes of a similar pattern in Putin’s Russia, when Russia’s GDP growth slowed to almost zero and Vladimir Putin’s approval ratings dropped. According to Gurlev, Putin decided to address an economic problem with a non-economic solution, the annexation of Crimea, which boosted his popularity. Erdogan has followed the same recipe. For example, when Turkey invaded and occupied Afrin, a Kurdish enclave in northwestern Syria, in 2018, it gained him support from almost 90 percent of the electorate. Now he is playing the same card again, using security concerns to justify a new incursion into northern Syria and block Finland and Sweden’s NATO membership. A “special operation” targeting Greece’s Aegean islands would also be grist to Erdogan’s mill.

#### The probability of war has never been higher—its try or die to prevent Erdogan popular support collapse

Rubin 20 — Michael Rubin Michael Rubin is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), "War Between Greece and Turkey Is Now a Real Possibility," National Interest, 7-24-2020, https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/war-between-greece-and-turkey-now-real-possibility-165465, accessed 6-20-2022 WMK

There has never been any love lost between Turkey and Greece, but the danger of war between the two NATO members has not been this high since the Cyprus conflict more than forty-five years ago. In the past, Turkey and Greece have gone to the brink, but policies initiated by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan may very much push the two neighbors over the edge.

Greek and Turkish fighter jets engaged in mock dogfights this week over the Greek island of Kastellorizo, just a mile and a half from the Turkish coast, causing tourists to flee. Meanwhile, there is a growing risk that the Turkish and Greek navies will clash, hundreds of miles to the west if Turkey pushes forward with its plans to survey for has in Greece’s exclusive economic zone. Greek officials say that all options are on the table, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel has rushed to mediate as U.S. officials remain largely absent.

### AT: Other Divisionary War Scenarios

#### War against Greece is the most likely scenario for diversion

Atlamazoglou 21 — Atlamazoglou, Defense journalist specializing in special operations, a Hellenic Army, and a Johns Hopkins University graduate. “What A War Between Greece And Turkey Would Look Like” October 18th. 2021. <https://www.19fortyfive.com/2021/10/what-a-war-between-greece-and-turkey-would-look-like/> WMK

A conflict between Greece and Turkey could spark in several different—intentional and accidental—ways. The two countries could go to war over an islet dispute—of which there are hundreds in the Aegean Sea, which borders the two countries—after an escalation following an air or naval accident—there have been several over the years—or in an attempt to placate domestic unrest—in the case of Turkey.

It’s important to note that in all of the above scenarios, Turkey would be the aggressor. Contrary to Ankara, Athens has no revisionist or expansionist aspirations. Greece doesn’t weaponize illegal immigrants to pressure Turkey into concessions. Greece doesn’t violate Turkey’s air space with armed fighter jets multiple times a day. Greece doesn’t send survey ships, accompanied by warships, in the exclusive economic zones of other countries.

Ruling a country with approximately 83 million people and a gross domestic product of close to $800 billion, Erdogan sees Greece, which has a population of 10 million and about $210 billion GDP, as a small nuisance. But a nuisance that is standing between Ankara’s ambition to expand its influence in the Mediterranean, Middle East, and Africa.

With the Turkish economy in a free fall without a parachute, Erdogan might try to appease domestic displeasure and unrest with foreign adventures. With his numbers falling, Erdogan might try to do something before the 2023 elections.

### AT: No Divisionary War—Generic

#### Empirics prove—Erdogan uses diversion to distract from domestic problems

Kara 22 — Mehtap Kara Mehtap Kara. Department of Political Science and International Relations, Bahçeşehir Cyprus University, Nicosia, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. (2022): Linking Turkey’s domestic politics and foreign policy: the justice and development party’s political strategies and their divergent foreign policy effects, Turkish Studies, DOI: 10.1080/14683849.2022.2060082 WMK

The AKP government continued to manipulate the country’s foreign policy through military operations and escalated tension with foreign countries to contain domestic opposition, especially (as noted in Figure 1) prior to elections or whenever the approval rating of the government declined.46 A series of incidents and dog fights between the Turkish and Greek warplanes in April 2018 before the snap elections in June is an example of these policies.47 Turkey’s traditional competition with Greece and the RoC was periodically used to increase tension and mobilize the nationalist base and distract people’s attention from problems at home.48 During this episode with Greece and the RoC, Bahçeli and Erdoğan submitted another joint proposal to move the elections forward (originally scheduled to be held in November 2019), and on June 24th, the presidential election and parliamentary elections were held on the same day. Although the AKP failed to secure the necessary majority of 300 deputies in the election, its alliance with the MHP gained 342 out of 600 seats. Interestingly, the new system was designed to reduce the possibility of coalitions to ensure that coalition governments were not able to return decades of instability. However, the AKP failed to obtain the 300 deputies needed for the majority of the seats in the first general election of this new system. Therefore, it had no choice but to continue cooperating with the MHP. Hale points out that in the American presidential system, if a president lacks the majority in Congress, then a ‘log-rolling’ method is utilized, which requires compromise and individual persuasion.49 Under the new presidential system, the AKP adopted a log-rolling strategy to maintain its parliamentary majority. The AKP gained the MHP’s support after the failed coup attempt, but following the June 2018 election, it became dependent on the MHP’s support in the National Assembly. Along with the mobilization strategy, the AKP also adopted insulation and accommodation strategies against its ostensible ally. The AKP-MHP alliance is a nationalistic partnership, and it is based on the creation of external problems and military engagement abroad like the ‘forever war’ where conflicts constantly remain in the political background. Neack describes this as Hagan’s ‘insulation strategy with a twist’ where the coalition of elites wants to stay in power by creating ‘an external situation that diverts attention from them, insulating them from critical domestic opponents and popular demands.’ 50 The MHP exerted a greater influence on Turkish politics as the AKP needed its help to pass legislation. Thus, the alliance empowered the MHP to actively participate in the country’s foreign policymaking process. However, this alliance has been faced with challenges and a clash of interests. The MHP proposed a partial amnesty law in May 2018, but the AKP chose to insulate the MHP by overriding this request and rejected the proposal (this was before the election in June and the AKP’s dependency on the MHP). The Student Oath issue became another divisive problem between the AKP-MHP partnership that led the MHP to suspend the People’s Alliance during the local elections in March 2019. Bahçeli announced that his party would not use the alliance to propose joint candidates. Later, he agreed not to nominate any candidate for big cities and announced his party’s support for the AKP’s candidate in Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir. This example illustrates how the AKP utilized an insulation strategy along with a mobilization strategy where policymaking elites gained support for their policies, but also coopted the MHP to achieve a dual agenda of staying at power and building a coalition. At this point, insulation and mobilization strategies were entwined, making it difficult to indicate where insulation ends and mobilization begins. Neack’s statement of ‘insulation with a twist’ points out the complexity and difficulty of implicitly separating these two strategies from each other. In February and March 2019, the TAF launched the ‘Blue Homeland’ naval exercise simultaneously in the Black Sea, Aegean Sea, and Mediterranean. This action allowed the AKP-MHP coalition to pursue coercive policies and gunboat diplomacy against Greece, but was also intended to regain domestic support to achieve their policy objectives. The word ‘homeland’ has a strong meaning for the Turkish population, which is oversensitive about national sovereignty, especially due to the failed coup attempt. Military training was also held a few weeks before the 2019 local elections. However, despite the MHP’s support and naval training that appealed to nationalists, the AKP lost to CHP candidates in all of the big cities. In response, the AKP applied to the Supreme Electoral Council to annul election in Istanbul, while also launching a cross-border military operation, ‘Operation Claw’, in Northern Iraq against Kurdish separatists before the June 23rd re-run election election in Istanbul, which was similar to its 2015 general re-election strategy. In addition, in May, the government also announced that Turkish ships would drill for natural gas off the southern coast of the RoC and sent two drill ships that were accompanied by Turkish naval frigates and three gunboats.51 Nevertheless, this mobilization strategy and manipulation of Turkish foreign policy in the Eastern Mediterranean and cross-border operations in Iraq failed to bring the desired result. The CHP’s candidate, Ekrem İmamoğlu won again by increasing his margin from 13,000 to nearly 775,000 votes.52 The CHP’s victory in Istanbul demonstrated declining support for the AKP’s policies and ended the 25-year rule of Erdoğan in Istanbul. Despite this failure, it is clear that Turkey’s cross-border operations to address security concerns and assertive policies in the Eastern Mediterranean correlate with general/local election dates. Therefore, the timing of these policies/operations further strengthens suspicions that the AKPMHP alliance intentionally exploits and manipulates Turkey’s national security and national interest related issues to suppress and prevail over domestic opposition. Economic problems have become the most important domestic challenge to the AKP. The Turkish lira (TL) has dramatically lost value, falling against the US dollar from 4.70 on July 2018–18.05 by December 2021. Weak institutions, declining rule of law, growing political influence over the judiciary, and failed monetary policies have negatively affected foreign direct investments (FDI) in Turkey. According to the World Investment Report, FDI inflow to Turkey was reported at $19 billion in 2015, fell to $13.5 billion in 2016, $11 billion in 2017, and dropped to $9.2 billion in 2019.53 The failed coup attempt, political instability, deepening problems with the West over the Kurdish issue, and the snap elections in 2018 contributed to declining FDI inflows and Turkish economic performance. Erdoğan portrayed the economic crisis as an economic war against ‘the devil’s triangle of interest and exchange rates and inflation.’ 54 He compared current economic problems with the War of Independence that Turkey fought against the Western imperialist powers almost a century ago. In this way, he identified this new ‘war’ as another historical fight against those who want to divide the Turkish nation through terror attacks, coup attempts, and economic restrictions.55 Erdoğan framed the country’s struggles as ‘us vs them’ or ‘Turkey vs the West’, which allegedly tries to weaken and destabilize Turkey.56 Through anti-Western rhetoric, Erdoğan not only found a means to exploit nationalism, but also portrayed the AKP-MHP alliance as an ultimate force to fight against foreign enemies. The ongoing anti-terror operations in Syria and Iraq, and Turkish military activism abroad were also presented as a part of Turkey’s historical fight against its enemies. The nationalistic rhetoric and military operations, while appealing to the nationalist base at home, also discourage foreign investors and further deepen the country’s economic problems. However, the parties in the Nation Alliance were hesitant to oppose Turkey’s military operations. They did not want to be labeled as being against Turkey’s national security interests or pro-American and pro-Western, which would only strengthen the AKP-MHP alliance’s hand domestically. Turkey’s military activism against Kurdish militias to contain domestic opposition also weakened domestic support for pro-Kurdish HDP. Following the US withdrawal from Syria in the fall of 2019, the TAF launched largest operation in Syria, ‘Operation Peace Spring’, to create a 32km (20-mile) safe zone along the Syrian border. With this operation, Turkey aimed to eliminate terror corridors in northeastern Syria, push the Kurdish militia forces back from the Turkish border, and resettle Syrian refugees in the safe zone. The mobilization strategy as a risk-taking strategy escalated the conflict in Syria, and resulted produced costs for Turkey, notably when dozens of Turkish soldiers were killed by Russian-backed Syrian Air Forces in Idlib in February 2020. The government reacted to the incident by lifting the Western sea and land border controls, which allowed refugees to cross into Europe through Greece. The AKP’s reaction was also the result of the EU’s lack of financial commitment to Syrian refugees in Turkey as part of the 2016 migration deal, as well as a lack of support for Turkey’s policies and military operations in Syria. In this way, the government attempted to contain possible negative blowback from the Turkish public, which was increasingly critical of Syrian refugees and less supportive of Turkey’s military operations in Syria. In addition, to prevent domestic opposition and conceal Turkey’s inability to respond to the Russian-backed Assad regime, Turkish elites manipulated the country’s foreign policy and further escalated tension with Greece. Thus, they have aimed to divert people’s attention away from the Idlib incident and foreign policy failures in Syria. 16 M. KARA The AKP has also shifted its insulation strategy vis-à-vis the MHP to one of cooptation with political favors and policy concessions. This shift became visible during the summer of 2020. The AKP agreed to pass the previously rejected amnesty law as a policy concession to contain the MHP and a recognition that ignoring the MHP’s demands and challenges was no longer an option since it did not have a parliamentary majority to rule on its own. The convicted former mafia leader, Alaattin Çakıcı, was released from prison by benefiting from the partial amnesty law.57 Soon thereafter, he posted a threatening letter on Twitter targeting the CHP leader, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, as a response to Kılıçdaroğlu’s criticism of Bahçeli during the party parliamentary group meeting. AKP policymakers initially remained silent to protect their alliance with the MHP, but later initiated a probe against Çakıcı. Bahçeli backed Çakıcı and described him as a ‘son of an ‘Ülkücü’ (an ultra-nationalist) who loves his country and nation.’ 58 Since the AKP’s political survival depends on maintaining an alliance with the MHP, it combined its insulation strategy accommodation by avoiding conflict on this issue. Another example of the accommodation strategy is the AKP’s adoption of the ultra-nationalist rhetoric to show unity with the MHP. This strategy raises an important problem for the AKP’s authority because it provides disproportionate power for the MHP compared to its size in parliament and may lead to unintended consequences.59 Based on the idea of the extremity of coalitions’ foreign policy choices, coalition governments are usually vulnerable to being hijacked by junior parties and are more likely to adopt extreme foreign policy behaviors than single-party governments.60 The hijacking is more likely if the government’s survival depends on the junior party and if the junior party’s ideology is more extreme than the larger parties within the coalition government.61 The MHP offers a life vest for the AKP, but in return, hijacks the government, receives policy concessions, and finds an opportunity to implement its hawkish/nationalist policies. By 2021, Bahçeli was seen as a very powerful person in Ankara, and he pulled Erdoğan toward ultranationalism.62 The AKP-MHP alliance constantly underlines its capacity to provide security and protect Turkey’s national interests against all forms of enemies. Erdoğan claimed that ‘We [the AKP] continue to collaborate with MHP on issues regarding our country’s survival and future.’ 63 His statement stresses that cooperation between the two parties is necessary for a country’s survival rather than party survival. The nationalist approach in the alliance aims to gain support for the government’s policies. Bahçeli uses similar rhetoric and underlines that the People’s Alliance ‘will be the main protector of Turkey’s future.’ 64 He claims that the alliance is‘Turkey’s only hope, its only guarantee against the world.’ 65 He creates imaginary enemies and a ‘Turkey versus the rest’ perception. To this end, the AKP-MHP alliance is no longer only targets opposition figures, journalists, or foreign countries/nationals as the enemy of the state, but anyone who opposes any of their decisions regardless of the issue. Being in opposition or a dissident to the AKP or the alliance is equated with being a terrorist or an enemy of the state who seeks to undermine the country’s prosperity and stability. From university students who protest state-appointed rectors to medical workers who claim that official figures of actual COVID19 cases were manipulated, everyone and anyone can be labeled as an enemy of the state. In addition to military operations, Turkey has also deployed military troops abroad as part of the government’s mobilization strategy. Turkey’s pro-Qatari stance in Qatar dispute with its Gulf neighbors facilitated the deployment of Turkish troops on Qatari soil in June 2017. Turkey also opened its biggest overseas military base in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, in September 2017. Nearly 1,500 Turkish troops have been training Somali soldiers to help rebuild the country. Turkey’s commitment to the Somalis is part of the country’s policy to expand its influence in the Horn of Africa. In November 2019, Turkey signed a memorandum with the UNbacked GNA government in Libya to cooperate on various areas including military, maritime rules, and drilling rights in the Mediterranean.66 The Turkish parliament also approved military assistance and the deployment of Turkish troops in Libya. Turkey’s presence in Libya is a part of the Blue Homeland doctrine and is important for maintaining a country’s assertive policies in the Eastern Mediterranean. Turkey’s cooperation with Libya is also an act of retaliation against the alliance of the RoC, Greece, Egypt, and Israel, which was created to limit Turkey’s regional maneuvers and isolate Turkey from regional issues. Thus, the AKP-MHP alliance portrays the Blue Homeland doctrine from the nationalist narrative and describes it as ‘striking a balance’ that has transformed Turkey into a ‘game setter’ in the Eastern Mediterranean.67 To divert people’s attention from economic problems and the COVID-19 pandemic, Erdoğan also announced the discovery of a total of 405 billion cubic meters of natural gas reserves in the Black Sea, the largest hydrocarbon resource discovery in Turkish history.68 These discoveries were announced as a way to reduce the country’s external dependency on natural gas by appealing to nationalist sentiments. Through this, the AKP-MHP alliance would like to validate the country’s Blue Homeland doctrine and gain support for its adventurous policies. This new doctrine offers an new area of manipulation for Turkish foreign policymakers to contain domestic opposition and change the narrative to something other than Turkey’s somewhat failed policies in Syria. The AKP’s alliance with the MHP is necessary to retain power, but, notably, it also limits the AKP’s foreign policy options on several issues. The AKP’s conflict avoidance strategy on the Çakıcı issue (the AKP initiated the probe case late and is likely to stall the case for years) demonstrates the AKP’s dependency on the MHP. As the accommodation strategy suggests, any significant 18 M. KARA changes in Turkish foreign policy behavior without the MHP’s consent is almost impossible. For instance, it is difficult to initiate a new phase in the Kurdish peace process, make a deal with Greece and the RoC, change policies in Syria, and normalize Turkey’s relations with the US without the MHP’s support or consent. Clashing statements from both sides of the alliance over the recent crisis with Greece highlights this problem. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mevlut Çavuşoğlu, emphasized Turkey’s openness to negotiations in settling differences with Greece. However, Bahçeli claimed that ‘Turkey will not negotiate its interests.’ 69 His statement restricts the AKP’s ability to de-escalate the crisis. Although the AKP and MHP leaders insist on solidarity for the upcoming general election (set to be held in 2023), ongoing economic problems and domestic instabilities continue to undermine constituents’ support for both parties and the alliance.

### AT: NATO Checks

#### NATO doesn’t check

Salacanin 20 — Stasa Salacanin, Author for Inside Arabia. 10/21/2020. “NATO’s Dilemma Over Greece-Turkey Friction”, Inside Arabia, https://insidearabia.com/natos-dilemma-over-greece-turkey-friction/ WMK

Faced with numerous challenges from outside and within, it is rather unclear whether NATO possesses enough capabilities to alleviate rivalries in the Mediterranean.

Basbugoglu believes that while NATO played a crucial role in decreasing the tensions between Turkey and the French-Greek alliance in the East Mediterranean, the bilateral problems within NATO like the Turkish-French spat could decrease its conflict mitigation capacity.

Mikaïl, on the other hand, is not sure if NATO can find a solution and impose it on Turkey and Greece, but he believes it can succeed in moderating stances. Still, unless Ankara gets some benefits from negotiations, it will be hard to soften its stance.

### AT: Erdogan Bad Turn

#### Erdogan is inevitable. He wins now, but if he doesn’t then he starts a diversionary war to maintain popularity.

#### Structural factors prevent changes to Turkey’s fopo—Erdogan was not the problem

Ünlühisarcıklı 22 — Özgür Ünlühisarcıklı is the director of GMF's office in Ankara, Turkey. Özgür Ünlühisarcıklı "It Is Not Too Early to Think About Political Change in Turkey," GMFUS, 1-10-2022, https://www.gmfus.org/news/it-not-too-early-think-about-political-change-turkey, accessed 6-25-2022, WMK

Under any of these scenarios, there would likely be less change in Turkish foreign policy than what foreign observers might expect or desire. Turkey is no exception to the fact that a country’s foreign policy is determined by factors such as history, geography, the international system, the regional balance of power, and national capacity, as well as values, public opinion, and the interests of the ruling elite. The structural factors will continue to play a significant, perhaps dominant role, but values, public opinion, and elite interests may be more variable over time.

Structural factors determine a country’s long-term strategy. However, how this is pursued could change significantly in the case of a change in government.

Democratic reforms—whether limited, as in the “change of season” scenario, or comprehensive, as in the “climate change” scenario—would lead to warmer relations with Europe and the United States. Differences over Iraq, Syria, the Eastern Mediterranean, the Southern Caucasus, or Libya would not just go away. However, warmer relations would mean that these could be managed more effectively without turning into major crises. Turkey has already started to seek a rapprochement with Saudi Arabia and its regional network as well as with Israel to overcome the diplomatic isolation it is facing in its region, but it could do so much more credibly with a new government that does not support the Muslim Brotherhood and similar networks in the Middle East.

A new government would not abandon Turkey’s relationship with Russia, but one that enjoys warmer relations with Western allies would probably frame this relationship in a way that does not conflict with Turkey’s NATO membership. The country would continue to pursue its perceived interests in the Eastern Mediterranean under a new government but, no longer diplomatically isolated, it would use diplomacy as opposed to coercion as its principal tool. In short, Turkish foreign policy would change in style if not essence in the case of a political transition.

#### His predecessors won’t change anything. This answers every scenario

Takins 21 — Hasim Tekines previously worked in the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Prime Ministry. He is currently an MA student at Leiden University focusing on Middle East Studies. Tekines is a contributor to Fikra Forum. M. Hasim Takins — What Would a Post-Erdoğan Turkish Foreign Policy Look Like?. War on the Rocks. Decatur 10th 2021<https://advance-lexis-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:648H-JPG1-JDG9-Y1F0-00000-00&context=1516831>. WMK

Both his admirers and detractors agree that President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has radically transformed Turkish foreign policy. But, if Erdoğan were to leave power, would Turkey’s approach to the world “normalize” and turn back to its pre-Erdoğan settings? With economic conditions in Turkey worsening, public outrage over the country ’ s mismanagement mounting, and Erdoğan ’ s health visibly declining, this question has generated increasing debate.

Under Erdoğan, Turkey has embraced aggressive military initiatives, worked with radical or criminal groups, made friendly overtures to revisionist powers like Russia and China, and distanced itself from Western institutions and values. Yet, it would be misleading to attribute all these changes to Erdoğan or his party.

Beyond any doubt, the absence of a reckless, ambitious, and hot-tempered leader will have a positive impact on decision-making in Ankara. Institutions, particularly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, might have more influence, bringing greater stability and consistency to Ankara ’ s foreign relations. Turkey ’ s NATO and E.U partners would most likely find Erdoğan ’ s successors more agreeable and easier to communicate with.

But, if Erdoğan is voted out of office, no one in Washington or Brussels should expect Turkey to suddenly turn into a docile and obedient ally. Structural changes in the international environment, broader bureaucratic and ideological trends in Turkey, and new facts on the ground that Erdoğan has created will all limit the potential for “normalization” in post-Erdoğan Turkey.

Navigating a Changing World

The first factor to consider is the role of changing global dynamics in encouraging Ankara to look for alternatives to its traditional allies and embrace a more independent foreign policy.

In an increasingly multi-polar world, the Justice and Development Party (AKP) government has improved its relations with countries like Russia, Iran, and China. And, when its interests have diverged from those of its NATO and E.U allies, Turkey has taken unilateral diplomatic and military initiatives such as joining the Astana mechanism together with Russia and Iran or carrying out its own energy exploration in disputed waters in the Eastern Mediterranean.

For Turkish policymakers, Washington ’ s handling of the Syrian civil war exemplified the shift toward a more multi-polar world. President Barack Obama ’ s failure to adhere to his chemical weapons red line in Syria was a major disappointment for Turkey. Tellingly, Ankara initiated negotiations with a Chinese defense company for an FD-2000 missile system in the wake of Obama ’ s 2013 decision, while Erdoğan also reiterated his desire to join Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

More broadly, NATO ’ s hesitant stance toward the dangers Turkey has perceived from Syria sharpened Ankara ’ s sense of loneliness. In 2012, the Syrian military shot down a Turkish military reconnaissance jet, and Syrian rockets hit southern Turkish cities. In 2015, Russian warplanes repeatedly violated Turkish airspace, leading Turkey to shoot down a Russian jet. NATO ’ s failure to wholeheartedly support Turkey in each of these crises helped push Ankara toward a more independent foreign policy.

This is not to say Turkey has managed these new dynamics well. Instead of safely navigating in a changing global and regional environment, Turkey seems to oscillate between great powers. Many in the U.S and European capitals now see Turkey as a hostile power rather than as an ally. Yet, despite this, Ankara has still failed to establish a sound and healthy relationship with Russia and China.

Future Turkish governments will wrestle with the same structural factors but may do so more effectively than the current government. If Washington continues shifting attention to the Asia-Pacific while conducting a rudderless or absentee policy in the Middle East, and if the European Union remains incapable of engaging effectively with developments beyond its borders, Turkish policy will respond accordingly. This does not mean a rupture in Turkey ’ s relations with the United States or the European Union. But it does mean that Ankara will push back if Western audiences don ’ t share its concerns about terrorism or regional crises, especially in Syria and Iraq. In the meantime, Ankara will still have to cooperate with Russia in order to manage the challenges the Syrian crisis poses. And, in parallel with China ’ s growing influence in the region, Ankara might get even closer to Beijing. Regional power vacuums and instability may force Turkey to take direct action. In short, compared to the Cold War period, Ankara may choose a more autonomous way between great powers rather than sticking to its Western allies.

Cross-Party Trends

Key aspects of Turkey ’ s current foreign policy also reflect longstanding bureaucratic and ideological trends that cross party lines.

Turkey has never been shy about using its military might, even before Erdoğan. The annexation of Hatay in 1939 was an early example of Ankara ’ s willingness to back up diplomacy with bribes, guerilla tactics, and the threat of military intervention in order to achieve its expansionist goals. In 1974, Turkey took half of the island of Cyprus and still keeps thousands of its troops there. On-and-off tensions with Greece over maritime issues in the Aegean Sea have escalated into armed confrontations quite often. Turkish intelligence, according to Behlül Özkan, intervened in the Syrian government ’ s conflict with the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1980s by covertly assisting the latter. In 1998, the Turkish military threatened Syria by piling up military units at the Turkish-Syrian border in order to oust Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the Kurdistan Workers ’ Party (PKK), from Damascus. More importantly, the Turkish military has been fighting with the Kurdistan Workers ’ Party for almost 40 years and has carried out countless cross-border operations into Iraqi territories. Hence, it is possible to consider Turkey ’ s recent armed operations as part of this bellicose tradition.

Indeed, Erdoğan ’ s military expansionism has received vigorous support from the military and civil bureaucracy. The inventors and promoters of the concept of “Blue Homeland,” which was coined to express Turkey ’ s maritime objectives in the eastern Mediterranean, were retired generals Cihat Yaycı and Cem Gürdeniz. Ryan Gingeras argues that their popularity in the Turkish media revealed “the ascendency of a more aggressive and antagonistic strain of thought within Turkish security circles” — which implies a more enduring strategic view. Even in the absence of Erdoğan, this line of thought may maintain its dominance in Ankara.

Similarly, there was agreement among the high echelons of the bureaucracy about Turkey ’ s operations in Syria. In a leaked voice recording from 2014, then-Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoglu, his then-undersecretary Feridun Sinirlioğlu, then-Deputy Chief of the General Staff Yasar Güler, and head of intelligence Hakan Fidan were discussing the necessity of intervention, whether be it covertly or militarily. Since then, widespread purges after the 2016 coup attempt have eliminated more restrained views and have homogenized the military bureaucracy. Turkish generals who had defied Erdoğan ’ s plans to carry out a military intervention between 2011 and 2016 have been imprisoned for more than five years.

The Turkish bureaucracy ’ s security-oriented mindset draws a boundary for Turkish foreign policy. Given that regional challenges, instabilities, and a power vacuum will continue to exist for the foreseeable future, armed interventions will continue to be an attractive option for an increasingly more confident bureaucratic elite. What ’ s more, Turkey ’ s non-combat missions, like the Turkish military base in Qatar, provide a lucrative career track for the military elite — which is another bureaucratic incentive to maintain Turkey ’ s military expansionism.

There is also an ideological dimension. Anti-Americanism is not a phenomenon limited to Justice and Development Party voters or ultra-nationalists either. Today, the great majority of Turkish society finds the United States unreliable, while trust in Russia is higher. This hostile suspicion of the United States, which is prevalent among the opposition too, will continue to complicate bilateral relations as Erdoğan ’ s successors will be obliged to demonstrate Turkey ’ s autonomy from the United States. In this context, many of the disputes between Ankara and Washington, such as Halkbank sanctions and U.S -Democratic Union Party (PYD) relations, will not be easy to solve.

The Russian S-400 air defense systems, for example, will continue to pose a challenge to U.S -Turkish relations even after Erdoğan. The attitude that the opposition Republican People ’ s Party (CHP) has adopted toward the S-400 issue falls short of satisfying NATO partners. Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, the party ’ s leader, openly supported the purchase on the grounds of Turkey ’ s urgent need for an air defense system, and he has criticized U.S sanctions against Turkey ’ s sovereign acts. Even though Kılıçdaroğlu later began questioning the necessity of the S-400s, his party ’ s position has not changed dramatically. For example, Ünal Çeviköz, a former career diplomat who serves as Kılıçdaroğlu ’ s foreign policy advisor, not only supports the S-400 purchase but also demands their immediate activation.

The opposition has also supported many of the government ’ s military initiatives. From 2012 up until this year, the Republican People ’ s Party backed bills that mandate the government conduct military operations in Syria, Libya, and Azerbaijan. Kılıçdaroğlu expressed his support for the 2016 Operation Euphrates Shield, the 2018 Afrin operation, and the 2019 Peace Spring operation. After all, in its election bulletin, Kılıçdaroğlu ’ s party promises a withdrawal from Syria after the successful accomplishment of Turkey ’ s military missions there — a position in line with government ’ s current policy.

What ’ s Done Is Done

Turkey ’ s expansionism in recent years has introduced a new reality in the region — a reality that cannot be undone easily. Ankara has made new commitments, become entangled in webs of interests, and made investments in the areas where Turkish troops and intelligence have set foot. Although these are politically, militarily, and economically expensive initiatives, a retreat might be costlier in terms of the regional power balance and domestic political standing. Thus, even if a new Turkish government wants disengagement, withdrawing Turkish troops or ending military engagements would be quite complicated.

In Libya, for example, withdrawing support from the Government of National Accord would be hard if Turkey wants to keep its maritime deal in the Eastern Mediterranean afloat or protect $20 billion worth of business interests. In Syria, the refugee issue, the existence of the Democratic Union Party, and the activities of radical jihadist groups will complicate any withdrawal plan. Turkey ’ s fight against the Kurdistan Workers ’ Party may stimulate new military initiatives in northern Iraq. The drones that have been delivered to Ukraine will be an issue in relations with Russia. Likewise, the Turkish military ’ s (and Turkish drones ’ ) existence in Qatar, the Horn of Africa, and the Caucasus will be potential sources of conflict with the Gulf countries, Egypt, and Iran.

Ankara’s relations with new regional blocs, which have been designed to balance Erdoğan’s government, will be delicate too. Energy resources in the Eastern Mediterranean and Turkey ’ s aggressiveness have facilitated a pact between Egypt, Cyprus, Greece, and Israel, plus the United Arab Emirates. But a new government in Ankara and renewed diplomatic niceties do not automatically mean that this alliance will break, or that Turkey will enter into it. Greco-Turkish rivalry and maritime borders might continue to generate tensions in the region.

The Syrian diaspora in Turkey could also be an influential factor, particularly in Turkey ’ s relations with the Assad regime and Israel. There are 3.6 million registered Syrian refugees in Turkey. The Syrian population in the country is most likely much higher if unregistered immigrants and those who have already received their citizenships are accounted for. Even though the Turkish state, the opposition, and Turkish society hope for these Syrian refugees ’ re-settlement in Syria, it is likely that the great majority of them will stay permanently in Turkey. When they gain the voting rights that come with Turkish citizenship, this new constituency may have long-lasting effects on Turkey ’ s Middle East policy.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Erdoğan has time and again proved how assertiveness and expansionism in foreign policy can be useful in domestic politics. They help to mobilize nationalist sentiments among voters and divert attention away from domestic troubles. Furthermore, throughout the last few years, Turkish voters have enjoyed the feelings of grandeur Turkey ’ s military operations and drones have aroused. The popular demand for mightiness, or the need for diversion from internal problems, could also seduce Erdoğan ’ s successors, who will command a seasoned military force.

#### If he’s too far behind, he’ll rig it—that turns the impact

Daragahi 6/5 — Borzou Daragahi is International Correspondent for The Independent. He has been covering the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, and Europe since 2002, with stints in Tehran, Baghdad, Beirut, Cairo, and now Istanbul. Daragahi, Borzou. "Opinion: The world is unprepared for Turkey’s potentially cataclysmic 2023 elections," 6-5-2022, https://www.independent.co.uk/independentpremium/voices/turkey-erdogan-elections-2023-nato-b2094281.html, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

So far, there is little sign that western nations or any other regional or world power are preparing for any outcome other than a clean Erdogan victory. But Turks are already discussing what could happen if he loses the election and refuses to relinquish power.

Like Belarus dictator Aleksander Lukashenko in 2020, some worry that Erdogan and his allies would cheat so egregiously and crack down on opponents so harshly that world leaders would be unable to sweep the matter under the rug. There is also the possibility that Erdogan wins the presidency but loses the parliament, or that a new centre-left administration comes into power in Ankara and renews demands to enter the EU.

None of this is high on the agenda of western policymakers. They are now focused on trying to convince Erdogan to allow Finland and Sweden to join Nato and bolster the coalition confronting Russia in Ukraine.

"We are not there yet," said one senior western official, when asked what if any preparations were being made for a scenario in Turkey in which protests would be violently crushed, opposition leaders jailed and results possibly forged.

Whether Erdogan defies the polls and cleanly wins, loses and gracefully steps aside to allow the opposition to take over or goes the Lukashenko route, Turkey's Nato allies, neighbours, and western business partners will face big questions.

"I have the feeling that the west is in a waiting mode about what is going to happen in 2023,"says Senem Aydin-Duzgit, a professor of international relations at Istanbul's Sabanci University. "They don't have a plan for what they'll do if the opposition wins. And that baffles me, because it could mean huge changes."

Trailing badly to several prominent opposition figures in multiple polls, Erdogan is already attempting to level the playing field. Turkish courts, heavily packed with loyalists to Erdogan and his Justice and Development Party (AKP), have targeted a number of his opponents on specious criminal charges.

Last month, a court upheld a four-year sentence against Canan Kaftancioglu, head of the centre-left opposition Republican People's Party's (CHP) Istanbul branch, on charges that include insulting Erdogan. The charismatic rising political star is widely considered the architect of the 2019 victory by Istanbul mayor Ekrem Imamoglu over Erdogan's hand-picked candidate.

Imamoglu, among the possible presidential contenders against Erdogan, is facing charges of insulting the country's election commission in a case that was adjourned last week until September.

Meanwhile, Selahattin Demirtas, the youthful onetime leader of the opposition People's Democratic Party (HDP) remains in prison after being locked up in 2016 on various terror-related charges. HDP members, including members of parliament, are regularly arrested and charged with security-related offences.

Erodgan's impending ground incursion against ethnic Kurdish-led armed groups in Syria is meant in part to rally the Turkish public around the flag. He claims hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees, which Turks increasingly consider a burden, will voluntarily relocate to the expanded buffer zone he hopes to forge.

So far, the machinations have failed to win over voters, enraged and disillusioned by what they perceive as economic mismanagement, with inflation reaching a 24-year high of 73.5 per cent.

Multiple opinion polls conducted over months by various firms suggest that Imamoglu, as well as CHP leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu and Ankara mayor Mansur Yavas, would handily trounce Erdogan were elections held now. Despite its legal troubles, HDP still polls over the 10 per cent threshold necessary to win a parliamentary bloc.

On the other hand, Erdogan's coalition partner, the far-right Nationalist Movement Party, has sunk to single digits while the CHP's partner, the Good or Iyi Party has become the country's third most popular political group.

All this points to a trouncing that few who know the pugnacious Erdogan and have closely watched Turkey over the years believe he would accept. Erdogan has a track record of refusing to bow down in the face of electoral setbacks. In 2015, after faring poorly in general elections, he engineered a second election in which the AKP did well enough to govern without a coalition. In 2019, he refused to accept Imamoglu's narrow victory, demanding another election, which Imamoglu won even more handily.

Many dread the political upheavals that could erupt in the Nato nation in 2023 - or sooner if Erdogan decides to call early elections. While staff at western embassies and consulates have begun quiet discussions for the sake of the security of their personnel and to offer up potential policy options, key decision-makers in western capitals have yet to place Turkey on their agendas.

"I really worry about it," says Nicholas Danforth, a Turkey expert at the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy. "I don't think anyone has a plan."

Among the options that could be considered in case Erdogan seeks to egregiously steal the election are sanctions, an arms embargo or expulsion from the Council of Europe. "It would probably depend on how ugly it was," says Danforth. "If there were protests and violence and arrests, I could see some slightly stronger measures."

Western leaders will be careful. If they punish Erdogan too harshly, it could push Turkey further into the sphere of influence of Russia and China. Ankara could also renege on the multi-billion-dollar deal that requires it to prevent refugees from crossing over into Europe.

Given the major questions that could arise in any election dispute, some wonder whether leaders in Brussels, London and Washington would prefer a victory by Erdogan, whom they have been grappling with for 20 years, over the messiness of a new administration in Ankara.

"I feel no one wants to think about it," says Aydin-Duzgit. "They are comfortable dealing with the leader they are used to dealing with. He's someone they don't want to totally include into the western security alliance, but as long as there is not much trouble, they won't feel the need of having a Turkey policy."

Erdogan may engage in more subtle chicanery that provides him with enough of a clean win to give western leaders an excuse to let any transgressions slide, as they do with Hungary's prime minister, Viktor Orban. He regularly uses gerrymandering of electoral districts and control of media to win elections that are technically free but grossly unfair.

As one Washington insider quipped: "I don't think Recep Tayyip Erdogan has any plan to lose."

## AFF

### 2AC — Non UQ — Relations High

#### Erdogan wants to cooperate now

Danforth 21 — Nicholas Danforth is a Senior Non-Resident Fellow at the Brookings institute. Nicholas Danforth, "A cool, cautious calm: US-Turkey relations six months into the Biden administration," Brookings, July 2021, https://www.brookings.edu/research/a-cool-cautious-calm-us-turkey-relations-six-months-into-the-biden-administration/, accessed 6-25-2022, WMK

President Joe Biden has made it six months into his term without a new U.S.-Turkish crisis. Amidst simmering tensions, strategic disagreements, and so many potential flashpoints, even this comparative calm counts as an achievement. It is a product of both the White House’s new approach to Turkey and Ankara’s eagerness to maintain the appearance of good relations in the face of more pressing problems. Biden has been appropriately cool and consistent in his dealings with Turkey, emphasizing human rights in his rhetoric and seeking to establish a new tone for the relationship that will give the United States greater leverage. This has corresponded with a period of consolidation and greater caution in Turkish foreign policy. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, for his part, has been on an international charm offensive as he confronts regional isolation, economic turbulence, and his own dwindling poll numbers.

### 2AC — Cooperation Now

#### Turkey-NATO and Turkey-US coop now

Kim and Utku 5-10 (Prof Dr Tongfi Kim is the Programme Director of the BA in International Affairs and Professor at the Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy (CSDS) of the Brussels School of Governance (BSoG-VUB) and a Senior Researcher at the KF-VUB Korea Chair. Mehmet Algin Utku is a research intern at the Brussels School of Governance. Brussels Times, 10 May 2022, “It’s time to bind Turkey to NATO,” <https://www.brusselstimes.com/223900/its-time-to-bind-turkey-to-nato>; accessed 6/23/2022) ng

The West has greater leverage The West, however, has its own tools to bind Turkey to NATO. Most importantly, the West has a superior power to reward Turkey. For instance, analysts often refer to close economic ties between Turkey and Russia, but the EU is by far Turkey’s largest trading partner and main source of investments, accounting for 33.4% of Turkey’s imports and 41.3% of its exports in 2020 (and 21 out of the 27 EU member states are also members of NATO). Military relations between Turkey and NATO also favour the West. NATO’s collective defense protects Turkey, and the decades-old alliance ties have made Turkey far more dependent on the West than on Russia. The S-400 system is expensive, but the delivery to Turkey began only in 2019, and Russia accounts for only 5% of arms import by Turkey in the last ten years between 2012 and 2021. During the decade, Russia ranked below other weapons suppliers of Turkey such as the United States (51%), Italy (16%), Spain (13%), and South Korea (6%) according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute’s Arms Transfers Database. For binding Turkey to NATO and wedging Turkey away from Russia, we recommend reward-based strategies rather than coercion. Academic literature suggests that positive sanctions work better and that a coercive approach is chosen by those with weaker reward power. A coercive strategy can easily antagonize the target, whereas a reward-based strategy is unlikely to worsen the status quo. Reward-binding is particularly important in relation to the Turkish public, who have resented the West’s treatment of their country in the aftermath of the Syrian refugee crisis and the 2016 coup attempt against Erdoğan. This anti-Western sentiment has been further exacerbated by pro-government Turkish media. In fact, unlike the seemingly neutral position of the Turkish government in this Russia-Ukraine war, Turkish mass media is dominated by anti-Western discourse and criticism against NATO. A poll in March revealed that 48.3% of Turks blamed the United States and NATO for the current situation in Ukraine and only 33.7% thought Russia was responsible. In the same poll, 51.7% of Turks see the United States as the biggest threat to their country as opposed to Russia (19.4%). As a Turkish scholar points out, anti-Western sentiments that developed for years will not easily disappear from the Turkish public opinion even after Erdoğan’s recent U-turn. In international security and diplomacy, NATO allies have already begun taking a conciliatory approach toward Ankara. This can be seen in the recent Franco-Turkish rapprochement and the Biden administration’s support for “appropriate U.S. defense trade ties with Turkey.” Economic reward-binding by NATO allies is likely to be appreciated by Erdoğan, who faces the presidential election in 2023. More importantly, this is a chance for the West to offer the olive branch to the Turkish public as Turkey experiences the highest level of inflation in 20 years, with Erdoğan’s economic mismanagement, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the war in Ukraine creating a perfect storm for the economy. Deepening of the EU-Turkey customs union and other positive economic incentives are useful tools to improve media freedom and human rights in Turkey, and the West should ask for domestic political concessions from Erdoğan. Rather than using Turkey’s political problems as excuses to keep Turkey at distance, however, economic rewards should be employed to bind the hearts of the Turkish public to NATO.

### 2AC — Non UQ — Erdogan Unpopular

#### Erdogan gets trounced—diversions have failed

Daragahi 6/5 — Borzou Daragahi is International Correspondent for The Independent. He has been covering the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, and Europe since 2002, with stints in Tehran, Baghdad, Beirut, Cairo, and now Istanbul. Daragahi, Borzou. "Opinion: The world is unprepared for Turkey’s potentially cataclysmic 2023 elections," 6-5-2022, https://www.independent.co.uk/independentpremium/voices/turkey-erdogan-elections-2023-nato-b2094281.html, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

So far, the machinations have failed to win over voters, enraged and disillusioned by what they perceive as economic mismanagement, with inflation reaching a 24-year high of 73.5 per cent.

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All this points to a trouncing that few who know the pugnacious Erdogan and have closely watched Turkey over the years believe he would accept. Erdogan has a track record of refusing to bow down in the face of electoral setbacks. In 2015, after faring poorly in general elections, he engineered a second election in which the AKP did well enough to govern without a coalition. In 2019, he refused to accept Imamoglu's narrow victory, demanding another election, which Imamoglu won even more handily.

#### Erdogan has no support—loses to every opposition figure and alt causes to base collapse

Arab News 21 — Arab News, "Erdogan rivals surge in polls ahead of 2023 Turkey election," 5-17-2021, https://www.arabnews.com/node/1860081/middle-east, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

Turkish opposition figures are gaining ground among voters ahead of the country's critical 2023 presidential elections and are likely to pose a major threat to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his ruling party,recent surveys show.

Istanbul mayor Ekrem Imamoglu and Ankara mayor Mansur Yavas, who head two opposition-controlled municipalities in Turkey's largest cities, previously challenged Erdogan and his party in the March 2019 local elections.

And recent meetings between leaders of the opposition have hinted at efforts to develop a joint candidate figure who can appeal to wider segments of Turkish society.

The latest survey from Istanbul Economics, a leading research company, showed that Yavas and Imamoglu are now performing better than Erdogan in polls.

Results show that 52.5 percent of voters prefer Yavas against Erdogan's 38.1 percent when asked who they would vote for if a presidential election was held today.

Similarly, 51.4 percent of voters would choose Imamoglu against Erdogan's 39.9 percent in a presidential election. They would also prefer Meral Aksener, chairwoman of the center right IYI Party, with 45.4 percent, against Erdogan's 39.1 percent.

The survey, titled Turkey Report, was conducted across 12 cities using 1506 respondents. The polling company recently revealed that popular support for the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) and its nationalist partner MHP was down to 45 percent, with the opposition standing at 55 percent.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also undermined trust in the government, due to perceived failures in handling the outbreak in Turkey.

Erdogan recently asked for "forgiveness" from Turks who have faced financial struggles due to pandemic restrictions and the subsequent economic downturn.

Dr. Berk Esen, a political scientist from Sabanci University in Istanbul, said that there are several reasons for the decline in Erdogan's popularity in recent months.

"The pandemic has worsened the economic downturn that had already severely hit the urban poor, many of whom are loyal to the ruling party," he told Arab News.

"Many voters feel that the Erdogan administration has done a poor job of dealing with the pandemic, both medically and economically," Esen said.

"Although Turkey has been spared the catastrophe seen in other right-wing populist cases like Brazil and India, case numbers are still too high and vaccination efforts have not gone smoothly. Turkey has only managed to vaccinate 13 percent of its population and has experienced difficulty acquiring more vaccines from multiple sources," he added.

The number of COVID-19 vaccinations administered in Turkey reached 25 million on Monday, however, over-reliance on China's Sinovac jab and shipment delays thought to be politically motivated have put the country in a dangerous position amid surging infection rates.

The pandemic has also threatened the livelihoods of disadvantaged people in the country, with family suicides and bankruptcies of small business owners becoming more prevalent. Many people, including AKP voters, are beginning to feel left behind, Esen said.

"Government precautions against the pandemic are seen by many to be insufficient, scientifically not all that helpful, ill-planned and selectively applied. Such restrictions hurt local businesses and created unemployment across the country," he added.

During the first quarter of 2021, about 29,000 shopkeepers closed their businesses, an increase of 11 percent compared with the same period in 2020.

Large pro-government rallies and other "super-spreader" events like mass protests have also sparked public outcry in the country. Many Turks have accused the government of double standards regarding pandemic measures, including social distancing rules.

Esen said that despite rising poverty and unemployment figures, the government has offered only limited social assistance to the poor, distributing less than most other OECD member countries.

"There is a growing sentiment among voters that the AKP treats its own members favorably thanks to cronyism, vast corruption schemes and shady business deals," he added.

"Against this backdrop, opposition mayors of major metropolitan areas like Istanbul and Ankara have seen their popularity rise due to the increased reliance on social assistance by the urban poor and the provision of public services to low-income neighborhoods," Esen said.

### 2AC — Non UQ — Polls

#### He’s getting destroyed no matter who the candidate is

BIA 5/24 — Poll: Erdoğan loses to unspecified 'opposition candidate'," Bianet 05-24-2022, https://m.bianet.org/english/politics/262262-poll-erdogan-loses-to-unspecified-opposition-candidate, accessed 6-25-2022, WMK

President and Justice and Development Party (AKP) Chair Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's popular support has fallen below 35 percent, according to a new poll.

In the poll between May 12-15 among 2,400 people in 27 provinces, the Yöneylem Research company, respondents were asked, "If there was a presidential election next Sunday, would you vote for President Erdoğan or the opposition candidate?" According to the results, Erdoğan seems to have lost his chance against the opposition.

The share of the respondents who said they would vote for Erdoğan was 34 percent whereas 51.8 percent said they would vote for the opposition. Also, 7.4 percent said they would not cast a vote and 6.8 percent said they were "undecided."

### 2AC — Non UQ — Elections

#### Erdogan just screwed himself—electoral reform

Tremblay 22 — Pinar Tremblay Professor in the Economics department at California State Polytechnic University - Pomona (Brendan Tremblays mom lol) How Turkey’s election bill could backfire on Erdogan’s ruling party," Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East, 6-22-2019, https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/03/how-turkeys-election-bill-could-backfire-erdogans-ruling-party, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

Turkey’s ruling party and its de facto coalition partner revealed a long-awaited draft amendment to the country’s election law March 14. The bill is expected to become law in April with the alliance’s majority vote. According to Turkey’s constitution, electoral changes must come into effect at least one year before elections, meaning that it's too late for the bill to affect any snap elections before the general and presidential elections scheduled for 2023.

Erdogan has been talking about an overhaul in the election law since last year, promising “a very different” electoral system. A senior bureaucrat working for the Ministry of Interior told Al-Monitor on condition of anonymity, “Experts studied this bill over a year and there were different proposals, simulations run. They picked this version.”

The changes that the draft introduced in the country’s electoral system affect vote distribution, election monitoring and presidential privileges.

First, the draft lowers the country’s notoriously high threshold for a party to win parliamentary seats from 10% of the national vote to 7%.

According to Kemal Ozkiraz, founder and chairman of the Avrasya polling company, the move might motivate small parties to form coalitions of their own, apart from the major parties. Yet the change also allows the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) and its ally the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) to enter the parliament, as their vote shares are projected below 10%, Ozkiraz argued.

The bill is a reversal of the 2018 alliance system that allowed parties to form alliances in a bid to clear the 10% threshold together but remain distinct. The coalitions received a percentage of the overall vote and then the seats were distributed proportionally.

The bill aims to eliminate the alliance vote-sharing system. Each party will instead win seats based in a proportional system called the D'Hondt system. Accordingly, small parties with a vote share of 3-4% will not be able to win any seats.

Gokhan Ozbek, director of the independent 23 Derece YouTube news channel, calculated how the votes would have been distributed if the amendment had been in effect during Turkey’s 2018 general election. According to his findings, the AKP and its coalition partner would have gained 12 and four more seats, respectively.

Turkey’s pro-Kurdish People's Democratic Party (HDP), meanwhile, would also have won four more seats. Its gains would have cost the main opposition Republican People’s Party (CHP) 15 seats and its ally the Good or Iyi Party another five, meaning the Good Party would not have won any seats if the new law had been in effect in 2018.

However, Ozkiraz and Ozbek concurred that the AKP’s vote share, which had been some 42%, today ranges between 25% and 35%, so the new bill could backfire and hurt the ruling alliance.

Professor emeritus of public law Levent Koker told Al-Monitor, “On the basis of the 2018 vote distribution, the AKP-MHP coalition would gain the advantage with this law, but that advantage could turn into disadvantage in 2023 if the vote distribution is different. Small right-wing parties in the opposition coalition might enter the election as a part of a bigger party to overcome this hurdle.”

If the ruling alliance’s goal was to shock and awe in a bid to dismantle the opposition, so far it hasn’t worked. The mood among left-leaning politicians and political pundits in Ankara has been sanguine. The CHP’s leadership appeared unfazed, with its parliamentary leader Ozgur Ozel commenting in a televised interview, “The AKP will fall into the trap they are setting for us.”

### 2AC — Thumper — Ukraine

#### Ukraine thumps—gives Erdogan a political win which will swing the election — diverts attention from the economy and political crackdowns

Tremblay 22 — Pinar Tremblay Professor in the Economics department at California State Polytechnic University - Pomona (Brendan Tremblays mom lol) "How Erdogan could emerge stronger from war in Ukraine," Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East, 3-15-2022, https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/03/how-erdogan-could-emerge-stronger-war-ukraine, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

Yet since the Russian invasion of Ukraine began nearly three weeks ago, there has been a newfound optimism among the AKP ranks. No one can deny that the invasion will cost Turkey, as it will lead to revenue losses from tourism to agriculture.

However, AKP elites also see this as a God-sent opportunity to sweep the 2023 elections.

One senior bureaucrat told Al-Monitor on the condition of anonymity, “From every crisis — including the 2008 recession, the Dec. 17-25 attacks, the July 15 coup attempt, you name it — Erdogan has managed to come out with fine colors, sometimes even with a stronger grip on the political institutions. Now he is on a charm offensive, hosting leaders from Greece to Israel to the UAE. We are confident that we will wipe the opposition off the table for good in the 2023 elections.”

It is not just those associated with the AKP who can see opportunities for Erdogan in this crisis. One can explain three prominent reasons for this optimism.

First are the security vulnerabilities that will snowball due to the war and Erdogan's ability to blame the worsening economy on the regional turmoil.

Levent Gultekin, a prominent political analyst and author, told Al-Monitor that alongside the economic shock, "The war on Ukraine will create a security concern. The public will now worry about the possibilities of the spread of this conflict. When publics worry about their national security, they also start yearning for strong leadership. So, I can see that the increasing fear and unease added with a divided opposition can easily benefit the incumbent. In addition, the national security concerns could cloud judgment on economic despair and blur the focus on accountability. The weak economy will be accepted as due to war, and the reality of the government-made economic vulnerabilities will be invisible.”

The second reason is the war will detract attention from the crackdown on the country’s political opposition. With regards to controlling the opposition, the government has gradually cracked down on opponents, particularly the pro-Kurdish Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP). Several party members, including its former co-chair, Selahattin Demirtas, remain behind bars.

Fair media representation stands as another factor. Most of the country’s media outlets are effectively under the control of the government.

Seren Selvin Korkmaz, a political analyst and executive director of IstanPol Institute, told Al-Monitor that the “visibility of opposition parties in the press is already low, and with war going on in the region their voices will be heard even less.”

On Feb. 28, the country’s six opposition parties revealed their roadmap outlining their plans to reinstate the parliamentary system and to strengthen the country’s democracy. The gathering did not generate much excitement among the public, with Turks' attention focused sharply on Ukraine.

### 2AC — Econ Alt Cause

#### Econ alt cause—it decides the election

AydıN 22 — Selçuk Aydın holds his PhD from King’s College in the School of Security Studies. He has conducted projects and published articles, book chapters and opinions on Turkey's history, Turkish diaspora, Kurdish Studies and Middle East politics. He is currently a lecturer at Giresun University. SelçUk AydıN, "Turkey is now on an election footing, and the economy could decide it," Middle East Eye, 1-17-2022, https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/turkey-politics-all-about-election-economy, accessed 6-25-2022, WMK

There is still one and a half years left until the presidential and parliamentary elections in Turkey, due simultaneously in June 2023, according to the law. But the country appears to have already switched to poll mode, as political tensions escalate between the ruling alliance and opposition bloc over the question of when to hold the elections.

But today, with the presidential system, both political successes and failures are attributed directly to politicians. This puts civilians at the centre of political discussions and shows that the government will be held directly responsible for its failures.

The new system also forces political parties with clear differences - from ideology to ethno-cultural issues - to work together in certain alliances, showing how fundamentally the political space of Turkey has transformed.

In this context, besides the alliance of the AKP and MHP, the diverse character of the opposition bloc has revealed an interesting picture. Under the Nation Alliance, the CHP, a centre-left secular party with a strong Kemalist emphasis, has been allied with the nationalist and centre-right Iyi Party, and the Felicity Party, a party that defends some sort of Islamism.

But the Nation Alliance also has some unlikely partners, such as the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), a predominantly Kurdish movement with leftist tendencies. During the latest municipality elections, the HDP gave strong support to the Nation Alliance’s candidates in Istanbul and Ankara.

Also, newly established centre-right operations the Future Party and DEVA Party, which broke from the AK Party ranks, appear to support the Nation Alliance.

It shows that for the first time in the republic’s history, seeking a political consensus has become a dominant aspect of the country under the presidential system, even though tensions between the ruling and opposition camps have continued to escalate. As a result, the most decisive factor in the upcoming elections will be the character of political alliances and their ability to forge reconciliation and national consensus.

The empty pot

As with every other country, in Turkey, economic conditions will be a crucial factor in the election. As the late president and prime minister Suleyman Demirel famously said: “There is no government which is able to resist the empty pot.” The pandemic hit Turkey's economy severely, as it has across the globe. Inflation has also recently increased across the world, but its effects have been more negative in Turkey due to decreasing interest rates.

### 2AC — Thumper — Security Mechanism

#### New security mechanism thumps—US and Turkey are increasing cooperation

Ertan 4/6 — Nazlan Ertan is Al-Monitor's former culture editor. She is a Turkish blogger, journalist and editor who has worked in Ankara, Paris and Brussels for various Turkish and international publications, including the Hurriyet Daily News, CNN Turk and BBC Turkish Service."Turkey, US launch new strategic mechanism amid Ukraine crisis," Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East, 4-6-2022, https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/04/turkey-us-launch-new-strategic-mechanism-amid-ukraine-crisis, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

Following months of diplomacy, Turkey and the United States have launched a strategic mechanism to boost cooperation in areas such as economy and defense.

“There is a new energy in ties,” Victoria Nuland, the US State Department's undersecretary for political affairs, told the Turkish media after meeting with Turkish Foreign Ministry and Presidency officials. The new mechanism allows Turkish and American officials to talk about all of the issues, from trade to human rights and civil society, or regional issues from Syria to Ukraine, she added.

A US-Turkey joint statement on April 4 held out the possibility of a minister-level meeting later this year. According to diplomatic sources, this is likely to occur in Washington, marking the first official visit of Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu since President Joe Biden took office.

The statement said that Nuland and Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister Sedat Onal "met in Ankara to review topics of mutual interest, including economic and defense cooperation, counterterrorism, and key areas of shared regional and global interes.”

“If the U.S. and Turkey were old friends engaged in a dispute, this would be the moment they unblocked each other’s number,” joked Soner Cagaptay, a fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and the author of “A Sultan in Autumn.” Diplomatic sources maintain that the aim is to focus on positive areas of cooperation, rather than dwell on the chronic problems that have dogged the relations.

### 2AC — AT: Link — Generic

#### No impact on the Turkish elections or politics

Pierini and ÜLgen 22 — Ülgen is a visiting scholar at Carnegie Europe in Brussels, where his research focuses on Turkish foreign policy, nuclear policy, cyberpolicy, and transatlantic relations. Pierini, Sinan ÜLgen, 5-19-2022, "Two Turkey Experts on Why Erdoğan Is Rejecting NATO Expansion," Carnegie Europe, <https://carnegieeurope.eu/2022/05/19/two-turkey-experts-on-why-erdo-is-rejecting-nato-expansion-pub-87159> WMK

Sinan Ülgen: Not really. Elections are still one year away, and that is a long time in Turkish politics. Also, the main issue for the electorate is the state of the economy, and as a result, the popularity gap between Erdoğan and some of his possible political challengers has widened considerably, reaching double digits. Foreign policy initiatives on their own will not bridge this divide.

### 1AR — No Link — Erdogan doesn’t use Fopo

#### Erdogan doesn’t use FoPo for political gain

Duran 6/5 — Burhanettin Duran is General Coordinator of SETA Foundation and a professor at Ibn Haldun University. He is also a member of Turkish Presidency Security and Foreign Policies Council. Burhanettin Duran, "Opposition's foreign policy and conservatives' gains," Daily Sabah, 6-5-2022, https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/columns/oppositions-foreign-policy-and-conservatives-gains, accessed 6-25-2022, WMK

Moreover, the declaration opposes the “exploitation of foreign policy for domestic politics” – which is nothing more than a reactionary statement. In truth, the Turkish government creates room for itself by blocking Sweden and Finland’s NATO membership over their support for terrorist groups, pledging to conduct military operations in Tal Rifaat and Manbij, and vocally criticizing Greece’s militarization of the Aegean islands. It goes without saying that the government took those steps in line with the principle of counterterrorism while keeping in mind the impact that the Russian invasion of Ukraine has had on the regional balance of power as well as the situation in Syria. Turkey must prevent the Iranian militias from creating a new refugee wave, the evolution of the YPG Syrian offshoot of the PKK into a state-like entity and the resurgence of Daesh. In other words, it makes no sense to associate that military operation with “electioneering” or “exploiting foreign policy for domestic political gains.”

### 2AC — Link Turn — Relations k2 Erdogan

#### US-Turkey relations are key to Erdogan support

Aydıntaşbaş 22 — Asli Aydıntaşbaş 22, Senior policy fellow @ ECFR (Asli, “Turkey, NATO, and the Ukraine war: Why Erdogan’s grievances are about more than Sweden and Finland,” European Council on Foreign Relations, <https://ecfr.eu/article/turkey-nato-and-the-ukraine-war-why-erdogans-grievances-are-about-more-than-sweden-and-finland/>)

Indeed, Erdogan’s statement was expressed more as a complaint than as a firm veto threat. And it may not be all about Sweden and Finland. The president almost certainly sees this as an opportune moment to air his grievances about existing NATO members, especially with the Biden administration, which has kept the Turkish leader at arm’s length. In the long list of problems between Ankara and Washington, a key item might be Erdogan’s disappointment at being unable to establish the type of presidential telephone line with Joe Biden as he had with Donald Trump. “We had good relations with Obama and Trump and had no problem talking. Have we achieved the same with Mr. Biden? No, we haven’t. That wasn’t what we wanted,” he recently lamented. With dwindling domestic support at a time when Turkey is entering a critical electoral cycle, Erdogan is looking for a higher international profile to demonstrate his global importance to Turkish voters.

### 2AC — AT: Diversionary War Theory

#### Diversionary war theory is bunk—there’s no good data

Butcher 21 — Department of Political Science and International Affairs, Kennesaw State University. Charity Butcher Diversionary Theories of Conflict: The Promises and Challenges of an Opportunities Approach," International Studies 3-25-2021, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.606> WMK

While a consideration of international and dyadic contexts as opportunities for diversionary uses of force is an important part of the diversionary puzzle, there are some key challenges with these considerations. Overall, one of the key challenges with scholarship on diversionary conflict is that it is extremely difficult to “prove” that diversionary motives are the primary cause of the use of force. The motives of leaders, especially if they are diversionary in nature, are not usually extremely transparent. As such, scholars must make assumptions about motives based on the best available information and situational contexts.

When considering the interplay between domestic problems and unrest, domestic opportunities for diversion, and international or dyadic contexts and opportunities for diversion, it may be difficult to specifically test diversionary motives. The fact that leaders consider both domestic and international factors when making decisions is certainly not new, but only a small number of such decisions are likely to be motivated by diversionary desires. Large-n quantitative analyses can help uncover patterns related to the connection between domestic factors and international ones but may not be able to fully ascertain whether diversionary motives were actually present in any given set of cases. Most large-n studies use measures of domestic unrest or problems, such as protest, leader popularity, and economic crises, to help demonstrate diversionary motives, but again, there are likely cases within these data that appear diversionary but really are not due to broad nature of measures of diversionary motives.

This problem is confounded further as more opportunities—and particularly international opportunities—for diversionary uses of force are added to the mix. In these cases, international opportunities for diversionary uses of force may also represent clear international security issues that affect the national interests of a state. As such, it is difficult to parse out conflicts that are occurring amidst both international and domestic pressures from those that have diversionary motives. This problem has yet to be fully explored within the diversionary literature.

In fact, some of the research discounting diversionary tactics has incorporated an international analysis, showing that these international factors are more important than domestic ones for impacting international conflict. For example, Meernik (1994) argued that, while some scholars previously found domestic political reasons to be important motivations for the use of force by U.S. presidents, these studies fail to fully consider the international considerations that affected presidential decision-making. When international considerations, such as the presence of an American military base, U.S. military aid, and prior use of force, are considered, Meernik found that the domestic political conditions are no longer statistically significant in affecting presidential decisions to use force. Instead, presidents seemed to be primarily motivated by these international conditions. Meernik found such domestic considerations are not important even in the face of international crises. Meernik’s study suggested the importance of focusing on international factors, but his analysis was limited only to the United States, and thus the generalizability was unclear. Similarly, DeRouen (2000) also considered the U.S. use of diversionary force, while controlling for international factors such as international crises and Soviet/Russian crisis activity and interactions. The author similarly found less support for diversionary tactics, and more support for the fact that Soviet crisis activity, was a major factor driving the use of force. Like Meernik (1994), these results suggested that, while international considerations are important in discussions of diversionary conflict, in some situations, when international factors are considered, diversionary tactics no longer seem present. These examples demonstrate the difficulty in parsing out the role of diversion as a motive in conflict.

The fact that many of the international opportunities that are linked to diversionary incentives, such as territorial disputes and rivalry, are also situations where wars are most likely, also makes it difficult to fully tease out the role of diversion. Another challenge with focusing on opportunities, particularly international ones, is that domestic problems (like economic crises) could be linked to the actions of other states (including rivals), and thus could represent legitimate grievances between states and grounds for potential armed conflicts. The conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea provides an example—where the economic crisis that Eritrea experienced was directly related to actions taken by the Ethiopian government (Butcher & Maru, 2018). In these cases, it becomes very difficult to disentangle traditional measures of domestic problems used as indicators of potential diversionary motives with other types of national security motives for imitating conflicts.

### 1AR — AT: Diversionary War Theory

#### Studies are at best uncertain

Albrecht 20 — Department of Political Science, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Holger Albrecht, "Diversionary Peace: International Peacekeeping and Domestic Civil-Military Relations," Taylor & Francis, 5-20-2020, https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/13533312.2020.1768073, accessed 6-25-2022, WMK

To introduce an important caveat, the research programme on diversionary war hardly ever presents robust evidence for the fact that a decision to go to war was prompted mainly by an incumbent’s intent to coup-proof. While intentionality is uncertain, scholars found empirically that war reduces the likelihood of military coups in autocracies.16 Cemal Eren Arbatli and Ekim Arbatli most forcefully described the mechanisms believed to underlie the effects that a military’s engagement in war has on coup risk.17 For one, the ‘rally-around-the-flag mechanism’ implies the emergence of a public cry for national unity at the time of war, increased political support for executive office holders, and hence less support for a coup among officers and the broader public. For another, the ‘feasibility mechanism’ means that a military’s deployment abroad reduces the organizational and combat capacities necessary to undertake a coup attempt. Finally, the ‘credible commitment mechanism’ implies that an increased external threat catalyzed through a militarized dispute substantiates the importance of the military in politics and society more broadly. Hence, the military’s political and economic interests would most likely be sustained as a consequence of its role as a ‘savior’ of nation and state, rather than an ordinary power grab.

Arguments assuming a connection between war and the reduced likelihood of coups are intuitively compelling and have received some empirical support. Yet, quantitative tests of the effect of diversionary wars suffer from methodological challenges that, at least in part, explain inconclusive results in existing studies.18 What has largely gone unnoticed is a problem related to the selection of the universe of empirical cases. In fact, many systematic studies in diversionary war theory disguise an empirical blind spot: not all states have a credible threat at challenging their neighbours, let alone to going to war, for their own limitations in military strength and/or their neighbour’s superior firepower. It does not make much sense to assume that incumbents in a small country, with military capacities vastly inferior to those of its adversaries, would even consider going to war for coup-proofing. While a stake in international conflict might generate an initial rallying-around-the-flag effect at home, almost certain defeat in war reduces the likelihood of authoritarian leaders to stay in office.19

Empirically, proponents of diversionary war theory therefore often ignore relative military strength as an important context factor for the assumed effects of war on coup-proofing. Theoretically, however, it remains an inspiring point of departure to explore alternative strategies in foreign policy decisions and their possible effects on domestic civil-military relations. While war may not always be an option, opportunities may appear for weak states to link foreign policy making to coup-proofing: the diversionary peace.20 In a nutshell, I argue that participation in peacekeeping missions abroad produces similar effects for coup-proofing as diversionary wars. As an added benefit, participation in peacekeeping operations avoids the risk for incumbents associated with losing a war. Rather, the humanitarian nature of peacekeeping missions allows politicians to claim additional support from both their own populace and the international community.

### 2AC — AT: Greece War/Escalation

#### No Greece War

Carassava 6/1 — Journalist at The Times. Anthee Carassava, "Greek Forces on High Alert over Crisis with Turkey," VOA, 6-1-2022, https://www.voanews.com/a/greek-forces-on-high-alert-over-crisis-with-turkey/6598746.html, accessed 6-25-2022, WMK

Greece's armed forces are on high alert in the Eastern Aegean Sea as tensions escalate with Turkey. Officials have been responding to what they say are mounting provocations by Turkey's leadership.

Senior Greek Defense Ministry sources say the military intelligence they have gathered point to the prospect of so-called hybrid threats that Greece may face from its neighbor Turkey as the two NATO allies compete for oil and gas drilling rights in contested parts of the Aegean and Mediterranean seas.

The points of friction between the two countries are many.

A crisis, the sources say, may also spring from a sudden surge in refugee flows from Turkey, or from unexpected wildfires in remote locations or islands in the Aegean Sea that Turkey wants to see demilitarized.

Some security analysts say that while Turkey's recent actions - including the bellicose remarks of its leader - are serious, an armed conflict is unlikely. Retired General Leonidas Tzoumis said both countries stand to lose from a military confrontation, but he warned that Turkish actions may lead to a miscalculation. That prospect, he said, requires heightened vigilance by Greece's armed forces.

Tzoumis said Greece is facing what he calls a classic Turkish game of controlled escalation, one of repeated provocations that can trigger a serious enough incident that would eventually force Greece to negotiate matters like the Aegean Sea dispute and territorial rights that Greece has been refusing to discuss because - the analyst said - it does not want to cede an inch.

### 2AC — Erdogan Bad Turn

#### Erdogan’s consolidation of power causes Turkish adventurism and miscalculation—there are no checks

IISS 20 — An international research institute that provides objective information on military, geopolitical and geo-economic developments that could lead to conflict (2020) Turkey’s increasingly assertive foreign policy, Strategic Comments, 26:6, iv-vi, DOI: 10.1080/13567888.2020.1830557 WMK

Erdogan’s centralisation of power

Turkey’s assertive defence of the interests noted above has run parallel to the growing concentration of power in Erdogan’s hands. For example, the first Turkish military operation in Syria in August 2016 came after Erdogan had declared a domestic state of emergency and initiated a massive purge of the officer corps following the failed coup attempt in July, the origins of which are still largely unexplained. In June 2015, even though its once considerable political influence was already waning, the Turkish armed forces had defied an order from Erdogan to draw up plans for a military incursion into Syria.

Erdogan renewed the state of emergency every three months until July 2018, when he introduced a de facto executive presidential system that was formalised by changing the Turkish constitution. The concentration of executive power in Erdogan’s hands has been accompanied by the personalisation and de-institutionalisation of foreign policy, the formulation and implementation of which are now shaped by his abrasive character. Expert input into the formulation of foreign policy has been significantly reduced: decisions are now made by Erdogan in the relative isolation of consultations with a small circle of advisers chosen on the basis of loyalty rather than experience or expertise. There has been a similar shift in the conduct of foreign policy. The role played by institutions – including the Ministry for Foreign Affairs itself, which previously conducted discreet and detailed negotiations – has diminished. Erdogan prefers instead to have one-to-one meetings and telephone conversations with other heads of government – and often suddenly announces major policy shifts during his daily public appearances on national television.

Erdogan’s long-running domination of Turkish domestic politics may have fuelled a belief that he could act with similar assertiveness abroad. US President Donald Trump has been willing to accommodate him in many areas, permitting the October 2019 Turkish incursion into Syria against the SDF, Washington’s main partner in its war against the Islamic State (also known as ISIS or ISIL). The European Union has been reluctant to take concrete action against him, such as by suspending or cancelling Turkey’s accession negotiations, despite factors that should weigh against accession: growing domestic repression, including prosecutions of journalists and other critics in civil society; his encouragement of refugees and migrants to breach Greece’s border in late February 2020; and his aggressive assertion of maritime claims in the eastern Mediterranean. Even though Ankara’s relations with Moscow have been strained by the two countries’ support for opposing sides in the civil wars first in Syria and now in Libya, Erdogan still seems confident that he can defuse a potential crisis through direct talks with President Vladimir Putin. He appears to hold the rather questionable view that the EU, Russia and the US all need Turkey more than it needs them.

Erdogan’s more assertive foreign policy is also underpinned by the recent development of the Turkish defence industry, including its production of weapons, armoured vehicles and, above all, drones. Virtually all of the military aid that Ankara is providing to the GNA in Libya and rebel forces in Syria has been manufactured in Turkey – thus significantly reducing the inherent constraints, such as the risk of sanctions or interruptions in supplies, that Ankara faced when it was heavily dependent on sourcing arms and equipment from abroad. (However, it is still dependent on other countries for the supply of major military equipment, such as aircraft.) In southeast Turkey and northern Iraq, the deployment of Turkishmade drones has resulted in a shift in the balance of power on the battlefield, enabling Ankara to contain, though not eradicate, the PKK’s insurgency. Turkishmade drones have also been deployed in Syria and Libya. Earlier this year they played an important role in the GNA first halting and then driving back an offensive by the LNA. In Libya in particular, the development of the Turkish defence industry has also brought Erdogan political advantages, enabling him to project power while avoiding the risk of high casualties – and domestic repercussions – that would have accompanied the commitment of large numbers of Turkish troops.

### 1AR — AT: He’s Not the Problem

#### Erdogan is responsible for Turkey adventurism

Robinson 5/19 — Kali Robinson covers the Middle East and edits the Daily News Brief. Before joining CFR, she was an intern at Al Jazeera’s Doha, Qatar, headquarters and at the Associated Press’s Washington, DC, bureau. Kali Robinson "Turkey’s Growing Foreign Policy Ambitions," Council on Foreign Relations, 5-19-2022, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/turkeys-growing-foreign-policy-ambitions, accessed 6-24-2022, WMK

What role has Erdogan played?

Erdogan and his AKP, a conservative party with Islamist roots, came to power in 2002, following a decade marked by political instability and a financial crisis. The AKP advanced economic and political reforms to bring Turkey closer in line with EU standards, and the country’s economy grew by 7.5 percent on average annually between 2001 and 2011. On foreign policy, the AKP’s motto was “zero problems with neighbors,” and Ankara aimed to expand Turkey’s influence by building trade ties, encouraging democracy, and emphasizing its Islamic identity.

But by the late 2000s, the AKP had become more authoritarian. It consolidated control over media organizations, purged the military of perceived dissidents, prosecuted and jailed critics, and quashed protests. In 2016, Erdogan seized on an attempted military coup to crack down further on his perceived opponents, who he alleges are led by Fethullah Gulen, a cleric living in exile in the United States who was once Erdogan’s ally. Through a referendum the following year, Erdogan replaced the country’s parliamentary system with a presidential one; abolished the office of prime minister, among other major changes; and effectively rendered himself Turkey’s sole power holder.

Erdogan has engineered an assertive shift in foreign policy that focuses on expanding Turkey’s military and diplomatic footprint. To this end, Turkey has launched military interventions in countries including Azerbaijan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria; supplied partners such as Ethiopia and Ukraine with drones; and built Islamic schools abroad.