**Aff**

**Notes:**

General Notes: These Cards are not necessarily in order of good to bad – read through them yourselves to find out which ones have the best warrants you need

No IL Notes: These cards basically say 2 things for the aff

1. Greece aggression is not about politics or trying to win an election
2. Greece aggression will persist past Erdogan

You wont want to run these cards if you have a cohesion advantage because they could cross apply them to solvency unless you have evidence saying turkey is on board with the aff or that cohesion will solve those conflicts – use at your own risk

NATO Checks Notes: This card is old but don’t let the other team tell you off because of that – this card has really good warrants, so make sure to utilize them in round

This card basically says institutional liberalism is true and (to some level) realism is false so make sure that fits into your 1ac strategy – or don’t I’m not the boss of you

Diversionary Peace Notes: Notes: These cards also majorly feed into liberalism – take that into account if running these cards

Its All Staged Notes: This Author is probably a hack – take that as you will

**Non UQ – F-35 Sales**

**No UQ – F-35 sales to Greece will trigger Turkish aggression**

**Insinna and Mehta**, **7/12**/22, Senior Reporter on Air Warfare and Breaking Defense, editor in chief of Breaking Defense, [Could Greek F-35 buy cause a flare up in US-Turkish relations?](https://breakingdefense.com/2022/07/could-greek-f-35-buy-cause-a-flare-up-in-us-turkish-relations/), <https://breakingdefense.com/2022/07/could-greek-f-35-buy-cause-a-flare-up-in-us-turkish-relations/>, BradAs

The tables have turned for regional rivals [Greece](https://breakingdefense.com/tag/greece/) and [Turkey](https://breakingdefense.com/tag/turkey/) in the realm of fighter jet acquisition plans, with Greece headed for a buy of the Lockheed Martin F-35 just three years after Turkey was kicked out of the [Joint Strike Fighter program.](https://breakingdefense.com/tag/f-35-joint-strike-fighter/)

Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis told reporters on June 30 that the country had submitted a letter of request “in recent days” to the US government for a squadron of 20 F-35s, with options to buy an additional squadron,[the Associated Press reported.](https://www.stripes.com/theaters/europe/2022-06-30/greece-requests-f35-fighter-jets-6510677.html)

The Greek announcement came just a day after[President Joe Biden](https://breakingdefense.com/tag/joe-biden/) said that the United States “should sell” F-16s to Turkey — a statement that was heralded as a breakthrough after Turkey’s purchase of the Russian S-400 air defense system in 2019 stymied US arms sales to Turkey and [got it booted from the F-35 program](https://breakingdefense.com/2020/07/congress-pushes-pentagon-to-finally-kick-turkey-out-of-f-35-program/).

Three experts who spoke to Breaking Defense say Greece’s purchase of the F-35 is very likely to be approved, but it could further drive a wedge between the already strained relationship of the United States and Turkey.

“Given the strategic situation in the eastern Mediterranean, a Greek F-35 purchase is inevitable, particularly with the [Hellenic Air Force’s] aging fleet,” said Richard Aboulafia, managing director with Aerodynamic Advisory. “Despite economic challenges, Greece has prioritized a high level of defense spending. The only challenge is availability, given the limited F-35 production ramp.”

**An F-35 sale to Greece could inflame Ankara**, where there is **mounting rhetoric that the United States is using Greece as a pawn to control Turkey** and concerns about the deepening relationship between the two nations, said Nicholas Danforth, senior visiting fellow at the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy. But that might **not be enough to dissuade** US **policy makers from approving the sale,** he added.

“Historically, the United States has placed a huge priority on avoiding conflict between NATO allies in the eastern Mediterranean. In the past, that meant trying to maintain a very balanced position between Greece and Turkey,” Danforth said.

“In time, as frustration with Turkey has mounted, it’s become clear to people in Washington that the real threat in the region is Turkey’s provocative behavior. There’s been a declining concern with whether or not improved cooperation with Greece will antagonize Turkey. I see a greater growing conviction that the relationship with Turkey is a lost cause and that US foreign policy has to do the best it can within that reality.”

Meanwhile, Athens believes that the Turkish threat is real, and that air superiority is critical for countering that threat, Danforth said. “Greece is already convinced that Turkish hostility [and] Turkey’s malign intentions are baked in and as a result are probably less worried about particular steps they take further aggravating Ankara.”

A senior Turkish official said the US government didn’t bring up the sale of F-35s to Greece in its recent engagements with Ankara. The official added his belief that Washington would maintain the diplomatic and military balance between Turkey and Greece and would take into account possible instability such sales could trigger in the region. “This is why we believe Turkey’s F-16 request would be fulfilled,” the official said.

The official added that Turkish military experts believe that the F-16 deal would put Turkey on par with the current Greek military — or even give air superiority to Ankara. But if Greece were to get the F-35, it would put pressure on Turkey’s homegrown TF-X project to be successful as a way of balancing capabilities.

Said the Turkish official: “We would of course criticize the US government if they give F-35s to Athens. Not only would it change the military balance, but also because they didn’t supply the same system to us.”

No one would go on the record among current Turkish officials to discuss the potential F-35 sale, but there is a long line of concerns from retired generals against such a deal. For instance, retired Brig. Gen. Nejat Eslen  proposed deploying the S-400 against the Greek F-35s in a 2020 interview to Russian state media.

Asked whether Greece actually has a military need for the F-35 or just wants to get one over on Ankara, Jim Townsend, a former US deputy assistant secretary of defense for European and NATO policy, said, “It’s both. It is definitely both.”

“You need the political hook to get the money, and the military is more than happy to push for it. They probably think the Turks eventually come back to F-35, but the Greeks want to say ‘we’ve already been there and we’ll have the leg upon the Turks because they’ll only have F-16s, and we’ll be in the next generation.’ It’s national pride, not necessarily meeting a specific NATO force goal,” he said.

It’s possible that a Greek F-35 deal could put pressure on Turkey to take steps that would allow it to enter back into the F-35 program, said Townsend, now with the Center for a New American Security. However, “I don’t think the Turks feel threatened by the Greeks,” he added. “The Turks worry more about the PKK.”

While it’s possible that Turkey could seek to throw a wrench into an F-35 sale to Greece, the United States could retaliate against Ankara by blocking Turkey’s F-16 buy, Townsend said. “We have some leverage. It’s rare to have leverage over the Turks and I think F-16 is our main leverage in a lot of ways.”

Euros And Sense

While the experts agreed that the US government is likely to approve the sale, one lingering question yet to be answered is how Greece will ultimately pay for the F-35. The combined forces of the COVID-19 pandemic and war between Russia and Ukraine have sent the global economy reeling, with nations in Europe and elsewhere dealing with surging gas prices, a food shortage, and higher costs due to supply scarcity.

With a unit cost of at least $78 million per F-35A conventional takeoff and landing model — a figure that is expected to increase due to supply chain pressures — and notoriously expensive operations and maintenance costs, paying for multiple F-35 squadrons could be a challenge for Greece even in the best of times. However, Greece’s economic system has only recently gotten back on its feet after the 2008 financial crisis spurred a series of bailouts.

Ultimately, the country could opt to cut its planned buy if it becomes too costly or “get a scaled down version” of the plane “like buying a car without hubcaps,” said Townsend.

“Who knows how they eventually afford it? They don’t seem to be worried about borrowing, as a rule,” he said. “I think what they do is they make buying armaments a top priority because they feel this threat from Turkey, but its also national pride and the ability to show the Turks they can’t take the Greeks for granted. Their economy has gone through issues with debt, so whether they could buy as many F-35s as they plan to or buy them at all is a good question.”

Aboulafia said that Greece could also seek out used planes to try to offset the initial costs of acquiring the F-35. However, that decision could result in higher sustainment costs, as it is more expensive to maintain older, early-model aircraft that may not have been updated with the latest software and hardware.

**Non UQ – Coop Now**

**Turkey already cooperates with the US on security**

**NTI ’21** (The Nuclear Threat Initiative is a nonprofit, nonpartisan global security organization focused on reducing nuclear and biological threats imperiling humanity., “Turkey Overview,” <https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/turkey-overview/>) JHK

As part of NATO’s nuclear umbrella, **Turkey continues to host approximately 50 U.S. tactical nuclear weapons on its territory** at Incirlik Air Base. 5 While the Cold War-era B61 bombs serve little military purpose, they provide tangible evidence of a continued American commitment to Turkish security. There is ongoing debate in the policy community about whether the United States should continue to station tactical nuclear weapons in Turkey, given political instability in Turkey and the wider Middle East. 6 However, advocates for the continued presence of **the weapons** argue that, although they **serve little military purpose, they provide tangible evidence of a continued American commitment** to Turkish security.

The **United States plans to upgrade the B61 bombs to the B61-12** and hopes to complete the process by 2024. 7 Currently, both U.S. aircraft and some Turkish F16s can carry the B61, however, there is some speculation over whether Turkey still maintains an operational link with the B61s on its territory. 8 Additionally, the United States halted a shipment of F-35 fighter jets to Turkey in 2019 over Turkey’s purchase of a Russian missile defense system. Some of these jets were slated to be used with U.S. nuclear weapons. 9

Additionally, in September 2019, Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdogan stated that it was unacceptable for nuclear-armed states to prohibit Turkey from attaining nuclear weapons. Though he did not say if Turkey would begin to pursue a nuclear weapons program, Erdogan’s statement fueled calls for the U.S. to remove its nuclear weapons from Turkey and increased anxieties regarding the development of nuclear power plants in Turkey. 10

Turkey’s interest in civilian nuclear technology dates to at least 1956, when the government founded the [Turkish Atomic Energy Authority (TAEK)](https://www.nti.org/facilities/490/), Ankara conducts sophisticated nuclear fuel cycle research and possesses two small research reactors. The [TR-2 5MWt reactor](https://www.nti.org/facilities/495/) is located at the [Cekmece Nuclear Research Training Center](https://www.nti.org/facilities/496/), and the ITU TRIGA MARK II is located at [Istanbul Technical University](https://www.nti.org/facilities/500/). 11

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s AKP-led government is aggressively pursuing nuclear energy. While the government’s announcement in 2006 that it would install 5,000MW nuclear energy by 2015 (3 reactors) has not proven feasible, the AKP remains politically committed to the nuclear power program. 12 After a troubled tender process in 2008, the government began assessing the sole bid for construction of Turkey’s first nuclear plant at Akkuyu from the Russian-led consortium Atomstroyexport-Inter Rao-Park Teknik. 13 In May 2010, [Russia](https://www.nti.org/learn/countries/russia/) and Turkey signed a Cooperation Agreement, under which Rosatom State Cooperation will construct Akkuyu nuclear power plant. The plant will eventually contain four reactors with a combined capacity of 4800 MW. 14 Construction is underway on the first unit. 15 Other nuclear power projects in Sinop and the Thrace region remain in the planning stages.

Turkey meets approximately 72% of its energy demand through imports, and thus is actively pursuing nuclear energy to address this dependency. 16

**US and Turkey are committed to cooperating – Strategic Mechanism Proves**

**Coksun 22** (Alper Coksun 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. “Making the U.S Turkey Strategic Mechanism Meaningful,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 5/12/22, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2022/05/12/making-new-u.s.-turkey-strategic-mechanism-meaningful-pub-87117>)

As the war between Russia and Ukraine grinds on and as the need to maintain a united front against Moscow grows, **Turkey and the United States** are seeking to put their long-troubled relationship **on a better path**. The new U.S.-Turkey Strategic Mechanism, [announced](https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-117_-turkiye-abd-stratejik-mekanizmasi-hakkinda-ortak-basin-aciklamasi.en.mfa) in early April 2022, is a **promising** (but tentative) step forward.

[Turkish](https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-61001836) and [American](https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-playing-pivotal-role-in-ukraine-crisis-us-172757) 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](https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-u-s-to-convene-a-working-group-to-fix-bilateral-disputes-128398) 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.[**U.S. officials**](https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-playing-pivotal-role-in-ukraine-crisis-us-172757) have **already spoken** of the possibility of such a meeting on the mechanism, and **Turkey would certainly welcome the idea**. The two presidents have only met [twice](https://nypost.com/2021/10/31/biden-turkeys-erdogan-meet-at-g20-summit/) so far since Biden took office, with both encounters on the margins of international meetings. The same arrangement could be made, for example, during the upcoming UN General Assembly meeting in New York in September 2022. The **direct involvement** of Erdoğan and Biden would give the mechanism good optics, add impetus to the initiative, and (maybe even more importantly) perhaps restrain potential spoilers on either side.

**US and Turkey are cooperating now**

**Gumrukcu 22** (Tuvran Gumrukcu is a Diplomacy Correspondent at Reuters in Turkey, “Turkey, U.S ready for attempt at fixing strained ties,” Reuters, 4/5/22, <https://www.reuters.com/world/turkey-us-ready-attempt-fixing-strained-ties-2022-04-05/>)

ANKARA, April 5 (Reuters) - Turkey and the United States announced the culmination of months of talks to set up a procedure for improving their strained ties, **eyeing cooperation in the areas of economy and defense.**

Ministerial discussions will follow, the two sides said in a joint statement on Monday. That confirmed the progress, since talks at ministerial level have been the intended format for the attempt at repairing relations.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan and U.S. President Joe Biden agreed in October to undertake the "Strategic Mechanism" talks for which officials have now cleared the way.

On Monday, U.S. Under Secretary of State Victoria Nuland met Turkish officials "to review topics of mutual interest", such as economic and defense cooperation, counter-terrorism, and regional and global developments, including Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the joint statement said.

"The United States and Turkey look forward to a Ministerial-level meeting within the framework of the Strategic Mechanism later in 2022," it added, without elaborating.

Before that, U.S. Department of Commerce Under Secretary Marisa Lago would visit Ankara on Tuesday "to **advance the economic and trade cooperation goals of the Strategic Mechanism.**"

The United States sanctioned the Turkish defense industry in December 2020 over the S-400s and has expelled its ally from its F-35 fighter jet programme. Ankara has called the moves unjust, but the allies have **since been working to set aside differences and focus on cooperation,** including on Ukraine.

**Non UQ – Loses Now**

**Erdogan loses now**

**Buyuk 22** **(**Hamdi Fırat Büyük currently works as a Political Analyst and a Journalist at the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN) in Sarajevo). “Istanbul Mayor: Erdogan Won’t Win Next Presidential Race,” Balkan Insight, 4-26-22, <https://balkaninsight.com/2022/04/26/istanbul-mayor-erdogan-wont-win-next-presidential-race/>)

Istanbul’s popular mayor, Ekrem Imamoglu, from Turkey’s main opposition Republican People’s Party, CHP, told BIRN during his visit to Sarajevo that **the days of Turkish strongman Recep Tayyip Erdogan** are **numbered.**

“We will have general elections next year in Turkey **and President Erdogan will lose the elections**, just like he lost in Istanbul. They will lose but Turkey will win,” Imamoglu said.

Commenting on Turkish politics, Imamoglu said [the opposition’s initiative, led by his social democratic Republican People’s Party, CHP](https://balkaninsight.com/2022/02/14/turkish-opposition-meeting-raises-hopes-of-unity-against-erdogan/), to field a united block in **next** elections against Erdogan’s political alliance, is of the **utmost importance**.

Many observers say Imamoglu has become one of **most popular politicians in Turkey** since winning the Istanbul elections in 2019 and would be a serious rival to Erdogan in the next presidential race.

**Inflation destroyed Erdogan’s support**

**Butler et al 22** (Daren Butler is a Turkey Correspondent at Thomson Reuters, “Turkey’s inflation soars to 70%, putting Erdogan in bind,” Reuters, 5/5/22, https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/turkeys-inflation-surges-20-year-high-70-april-2022-05-05/)

Turkey's annual inflation jumped to a two-decade high of 69.97% in April, according to data on Thursday, fuelled by the Russia-Ukraine conflict and rising energy and commodity prices after last year's lira crash.

The surge in prices has badly strained households just over a year before presidential and parliamentary elections that could bring the curtain down on President Tayyip Erdogan's long rule.

Erdogan first came to power as prime minister in 2003 before switching the country to a presidential system, and the unorthodox interest rate cuts made last year under pressure **from him** **have been blamed for lighting a fire under inflation.**

Month-on-month, consumer prices rose 7.25%, the Turkish Statistical Institute said, compared to a Reuters poll forecast of 6%. Annually, consumer price inflation was forecast to be 68%.

The surge in consumer prices was driven by a 105.9% leap in the transportation sector, which includes energy prices, and a 89.1% jump in food and non-alcoholic drinks prices, the data showed.

Month-on-month, food and non-alcoholic drink prices rose the most with 13.38% and house prices rose 7.43%.

The lira dipped 0.9% to 14.8525 against the dollar after the release of the data.

Presidential and parliamentary elections are due by June 2023 and opinion polls show Erdogan's support declining.

**No Link – OCOs/Cyber**

**Turkey likes OCOs – they see deterrence as their only route against national cyber threats**

**SpaceWatch**, 06/20**17**, Independent Perspective on Space, “Turkey Establishing a ‘Cyber Army’ To Counter National Cyber Threats”, <https://spacewatch.global/2017/06/turkey-establishing-cyber-army-counter-national-cyber-threats/>, BradAs

Turkey Establishing a ‘Cyber Army’ To Counter National Cyber Threats

The Turkish government is in preparations to establish a national cyber ‘army’ that will tackle national cyber threats against the country, according to the Turkish Minister for Transportation, Maritime Affairs, and Communications Ahmet Arslan.

The announcement was made in the aftermath of the global WannaCry ransomware attack that affected over 300,000 computers worldwide, but left most of Turkey and the Middle East largely unaffected due to its weekend timing. Still, the WannaCry episode is being seen by policy makers everywhere as a wake up call.

“We survived these recent attacks unharmed as a country,” said Arslan, who noted that only one factory in Turkey ceased operations for a day because it was part of the supply chain of French auto manufacturer Renault, whose systems were affected by the WannaCry ransomware.

Yet Arslan is not content to have avoided serious damage from the WannaCry episode, telling Turkish reporters that, “…they may pose a bigger threat and danger in the following days. That’s why we are strengthening the structure all the time. Some 13,000 white hackers came to work in the public sector. We are building a cyber army with five groups.”

“We formed centers and teams to intervene in cyber incidents starting from 2013. We led the way for the formation of these centers and teams in all institutions, not just the public sector. There is a beautiful coordination on this issue. We notified the institutions about the possibility of this recent cyberattack. We said, ‘Update your defense software and antivirus programs.’ This was very important,” he added.

The Turkish government started a recruitment drive in late 2016 for hundreds of university graduates to work in cyber security after a tumultuous year that saw up to 90 million cyber attacks and exploits targeting Turkish government and private sector computers and networks.

The recruitment drive is being led by the Turkish government’s Information and Communication Technologies Authority (BTK), and new recruits can expect to be paid a minimum of 6,000 Turkish Lira (approximately U.S$1,700) a month upon joining the BTK. According to BTK officials, the new cyber security recruits can expect to work on the frontlines of Turkish national security.

2016 was a devastating year for Turkish cyber security after the 15 July 2016 attempted coup that involved a large number of active measures in cyberspace by both the coup instigators and by the government of President Erdogan. Additionally, the Erdogan government endured several weeks of intense political pressure as Wikileaks mounted a campaign not long after the attempted coup to release information thought to be embarrassing for Ankara.

**Turkey will adapt to a more cyber approach**

**Ikitemu 14**, Gokhan Ikitemu, PhD, the University of Texas as Dallas, Proquest, “ Enhancing cyber security in Turkey through effective public and private cooperation <https://www.proquest.com/openview/2f200b29c94db7268c1fa461e5fe8fe5/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750>

Turkey is experiencing a transition wherein it is trying to adapt its security posture to a dynamic environment filled with numerous cyber threats. Examining governance aspects of cyber security in Turkey, the current study found that public-private cooperation is likely to positively affect national cyber security preparedness; that Turkish private and public organizations have similar preparedness levels; and that both private and public organizations do not accord a high value to democratic concerns. While effective government agencies are critical to enhance national preparedness they are paradoxically unsuccessful in enhancing organizational preparedness. As a result, Turkey must regard cyber security as a governance concern and decide which organizations will lead cyber security efforts: either organizations with highly capable technological infrastructure or organizations with security mandates and experiences

**No Link – AI**

**Turkey likes international cooperation on AI**

**TRT World**, 8/24/**21,** Turkish public broadcaster international news channel, “Turkey's AI roadmap looks to boost economy and add thousands of jobs,” <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/turkey-s-ai-roadmap-looks-to-boost-economy-and-add-thousands-of-jobs-49435>, BradAs

A roadmap for an artificial intelligence sector is part of Turkey's digital transformation that seeks to make the country a global competitor in technology.

Turkey aims to push the artificial intelligence sector to contribute 5 percent towards the country’s GDP by 2025, it has revealed in its first strategic artificial intelligence (Al) plan.

The strategy was launched in a public event held by the Presidency’s Digital Transformation Office and the Industry and Technology Ministry on Tuesday.

The strategy foresees employing at least 50,000 people in the sector as one among 24 other objectives in its plan by 2025.

The ceremony was attended by artificially intelligent characters and holograms where Turkey’s plans were presented. The five-year roadmap was launched at Turkey's Informatics Valley in Gebze, Kocaeli, and was developed with the collaboration of private, public, and academic groups.

In August, the National Artificial Intelligence Strategic Plan report was published with a [preface](https://cbddo.gov.tr/SharedFolderServer/Genel/File/TR-UlusalYZStratejisi2021-2025.pdf) from Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, stating, “The field of artificial intelligence is not a matter of choice, but one of the biggest bearers of our development goals.”

The major tenets of the artificial intelligence (Al) strategy include realising actions of decision-making, exploring meaning, and learning in dynamic conditions unique to intelligent creatures by computer or computer-controlled machines, according to [the official report.](https://cbddo.gov.tr/SharedFolderServer/Genel/File/TR-UlusalYZStratejisi2021-2025.pdf)

“We have made the national artificial intelligence (Al) strategy to ensure that the digital transformation is most beneficial to society,” said Musyafa Varank, Minister of Industry and Technology, indicating that Turkey is one of the few countries to develop such a plan..

“The artificial intelligence will be an indispensable part of economic and social fields in the very near future,” Varank also said while explains the plan's socio-economic aims.

The plan outlines six [priorities](https://cbddo.gov.tr/uyzs) primarily centered around supporting Turkey's Al initiatives and **strengthening international cooperation** in this field by training artificial intelligence specialists and increasing employment , encouraging research, entrepreneurship, and innovation, reaching to quality data and technical infrastructure, and expediting structural and workforce transformation.

The government would like to commercialise applications developed and prioritise in public procurement and boost the number of MSc graduates specialized in AI technology by at least 10,000.

“We will enter the top 20 countries in the international artificial intelligence indices,” Ali Taha Koc, Head of the Digital Transformation Office of the Turkish Presidency said during the ceremony, highlighting the importance of becoming an accurate Al data-sharing country.

The strategy forecasts a two-fold increase in market size and global AI expenditures within five years. It also strives to enhance Turkey's economic and technological independence by reinforcing indigenous infrastructure and a structural transformation.

Efforts are still ongoing to establish institutions and ‘unicorns’ similar to The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK) Artificial Intelligence Institute . When compared to the 2,000 US and Chinese startups, the number in Turkey is low at approximately 200 companies.

**No Link – Ethical AI/LAWs**

**Turkey likes international cooperation on responsible AI standards**

Sebastian **Moss**, 9/8/20**21**, DCD's Editor-in-Chief. Regular beats: Data centers, supercomputers, artificial intelligence, cyber security, open source, submarine cables, climate change, chips, quantum computing, military infrastructure and government procurement, “Turkey publishes its National Artificial Intelligence Strategy” <https://aibusiness.com/document.asp?doc_id=771943>, BradAs

The government of Turkey has published the country’s National Artificial Intelligence Strategy for 2021-2025.

Prepared by the Digital Transformation Office of the Presidency and the Ministry of Industry and Technology, the strategy hopes to solidify Turkey's artificial intelligence ambitions, and lay the foundation for a more aggressive investment plan.

Just don’t mention the surveillance state

To implement [the new strategy](https://cbddo.gov.tr/SharedFolderServer/Genel/File/TR-NationalAIStrategy2021-2025.pdf), the government will establish a National Artificial Intelligence Strategy Steering Committee, which will help craft national policy on all things AI.

The country plans to focus on six strategic priorities – educating citizens in AI and increasing employment in the sector; supporting research activities; entrepreneurship and innovation in the field of AI; developing access to quality data and technical infrastructure; making arrangements to "accelerate socioeconomic adjustment;" improving international cooperation; and accelerating structural and workforce transformation.

By 2025, these six aims (broken into 24 objectives and 119 more specific measures) are expected to lead to a number of positive outcomes.

The country hopes to increase the contribution of AI to GDP to five percent – although it doesn't disclose the current level. It also hopes to boost employment in the field of AI to 50,000 people, with employment of AI specialists within central and local government public institutions to reach 1,000 people.

The number of graduates in the field of AI will be increased by 10,000 within five years. AI applications developed by the local ecosystem will be prioritized in public sector procurement, and commercialization will be supported.

Turkey has promised "an active contribution" to the regulatory studies and standardization processes of international organizations in the field of **cross-border data sharing with reliable and responsible AI.**

It pledged to launch at least one global initiative in the field of natural language processing, and at least five spin-offs operating in the field of AI technologies that will come out of public institutions and companies.

Finally, the country said that it would become one of the top 20 countries in the rankings of the international AI indices.

"Taking part in the field of artificial intelligence is not a matter of choice," Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said.

"Unknowingly, we are transforming from people struggling with nature to individuals stuck between algorithms."

**No Link – Satellites/5G**

**Turkey has a vested interest in satellites – seen as a win for Turkish pride**

**Daily Sabah** with AA, 12/19/**21**, Pro-government Turkish daily published in turkey, “SpaceX launches Turkey's Türksat 5B satellite into space,” <https://www.dailysabah.com/business/tech/spacex-launches-turkeys-turksat-5b-satellite-into-space>, BradAs

Turkey's new telecommunication satellite was launched on Sunday by United States aerospace company SpaceX at 6:59 a.m. Turkish time (3:59 a.m. GMT).

Türksat 5B, which launched from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in the U.S. state of Florida, will reach its orbital slot of 42 degrees East in 164 days. Then, a 45-day test process will begin.

The satellite produced by Airbus and transferred from France to the U.S. on Nov. 29, is the most powerful Turkish satellite so far and will increase its Ka-band capacity by over fifteenfold.

It will be capable of transmitting data at more than 55 gigabits.

[Türksat 5B](http://www.dailysabah.com/business/tech/turkey-to-launch-turksat-5b-satellite-on-dec-19-from-us) was produced with contributions from Turkey's domestic industry. It is expected to last more than 35 years and features a next-generation electric-powered propulsion system. Besides Turkey, the entire Middle East, Persian Gulf, Red Sea, Mediterranean, North and East Africa, Nigeria, South Africa and neighboring countries will be covered by Türksat 5B. In a video message, President Recep Tayyip **Erdoğan hailed the launch as another "moment of pride for Turkey and the Turkish nation."** "Today, we launched Türksat 5B, the most powerful and highest-capacity communication satellite of our country, into space. In this satellite project, we also opted for Space X's Falcon 9 rocket," he said.

Erdoğan also thanked Elon Musk and his company Space X for not bowing down to "the blackmail and pressure of the anti-Turkey lobbies." [Erdoğan held a video call on Thursday with Musk](https://www.dailysabah.com/business/tech/erdogan-thanks-musk-with-nft-for-helping-with-satellite-launch), the founder of Space X, and discussed the launch process.

Underlining that data transmission speed and capacity would see an over fifteenfold increase with the launch of Türksat 5B, the Turkish president added: "In this way, broadband satellite internet services will be provided to users within the coverage area, including on land, sea and air vehicles in regions where internet access is limited."

Deputy Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Ömer Fatih Sayan meanwhile stated that Türksat 5B differs from other satellites with its high internet capacity, adding that every single Turkish village will have access to the internet in the coming period.

Explaining that satellites are primarily used for broadcasting in the media and television industry, Sayan said that the sector is now shifting from broadcasting to providing internet services.

Sayan also commented on the expansive area Türksat 5B will cover, noting that the satellite will cater to a large part of Africa and almost the entire Mediterranean as well as Turkey.

In addition to providing broadcasting and internet services to the regions, Sayan noted that “As of today, the internet of our nearly 2,000 village schools is provided by Türksat. With Türksat 5B, we will use our Türksat satellites much more effectively in order not to leave villages without internet in Turkey.”

Sayan added that the satellite, which took over three years to produce, will be in service for 30-35 years.

Head of the Presidency's Digital Transformation Office Ali Taha Koç commented on the domestically produced parts in the satellite, stating that a transceiver system produced by Turkish defense giant Aselsan is being sent into space over Türksat 5B and will be used in space for the first time.

“Most of the satellites we have sent so far have been low-orbit satellites, but for the first time, a domestic product has been tested at a high orbit distance of 36,000 kilometers (22,369.36 miles), it has passed all the criteria and is now above Türksat 5B,” he said.

“Aselsan’s product will now go down in history,” Koç said, adding that the local product will be available to other countries when building satellites from now on.

“We took a risk here to support domestic and national production. Currently, these products have not been used in any satellite,” he said.

The construction of the domestic communication satellite Türksat 6A, one of Turkey's most important projects, is also proceeding at full speed. The sub-systems, satellite ground station and software to be used in the satellite are being developed entirely with domestic means.

While the engineering model equipment and system production of Türksat 6A is completed, system level tests continue at the Satellite Systems Integration and Test Center.

After the system level tests of the engineering model are completed, flight model integration and tests will continue. The Türksat 6A communication satellite is expected to be launched into space in 2023.

Another one of Turkey's satellites, [Turksat 5A](http://www.dailysabah.com/business/tech/turksat-5a-comes-online-to-secure-turkeys-orbital-rights-for-35-years), was also launched by SpaceX in January.

With Turksat 5B, Turkey currently has a total of eight active satellites.

**Turkey knows they need better access to space satellites to monitor environment**

**Deveci 16,** “The Benefits and Challenges of Having an open and free basis satellite data sharing platform in Turkey: Gezgin” https://aperta.ulakbim.gov.tr/record/98849#.YtyVlezMI6A

Turkey is a county that experiences rapid socioeconomic development, which, in turn, leads to high urbanization rates due to migration of people from rural to urban areas, many large-scale development projects (e.g. highways, dams, housing and infrastructure), and environmental problems that adversely affect agriculture, such as soil erosion and deforestation. Furthermore, Turkey lies in a region prone to natural disasters, especially earthquakes, landslides, flooding and forest fires. Successfully overcoming these challenges requires continuous monitoring to enable rapid response as well as the development of effective socioeconomic policies. In this regard, space-based earth observation (EO) systems play a critical role in the rapid acquisiton and extraction of crucial information. The first launch of the first Turkish-designed satellite, RASAT, in 2011 led to the wide-spread exploitation of space-based resources by Turkish institutions through the dissemination of EO data on an open and free basis via the GEZGIN internet portal (http://www.gezgin.gov.tr). The push for data sharing was further instigated by the nationally funded project GEOPORTAL ("Satellite Image Processing and Geoportal Development Project") and European Union FP7 project EOPOWER ("Earth Observation for Economic Empowerment"), which strove to create conditions for sustainable economic development through the increased use of Earth observation products and services for environmental applications. In this work, the technical challenges involving processing and preparing raw satellite data for dissemination as well as software design of the GEZGIN Portal will be presented.

**No Link – Biotech**

**Turkey likes biotech investment**

**Anadolu Agency**, 3/08/**20**, state-run news agency headquartered in Ankara, Turkey, “Turkey eager to invest in biotech, boost domestic production,” dailysabah.com/business/turkey-eager-to-invest-in-biotech-boost-domestic-production/news, BradAs

Turkey's progress in the health sector has advanced beyond its economic significance, the Turkish president said Saturday.

Congratulating the awardees at the international biotechnology congress, BIO Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in a letter stressed the importance of Turkey's pharmaceutical industry.

Erdoğan underlined that the sector was the most important in the country's economy, following the defense industry, adding that during difficult times, Turkey could only rely on its own production and manufacturing infrastructure to survive.

"However, we have unfortunately faced veiled resistance in our steps to develop a domestic and national pharmaceutical industry and strengthen our medical device sector, just as we once faced in the defense industry," he said.

Vice President Fuat Oktay, attending the ceremony, said Turkey would act against any attempt that sought to compel domestic ventures to move abroad as the government attempts to boost the number of research and development, as well as design and production facilities in the country.

Inviting scientists, non-governmental organizations and universities to **support Turkey's biotechnology** initiatives, Oktay said investments in the defense, health and food industries would "not only save us from dependence but also turn Turkey into a global exporter."

Health Minister Fahrettin Koca also spoke at the ceremony, underscoring the role of partnerships between academia, industry and individual projects in training a qualified labor force. After his speech, Koca handed over plaques of appreciation to the sponsors of the congress.

**No Link – Subs**

**Turkey likes subs**

**Daily Sabah**, 4/23/**22**, Pro-government Turkish daily published in turkey, “Turkey to complete domestically made submarine in 6 months,” <https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkey-to-complete-domestically-made-submarine-in-6-months>, BradAs

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said Monday that Turkey expects to complete and deliver the domestically made submarines to the Turkish Naval Forces Command within five to six months.

Speaking at a ceremony for the docking of the Hızır Reis submarine and the first welding of the Selman Reis submarine at Gölcük Shipyard Command in northwestern Kocaeli province, the president said Turkey aims to take into service a new domestically made submarine each year, to ensure that the navy has six new submarines by 2027.

"Our submarines, which weigh 1,856 tons above water and 2,042 tons when submerged, can go to a depth of more than 300 meters. Our submarines, which can operate for three days underwater, can stay in water for 12 weeks without the need for resupply. The submarines, which are equipped with effective weapons against underwater, surface and land targets, have the ability to launch various types of torpedoes, missiles, and mines. We are also integrating our national torpedo Akya and our national anti-ship missile Atmaca into our submarines with air-independent propulsion capability,” Erdoğan said.

The president added that the Hızır Reis submarine will be put into service in 2023 and the Selman Reis in 2027.

“Starting from this year, we will put one of our submarines into service every year, and we will add six new type submarines to our navy until 2027."

"We have realized many projects that will render our navy stronger and more deterrent for the security of the Blue Homeland," Erdoğan added.

"Nearly 30 domestic companies of ours have assumed responsibility in this critical project with their designs and productions for submarine platforms and underwater technology. Moreover, many other companies of ours are contributing as subcontractors to the production process of our submarines. I thank on behalf of myself and my nation all who have contributed to the production of these submarines that will add to our strength in seas," the president said.

Erdoğan also highlighted the recent boost in Turkey's defense industry, saying that the reliance on external sources has been minimized.

"While the foreign dependency in the defense industry was 80% when we took office, we have today reached a domestic and national production rate of over 70%. We are currently carrying out more than 750 defense industry projects half of which we have launched in the past five years. We have realized many projects that will render our navy stronger and more deterrent for the security of the Blue Homeland," he added.

The president also added that Turkey's preparations for the domestically designed submarine, MILGEM, which is expected to be built with mostly domestically developed systems also continues. "We will begin building the MILGEM in 2025 in Gölcük Shipyard," he said.

The MILGEM (National Ship) marine platforms project is a Turkish warship program that aims to develop multipurpose corvettes and frigates that can be deployed in a range of missions.

These include reconnaissance, surveillance, early warning, anti-submarine warfare, surface-to-surface and surface-to-air warfare, and amphibious operations.

**No Link - Intellectual Property**

**Turkey is open to discussion on AI IP**

Burak **Özdağıstanli** and Hatice Ekici **Tağa,** Turkishattorneys, “In review: key recent IP developments and trends in Turkey” <https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=a8ee9192-7f16-4d1a-9a76-d8400c36558a>, BradAs

The Turkish government strongly promotes the mediation system. In the near future, mediation is expected to be mandatory as a precondition to formal litigation relating to all IP disputes. In this regard, alternative dispute resolution methods will be more important and effective in practice. Further, as artificial intelligence (AI) continues to grow across technical fields, the WIPO has started an open process to lead the conversation regarding IP policy implications. In the global IP world, the topic of whether AI can be the owner of a patent or not is being discussed. Even though there haven't been any decisions or changes in Turkey, it **seems that changes regarding AI will be necessary**.

**Thumper – Covid**

**COVID thumps and disproves the theory**

Stephen **Walt 20**. Robert and Renée Belfer professor of international relations at Harvard University and a columnist for Foreign Policy. Will a Global Depression Trigger Another World War? Foreign Policy. 5-13-2020. https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/05/13/coronavirus-pandemic-depression-economy-world-war/

But war could still be much **less likely**. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Barry Posen has already considered the likely impact of the current pandemic on the probability of war, and he believes  COVID-19 is more likely to promote peace instead. He argues that the current pandemic is affecting all the major powers adversely, which means it isn’t creating tempting windows of opportunity for unaffected states while leaving others weaker and therefore vulnerable. Instead, it is making all **governments more pessimistic** about their short- to medium-term prospects. Because states often go to war out of sense of overconfidence (however misplaced it sometimes turns out to be), pandemic-induced pessimism should be **conducive to peace**.

Moreover, by its very nature war requires states to assemble lots of people in **close proximity**—at training camps, military bases, mobilization areas, ships at sea, etc.—and that’s not something you want to do in the middle of a pandemic. For the moment at least, beleaguered governments of all types are focusing on convincing their citizens they are doing everything in their power to protect the public from the disease. Taken together, these considerations might explain why even an impulsive and headstrong warmaker like Saudi Arabia’s Mohammed bin Salman has gotten more interested in winding down his brutal and unsuccessful military campaign in Yemen.

Posen adds that COVID-19 is also likely to **reduce international trade** in the short to medium term. Those who believe economic interdependence is a powerful barrier to war might be alarmed by this development, but he points out that trade issues have been a source of considerable frictionin recent years—especially between the United States and China—and a degree of decoupling might **reduce tensions** somewhat and cause the odds of war to recede.

For these reasons, the pandemic itself may be **conducive to peace**. But what about the relationship between broader economic conditions and the likelihood of war? Might a few leaders still convince themselves that provoking a crisis and going to war could still advance either long-term national interests or their own political fortunes? Are the other paths by which a deep and sustained economic downturn might make serious global conflict more likely?

One familiar argument is the so-called diversionary (or “scapegoat”) theory of war. It suggests that leaders who are worried about their popularity at home will try to divert attention from their failures by provoking a crisis with a foreign power and maybe even using force against it. Drawing on this logic, some Americans now worry that President Donald Trump will decide to attack a country like Iran or Venezuela in the run-up to the presidential election and especially if he thinks he’s likely to lose.

This outcome strikes me as unlikely, even if one ignores the logical and empirical flaws in the theory itself. War is always a gamble, and should things go badly—even a little bit—it would **hammer the last nail** in the coffin of Trump’s declining fortunes. Moreover, none of the countries Trump might consider going after pose an **imminent threat** to U.S. security, and even his staunchest supporters may wonder why he is wasting time and money going after Iran or Venezuela at a moment when thousands of Americans are dying preventable deaths at home. Even a successful military action won’t put Americans back to work, create the sort of testing-and-tracing regime that competent governments around the world have been able to implement already, or hasten the development of a vaccine. The same logic is likely to guide **the decisions of** **other world leaders too**.

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**No Internal Link – Diversionary War False**

**No diversionary war**

**Boehmer ‘7** – political science professor at the University of Texas [

Charles, Politics & Policy, 35:4, “The Effects of Economic Crisis, Domestic Discord, and State Efficacy on the Decision to Initiate Interstate Conflict”, WEA]

This article examines the contemporaneous effect of low economic growth and domestic instability on the threat of regime change and/ or involvement in external militarized conflicts. Many studies of diversionary conflict argue that lower rates of economic growth should heighten the risk of international conflict. Yet we know that militarized interstate conflicts, and especially wars, are generally rare events whereas lower rates of growth are not. Additionally, a growing body of literature shows that regime changes are also associated with lower rates of economic growth. The question then becomes which event, militarized interstate conflict or regime change, is the most likely to occur with domestic discord and lower rates of economic growth? Diversionary theory claims that leaders seek to divert attention away from domestic problems such as a bad economy or political scandals, or to garner increased support prior to elections. Leaders then supposedly externalize discontented domestic sentiments onto other nations, sometimes as scapegoats based on the similar in-group/out-group dynamic found in the research of Coser (1956) and Simmel (1955), where foreign countries are blamed for domestic problems. This process is said to involve a “rally-round-the-flag” effect, where a leader can expect a short-term boost in popularity with the threat or use of force (Blechman, Kaplan, and Hall 1978; Mueller 1973). Scholarship on diversionary conflict has focused most often on the American case1 but recent studies have sought to identify this possible behavior in other countries.2 The Falklands War is often a popular example of diversionary conflict (Levy and Vakili 1992). Argentina was reeling from hyperinflation and rampant unemployment associated with the Latin American debt crisis. It is plausible that a success in the Falklands War may have helped to rally support for the governing Galtieri regime, although Argentina lost the war and the ruling regime lost power. How many other attempts to use diversionary tactics, if they indeed occur, can be seen to generate a similar outcome? The goal of this article is to provide an assessment of the extent to which diversionary strategy is a threat to peace. Is this a colorful theory kept alive by academics that has little bearing upon real events, or is this a real problem that policy makers should be concerned with? If it is a strategy readily available to leaders, then it is important to know what domestic factors trigger this gambit. Moreover, to know that requires an understanding of the context in external conflict, which occurs relative to regime changes. Theories of diversionary conflict usually emphasize the potential benefits of diversionary tactics, although few pay equal attention to the prospective costs associated with such behavior. It is not contentious to claim that leaders typically seek to remain in office. However, whether they can successfully manipulate public opinion regularly during periods of domestic unpopularity through their states’ participation in foreign militarized conflicts—especially outside of the American case—is a question open for debate. Furthermore, there appears to be a logical disconnect between diversionary theories and extant studies of domestic conflict and regime change. Lower rates of economic growth are purported to increase the risk of both militarized interstate conflicts (and internal conflicts) as well as regime changes (Bloomberg and Hess 2002). This implies that if leaders do, in fact, undertake diversionary conflicts, many may still be thrown from the seat of power—especially if the outcome is defeat to a foreign enemy. Diversionary conflict would thus seem to be a risky gambit (Smith 1996). Scholars such as MacFie (1938) and Blainey (1988) have nevertheless questioned the validity of the diversionary thesis. As noted by Levy (1989), this perspective is rarely formulated as a cohesive and comprehensive theory, and there has been little or no knowledge cumulation. Later analyses do not necessarily build on past studies and the discrepancies between inquiries are often difficult to unravel. “Studies have used a variety of research designs, different dependent variables (uses of force, major uses of force, militarized disputes), different estimation techniques, and different data sets covering different time periods and different states” (Bennett and Nordstrom 2000, 39). To these problems, we should add a lack of theoretical precision and incomplete model specification. By a lack of theoretical precision, I am referring to the linkages between economic conditions and domestic strife that remain unclear in some studies (Miller 1995; Russett 1990). Consequently, extant studies are to a degree incommensurate; they offer a step in the right direction but do not provide robust cross-national explanations and tests of economic growth and interstate conflict. Yet a few studies have attempted to provide deductive explanations about when and how diversionary tactics might be employed. Using a Bayesian updating game, Richards and others (1993) theorize that while the use of force would appear to offer leaders a means to boost their popularity, a poorly performing economy acts as a signal to a leader’s constituents about his or her competence. Hence, attempts to use diversion are likely to fail either because incompetent leaders will likewise fail in foreign policy or people will recognize the gambit for what it is. Instead, these two models conclude that diversion is likely to be undertaken particularly by risk-acceptant leaders. This stress on a heightened risk of removal from office is also apparent in the work of Bueno de Mesquita and others (1999), and Downs and Rocke (1994), where leaders may “gamble for resurrection,” although the diversionary scenario in the former study is only a partial extension of their theory on selectorates, winning coalitions, and leader survival. Again, how often do leaders fail in the process or are removed from positions of power before they can even initiate diversionary tactics? A few studies focusing on leader tenure have examined the removal of leaders following war, although almost no study in the diversionary literature has looked at the effects of domestic problems on the relative risks of regime change, interstate conflict, or both events occurring in the same year.3

**Diversionary war is backwards---decline causes diversionary peace**

**Mattsson 16** (Linus Mattsson, Uppsala Universitet Department of Government, Fall 2016, “Unrest as Incentive for Cooperation? The Diversionary Peace Theory, Turkish-Syrian Relations and the Kurdish Conflict,” http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1067590/FULLTEXT01.pdf)

3. Theoretical framework 3.1 Diversionary War theory First, let us look at the founding theory again. The Diversionary war theory, as previously explained, is **claimed** to be an **explanation of the outbreak of war**. The theory assumes that in times of domestic turmoil or discontent, leaders initiate conflict in the international arena in order to divert the citizens' attention away from the politically unpopular domestic situation, thus making sure they stay in office. The breakout of a large number of conflicts in history, from the Middle Ages to modern times, has been explained in terms of diversionary use of force. The actions of Napoleon III have been interpreted as frequent uses of diversionary tactics: not only did the Emperor provoke the Crimean war (1852-1856) to “divert the eyes of Frenchmen from their own government's weaknesses” (Blainey, 1988:72), but also the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 has been interpreted in the same way. Perhaps the most well-known example is the RussoJapanese war of 1904. The Russian Interior Minister at that time, Plehve, is cited in the memoirs of Count Witte, Minister of Finance, as saying “you are not familiar with Russia's internal situation. We need a little victorious war to stem the tide of revolution” (Blainey, 1988:76). The theory has been widely supported and is a long-lived one, appearing long before the established scholarly field of International Relations. Historically, it has been a conventional wisdom on the outbreak of war, based upon a number of ad hoc observations rather than a well-established theoretical scientific hypothesis. As Morgan and Bickers put it: “virtually every war since 1800 has been attributed, at least in part, to efforts of state leaders to deal with domestic problems” (Morgan and Bickers, 1992:27). However, throughout the years, this enigma has become widely researched by political scientists, resulting in a more developed theory. What theoretical arguments do the advocates of the Diversionary War theory rely upon? In summary, the main mechanisms of the DWT have said to be three: The In-group/Out-grouphypothesis or Rally-Round-The-Flag-Effect, Scapegoating and Gambling for Resurrection (Chiozza and Goemans, 2003:445). The first one, the In-group/Out-group theory, or conflict-cohesion theory, originates from the field of sociology and the two sociologists Simmel and Coser. It suggests that identities of a group, in this case national identities, become stronger in times of external threats – that the in-group identity becomes more united during conflicts with the out-group (Levy, 1989:261). The Rally-Round-The-FlagEffect is a consequence of this. Not only does external pressure strengthen the group identities – in addition, it also leads to the group's unification around leader. The tenure of the leader should therefore be extended in times of external crisis (Chiozza and Goemans, 2003:445). However, for the theory to be effective, there are some conditions that should be met: the group has to be fairly salient to begin with, has to already perceive itself as a group and also view the survival of the group as something worthwhile (Levy 1989:261). In addition, Simmel recognized that the outcome of conflict might be of importance: “[War] might either cause domestic quarrels to be forgotten, or might on the contrary aggravate them beyond reconciliation” (Levy, 1989:261). The second mechanism, Scapegoating, means that leaders retort to war to shift the blame of failed policies onto the states enemies (Chiozza and Goemans, 2003:445). This is a consequence of the first theory, implying that leaders are aware of the psychological effect external pressure has on national identity and, in turn, their own tenure. The third mechanism, Gambling for resurrection, stemming from rational choice literature, argues that state leaders who are confronted with a possible loss of power can afford starting a foreign conflict, since their risk of losing office is imminent. If creating a conflict increases their chance of staying in office even by a small percentage, it would be worth it (Chiozza and Goemans, 2003:446). Consequently, we should be able to observe the following patterns or mechanisms, according to the theory: When a domestic issue in a state threatens the legitimacy or political power of the ruling elite, said elite should a) be likely to use aggressive foreign policy behaviour as a tool to divert the attention of the public from the domestic issue, since a) the leaders are aware that the people will become more united or nationalistic under such external pressure, b) the people will give more support to the leader leading to c), a return of the popular support of the political elite. However, as already touched upon in the introduction, most of the research in support of the DWT have been either **backed up by anecdotal evidence** or **lack quantitative evidence**, which leads to both **theoretical and empirical issues**. 3.2 The Critiques of Diversionary War Theory The Diversionary War theory has been **heavily criticized** throughout the years. Only **few** modern **scholars** working on the subject ultimately **support the initial theory**. The main critique against the DWT is that there are **insignificant links** between the theory and the empirical findings (Levy, 1989:282). The historical and theoretical literature strongly suggests that political leaders should use diversionary force to strengthen their own positions, while the **empirical studies, often quantitative**, have found little or **no support for the relationship** between domestic strife and foreign conflict. The reasons for this are, in summary, two: 1. There might be something wrong with the theory itself. 2. The methodology used (mostly statistical analysis of a large number of states) might not be the right one (Morgan and Bickers, 1992:28). Regarding the theory, the idea that external enemies unite the group **might not be** as **strong** as initially thought. As Simmel himself explained, the in-group/out-group theory needs **strict** **conditions** to work – one of them is the in-group being fairly small. Thus, **extrapolating** the concept from small group psychological behaviour into a large, complex entity as modern day states might be **difficult** (Morgan and Bickers 1992:32). Although commonly treated almost as a general law, some scholars have paid attention to under what circumstances diversionary tactics would be used. The level of internal conflict should matter for the use of diversionary tactics. If the level of internal conflict is too low, aggressive foreign policy should be an exaggerated tool to use. If the level of internal conflict instead is too high, it would not be wise to turn to diversionary tactics. Blainey noted that during open civil war, diversionary use of force is rare since states **turn to** **deal with** **their** **internal issue** **first** as a part of its **rational calculations** (Blainey, 1988:86). In conclusion, we should only be able to observe diversionary actions at the moderate levels of internal strife. Another issue with the Diversionary War theory has to do with the assumptions that it makes regarding the management of conflict (or war). It presumes that war is something that can be easily managed. However, war requires a **warring opponent** who the state leaders **cannot control**. The situation is very likely to **get out of hand** and therefore open conflict should probably be an **unlikely goal** **for leaders** who seek to divert the attention of the public. Thus, actions short of war, like escalation of threat of force should be observable (Morgan and Bickers, 1992:29). However, this has also been challenged. Rummel, conducting a study on the link between internal and external conflict upon 77 states between 1955-57 found that “foreign conflict behavior is generally completely unrelated to domestic conflict behavior” (Levy 1989:262). These two facts about the variables give us some clue to why the quantitative studies that have been conducted might fail to produce any results in favor of the DWT. Large scale studies of the relationship between domestic strife and foreign conflict using correlation analysis and regressions all rely on the assumption that the relationship between the variables should be linear. The problem is that the theory does not imply that this is the case. Rather, the relationship should differ depending on the level of internal strife. There are more clues as to why the large, statistical analyses have failed to produce any results. One reason could be that scholars mainly have focused on correlations rather than offering any explanations through causality. One such scholar is Blainey. In his observations, he finds support for the linkage between civil strife and foreign conflict, but not due to diversionary actions. Instead, a state torn by civil strife often end up in conflict because it is perceived as weakened, and thus easily become a target for other states seeking to exploit the shift in power balance (Blainey 1988:82). It has also been argued that the direction of the relationship between internal and external conflict could be reversed. Foreign conflict could easily lead to internal turmoil and finally revolution at the home front, giving us internalization of external conflict rather than externalization of internal conflict (Levy, 1989:267). However, that this could happen would not per se be a problem for the theory – it is only problematic when the direction of the relationship is unaccounted for, given that there probably should be different casual mechanisms active during externalization and internalization of conflict, which would affect the results. In summary, the biggest obstacle to the research is a common, cumulative theoretical framework. As Levy puts it: “Little attention is given to questions of under what kinds of conditions what kind of states resort to what kinds of external conflict in response to what kinds of threats to the security of political elites” (Levy, 1989:283). 3.3 Diversionary Peace Theory The **Diversionary Peace Theory**, as put forward by Fravel is an **alternative critical engagement** with the **Diversionary War Theory**. In a case study on **China** **and** **its** **territorial disputes**, he finds that in times of **internal turmoil** **or regime insecurity**, China seeks **compromises** with foreign states, **rather than confrontation** (Fravel, 2005:47). Internal or domestic turmoil is referred to as regime insecurity. Fravel specifically dwells on social discontent, such as **protests** and **legitimacy crises,** and ethnic violence or uprisings. His observations are that when China is in a state of regime insecurity, the state chooses **not to escalate** any of the **territorial conflicts** with the neighbouring states. Instead, China seeks **cooperation**, **contrary** **to** what the **DWT** predicts. Instead of diversion, good relations with foreign state is **one key way to** **solve internal problems**, in addition to domestic tools. This is connected to the theoretical concept of Omnibalancing (David, 1991:235), which explains that leaders of third-world countries would be inclined to cooperate with an adversary, if there is an enemy deemed as more threatening. There are several ways leaders could benefit from cooperating with other states to deal with regime insecurity: they can gain **direct** **assistance** in dealing with the domestic threat, such as an external state denying rebel groups a harbor, as in Syria harboring Öcalan in our case, or they can improve border patrols. They can **avoid a costly two-front war**, and **focus** their resources **on the domestic issues** instead of the defense budget. Cooperation could also lead to an improvement of the regimes' **international recognition**, which would **delegitimize** any **domestic contestors** (Fravel, 2005:52). According to Fravel, leaders have three strategy options in ongoing disputes: they can delay, i.e. maintain claims to the issue, escalate via threat or use of force, and finally cooperate by dropping claims or offering concessions (Fravel, 2005:52). The least costly alternative is the delaying strategy, whereas escalation is costly due to risk of ending up in a military defeat, and cooperation is costly since it can be perceived as weakness by domestic audiences and lead to a removal from office. However, his argument is that when facing regime insecurity, the cost of the cooperation strategy is **significantly lowered**, since whatever one might lose on domestic discontent is **won through** the **assistance** in dealing with the original threat (Fravel, 2005:53). This is **especially** true if the threat to the regime emerges in the form of a threat to territorial integrity, which would **drastically enhance** the **incentives to offer concessions** to the neighbouring countries to prevent them from aiding events such as uprisings (Fravel 2005:53). This has clear implications for our case. When the armed Kurdish struggle for independence (i.e. a threat to territorial integrity) escalates, Turkey would have strong incentives to cooperate with or give concessions to Syria, an adjacent state that could serve as a base for the rebels. Fravel mainly studies behavior in territorial issues as the main independent variable. In this study, I will broaden this framework and include other contested foreign policy issues as well as long as there is a bargain situation for the two related states where concessions can be made. Although he backs his claims by an empirical study, only some attempt is made by Fravel to theoreticize his findings. He claims it is a “**counterintuitive** argument about the effects of domestic conflict on foreign policy” (Fravel, 2005:49). He does elaborate on why states would chose to cooperate, but does not offer any deeper explanation of the intervening variables in action. However, we can draw some **theoretical conclusions** from Fravel's observations and thoughts. First, we assume that leaders are rational. They would, in times of a crisis, assess the problem, identify possible courses of action and then choose the alternative that is most effective. By assuming this, we can draw the conclusion that leaders do not engage in a new conflict simply because the conflict is not manageable. The logic of the DWT is that leaders can control new conflicts – otherwise they would not be able to initiate them in order to divert attention. For Fravel, in contrast, leaders choose to focus on **what** **they can** **control**, which leads to **cooperation rather than war**. Secondly, we can assume that conflict is costly. The resources of the state might be **too scarce to manage** **two** **crises**. Therefore, it is **not rational to engage in a new, foreign conflict before the domestic one is solved.**

**No Internal Link – Not About Politics**

**Aff isn’t key - Its not just about politics – Erdogan’s concerns are real and will persist past him**

Aaron **Stein**, **5/30**/22, Director of Research at the Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI). Resident senior fellow of the Atlantic Council, where he managed their Turkey-related research program, oversaw work on nonproliferation in the Middle East with a focus on Iran, and researched non-state actors in the Middle East, with a particular focus on Kurdish groups in Syria and Iraq, “YOU GO TO WAR WITH THE TURKEY YOU HAVE, NOT THE TURKEY YOU WANT,” <https://warontherocks.com/2022/05/you-go-to-war-with-the-turkey-you-have-not-the-turkey-you-want/>, BradAs

The Turkish government is using the Russian invasion of Ukraine to settle [outstanding grievances](https://www.reuters.com/world/erdogan-says-nato-should-understand-turkeys-security-sensitivities-2022-05-18/) with much of NATO. Sweden and Finland were expected to [swiftly join the alliance](https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/germany-says-all-ready-quick-ratification-finnish-swedish-nato-membership-2022-05-15/), in time for the June summit in Madrid. Instead, Ankara has upended this coronation. Turkey, which joined NATO during the alliance’s [first wave of enlargement](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49212.htm) in 1952, seeks to [extract concessions](https://t.co/Sc2SdG6RtD) from Sweden and Finland on combatting terrorism, extraditing citizens of Kurdish origin to Turkey, and lifting the arms embargo that much of the West placed on Turkey following its October 2019 invasion of Syria. The Turkish protests have underscored how Ankara’s narrow security concerns differ considerably from those of the rest of the NATO alliance, particularly at a time when the alliance has sought to move beyond the war in Afghanistan and return to its core mission of deterring Russia.

The topic of Turkey has polarized debate in many Western capitals. The debate centers on Ankara’s value to the alliance, and whether Turkey’s domestic authoritarianism and functional relationship with Moscow matter for Western security. For Turkey skeptics, [the argument](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/03/world/europe/turkey-nato.html) is that Ankara has upended Western efforts in Syria, and that its tight trading relationship with Russia and refusal to join with Western sanctions to punish Moscow for its invasion of Ukraine suggest that Turkey undermines NATO security. For proponents, Turkey’s large, conscript-heavy military is seen as vital for tying up Russian forces in a theoretical conventional conflict, and its [sale of TB2 drones](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2022/05/16/the-turkish-drone-that-changed-the-nature-of-warfare) to Ukraine is proof-positive of Ankara’s constructive role in NATO and contribution to [deterring Russian expansionism](https://twitter.com/yusuferim34/status/1402177441964122114?s=24).

In these debates, Ankara’s [sympathizers](https://twitter.com/sinanulgen1/status/1527399508425990145) often focus on the legitimacy of Turkey’s concerns, while [critics](https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-syria-middle-east-recep-tayyip-erdogan-4386d1ae4dd72a1bcf2e26f0710987e6?utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=AP_Europe&utm_campaign=SocialFlow) emphasize that President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is blackmailing the West to win nationalist votes at home. But both of these arguments miss a deeper point. Turkish elites are serious about their security concerns and that in itself is problem for NATO. These genuine concerns are not just framed in anti-Western ways, but **understood** in anti-Western ways. This means that **Ankara has some legitimate demands,** particularly on collective support for counter-terrorism. But when pro-Ankara analysts focus solely on these asks, they overlook the “poison-pill” demands for democratic countries to limit their own societies’ free speech in ways that are impossible, or to extradite people without proper evidence. Conversely, by dismissing all of Erdogan’s demands as token efforts to rally his base, Western critics risk downplaying the seriousness with which the ruling Justice and Development party in Turkey pursues foreign policy.

The Turkish government is using the threat of non-consensus to try to force a wider change in how NATO conceptualizes security. This facet of Turkish foreign policy has broad support inside the country and the challenge it presents to Turkish-Western relations **will endure long past the current impasse over NATO expansion**. The sooner leaders in Washington and Brussels confronts this fact, the more effectively they will be able to handle the unmanageable problem it poses.

The Roots of Ankara’s Anger

Erdogan is one of the world’s most transparent leaders and uses clear, blunt language to describe his foreign policy goals. Despite this, his frequent criticisms of the United States and the international order [are often dismissed as bluster](https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/05/23/erdogan-turkey-pkk-election-sweden-finland-nato/), aimed only at a domestic audience to retain populist support. To be sure, all foreign crises involving Turkey have some link to domestic politics, but dismissing Erdogan’s rhetoric as unserious is a mistake. The security concerns that he and his officials have bluntly laid out over Swedish and Finnish NATO membership are widely shared inside Turkey and linked to a whole host of other issues that have plagued Turkish-Western relations for the past decade. These include the way Turkish elites [view their own national security situation](https://stockholmcf.org/pew-report-72-percent-of-turks-see-us-as-security-threat/), their expectations of “[solidarity](https://www.conversationsix.com/profile/5Jaafs3entsc2Zutf)” from Western allies, and their suspicion — shared by the majority of Turks — that the United States and NATO are [actually adversaries](https://eurasiantimes.com/us-israel-biggest-threat-to-turkey-azerbaijan-closet-ally-centre-for-turkish-studies/) instead of allies.

Many varieties of Turkish nationalists hold [hostile anti-NATO views](https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/leaving-nato-should-be-on-agenda-mhp-leader-174038) and an even [smaller subset](https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/research_papers/2022RP07_EurasianismInTurkey.pdf) view Moscow as a more suitable ally for Turkey than NATO. Elements of this clique view Greece as particularly hostile and believe that the threat from Athens has grown in recent years because of its [closer relationship](https://greekreporter.com/2022/05/17/live-greek-pm-mitsotakis-address-u-s-congress/) Washington and the arms embargoes placed on Turkey. The U.S.-Greek relationship was consolidated, particularly during the Trump administration, by [Greece’s openness](https://www.defensenews.com/news/your-military/2022/05/12/greece-to-extend-base-access-deal-with-us-military/) to hosting American military forces. For Turkey’s anti-Western Eurasianists, the increase in American cooperation with Greece is viewed as proof of [American encirclement](http://www.apple.com/) of Turkey and indicative of an American policy of weakening the Turkish armed forces.

As a result, many elites view the country’s [military balance vis-à-vis Greece](https://twitter.com/kozanserkan1/status/1526470346567729152?s=24&t=9Su4Zecj6Jc_FA8udKRCpQ) as paramount for national security. The focus on maintaining a more capable military than Athens has direct relevance to Turkey’s position on Swedish and Finnish membership in NATO. The American decision, in this instance, to kick Turkey out of the F-35 program looms large. Washington’s decision came after years of telegraphing to Turkey that its purchase of the S-400 air defense system from Russia would lead to Turkey’s removal from the fighter production program and result in sanctions. Ankara ignored these warnings. The end result was [just what Washington signaled](https://warontherocks.com/2021/10/not-a-divorce-but-a-defense-decoupling-whats-next-for-the-u-s-turkish-alliance/) and Ankara lost its future front-line fighter and now faces [sanctions on its defense industry.](https://2017-2021.state.gov/caatsa-section-231-imposition-of-sanctions-on-turkish-presidency-of-defense-industries/index.html) Greece, in turn, has [pledged to purchase the F-35](https://greekreporter.com/2022/05/17/greece-buy-us-f-35-after-2028/) and, importantly, [has received upgrades](https://www.key.aero/article/aegean-vipers-overview-greeces-major-f-16-upgrade) to its legacy F-16 fleet. Ankara has requested these same aircraft upgrades from Washington, but an unofficial arms embargo[Congress has imposed](https://www.defensenews.com/breaking-news/2020/08/12/congress-has-secretly-blocked-us-arms-sales-to-turkey-for-nearly-two-years/) since October 2019 has prevented it. The uncertainty about the future of the Turkish Air Force — and the upgrades to the Hellenic Air Force — has reinforced concerns inside Ankara about the future balance of forces in the Aegean and Mediterranean regions.

Thus, even though Turkey has decreased its overall reliance on foreign suppliers for military equipment, its inability to access certain higher-end equipment does have an impact on the country’s armed forces. The embargoes also reinforce [paranoid thinking](https://warontherocks.com/2020/06/blue-homeland-the-heated-politics-behind-turkeys-new-maritime-strategy/) about the true intent in Washington and reinforces the fictitious narrative that Washington seeks to hinder Turkish development out of some broader desire to control elites in Ankara. This also bolsters the broadly held view that the United States is indirectly killing Turkish troops by supplying weapons to the Syrian Kurds while, at the same time, denying them to Turkey.

Ankara has never accepted the Syrian Kurds as a legitimate anti-terrorist force, and instead has said that using [“one terrorist group to fight another](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/1/9/erdogan-us-made-a-serious-mistake-on-syrian-kurdish-ypg-fighters)” is destined to fail. The Syrian Kurds, Ankara has suggested, will repress Arabs, who will then seek shelter from Islamic State, thereby creating a cycle of violence that Ankara will always have to grapple with. As Washington’s relationship with the Syrian Kurds deepened, so too did Ankara’s intransigence over the direction of the war against the Islamic State. This intransigence eventually led to [unilateral Turkish military action](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/turkey-invades-syria-turkish-president-erdogan-announces-military-operation-today-2019-10-09/) intended [to carve out a 30-kilometer buffer zone](https://warontherocks.com/2014/12/the-origins-of-turkeys-buffer-zone-in-syria/) along the entirety of the [Turkish border with Syria](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/16/world/middleeast/syria-turkey-erdogan-afrin.html). This zone was intended to keep the Syrian Kurds away from Turkey’s border and, importantly, to serve as a repository for displaced Syrians, who Ankara has sought to bar from entering the country since 2015. However, in each instance, Ankara’s unilateral actions prompted [Western counter-reaction](https://www.defensenews.com/congress/2019/10/30/us-turkey-alliance-in-downward-spiral-as-congress-mulls-sanctions/) with sanctions and embargoes. These twin issues are, now, the cornerstone of Ankara’s push against Finnish and Swedish membership in NATO.

Turkey is seeking to rectify what it perceives as an injustice by using its power to deny consensus in NATO and thereby coerce the alliance to take its own national security issues more seriously**. Ankara is** doing this with blunt force: threatening to block the accession of two new NATO members, threatening to invade Syria (again), and [**implicitly threatening**](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/may/24/erdogan-says-he-will-cut-all-ties-with-greece-dashing-hopes-of-talks) **to**[**further escalate**](https://www.euronews.com/2022/04/29/greece-and-turkey-accuse-each-other-s-military-of-airspace-violations)**tensions with Greece**. The challenge is that Turkish demands of Sweden and Finland are **not some roundabout way to whip up populist sentiment**, **or** solely **a reflection of Erdogan trying to split the opposition before the 2023 elections**. Instead, the **Turkish position** on its security vulnerabilities **is genuine** and the slow-rolling of NATO enlargement is seen as a legitimate mechanism to coerce the alliance to take Turkish concerns more seriously.

The issue, of course, is that these concerns are unique to Ankara and not shared by the Western alliance. Instead, Ankara’s Kurdish problem is thought of as an internal, Turkish-only issue that can be resolved with a [return to a peace process](https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/western-europemediterranean/turkey/turkey-and-pkk-saving-peace-process). Even while NATO members recognize the brutality of the Kurdistan Workers Party and its terrorist tactics, they see the group as a product of Turkey’s own democratic failings. Meanwhile, within Turkey, the ruling party has ample [support](https://www.americanprogress.org/press/release-cap-poll-shows-deep-ambivalence-turkey-toward-european-union/) for its hardline policies, even if there are gripes within the country about how Erdogan conducts foreign policy. The disconnect between Turkey and its NATO allies may grow in the coming years, given divergences over national security priorities and Ankara’s willingness to use its position within Western institutions to coerce its allies.

The Turkish positions over Sweden and Finland are not spur of the moment, nor are they simply reflective of populist domestic politics. Instead, what Ankara is seeking to do is to “right” perceived wrongs that are now nearly a decade old. The challenges in meeting Ankara’s demands are manifest, signaling that even if there is compromise over this one issue, differences between Turkey and the NATO alliance will persist. These suggest that managing Turkey will remain a core issue for NATO for years to come, underscoring how current challenges may continue to fester even if compromises can be found.

The best pathway forward for the United States and Europe is to admit that relations with Ankara are a transactional, interest-driven affair that requires near-constant effort to manage. Given Turkey’s position within NATO, it literally gets a vote over expansion, ensuring that Ankara can extract concessions from current and future aspirants. However, it would be unwise for countries to focus only on the Turkish demands that it agrees with, without viewing the totality of Ankara’s expectations. Ankara may be forced to capitulate, but Erdogan’s earnestness when expressing his desires for [global change](https://www.insightturkey.com/articles/the-world-is-bigger-than-five-a-salutary-manifesto-of-turkeys-new-international-outlook) clearly indicate that he **will revisit his gripes at a later date,** when he again feels he has leverage over the West. This reality should also inform how the West deals with Turkey: looking for its own opportunities to extract concessions when it is Ankara that is vulnerable to coercion. This method of diplomacy is, at its core, how the current leadership in Turkey views its relations with the world — as a zero-sum affair. It would behoove others to get with the program. It is unclear if Turkish demands of Sweden and Finland can ever be met, but the demands are serious and part of a broader worldview that informs Turkey’s thinking. It would be wise to understand the roots of those concerns because, inevitably, **they will reappear**.

**Greece concerns existed before Erdogan, and will persist past him**

**Jeffrey 6-15**-2022 (James F., Former ambassador to Iraq and Turkey, and Special Envoy to the Global Coalition To Defeat ISIS, “The NATO Accession Crisis Risks Final Collapse of the Alliance-Turkey Relationship,” <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/nato-accession-crisis-risks-final-collapse-alliance-turkey-relationship>) JHK

**Turkey’s rejection of NATO accession for Sweden and Finland,** beyond undercutting NATO’s response to Russia’s aggression, **reflects a deeper rift between the West and Turkey**. This is further manifest by Ankara’s recent threat to expand into northern Syria and its overflights of Greek territory. For the sake of the Alliance, immediate responses are vital, but **the rift will worsen unless Washington and European capitals work** with Ankara **to fundamentally shift their relationship**. While such a shift has long been advisable given Turkey’s importance, the existential threat of Russian aggression for both Turkey and the Alliance make it urgent.

Almost overnight Ankara lashed out against Finland and Sweden, threatening to block their NATO accession if they did not cut real and alleged ties to the PKK.

A month ago, Washington hosted Turkish Foreign Minister Melvut Cavusoglu and signaled a new bilateral strategic dialogue. This included possible sales of F-16’s to Ankara, symbolically ending the bitter dispute over a Turkish Russian missile purchase, and Washington’s subsequent cutting Turkey from the F-35 program. Turkey was also following analogous rapprochement with Arab states, Israel, Greece, and Armenia, and now plays a central role in the Ukrainian conflict providing weapons, closing the Straits to Russian naval reinforcements and pressing on various diplomatic exchanges. Then almost overnight Ankara lashed out against Finland and Sweden, threatening to block their NATO accession if they did not cut real and alleged ties to the PKK, and followed up with the aforementioned threats in Syria and escalation in the Aegean. Predictably, American commentators reacted vigorously, even suggesting once again for Turkey to be thrown out of NATO.

Shifting attitudes toward Turkey

Such dramatic flips in Turkish policy, gelding any predictable diplomacy, have become a hallmark of both Turkish president Erdogan and the convoluted internal political system with his party, dependent on an extremist nationalist partner. Such flips also make efforts to resolve issues such as those above (let alone the underlying rift between Ankara and NATO allies), a high-risk endeavor which most Western leaders avoid, writing Turkey off as a lost cause. But as Ukraine has demonstrated, Turkey is vital to containing Russia, as it has been to NATO’s nuclear deterrence, missile defense against Iran, operations in the Balkans, and Afghanistan. It is just too big, too important, and at times too problematic to ignore.

While the Ukraine conflict is now generating strife between Turkey and NATO over Scandinavian accession, it also offers a chance to improve relations between them. That conflict resembles nothing seen since the late 1930s and immediate post-war period, with the very survival of the world order at stake. Winning this conflict, by maintaining Ukraine’s survival as an independent state and deterring new Russian aggression, while avoiding escalation into the unknown, is a categorical imperative not experienced since the Cold War. While this is true of the Alliance as a whole, it is especially relevant for Turkey, a front line state with a long history under Russian pressure.

Furthermore, experience shows Turkey can be cooperative. The Bush administration worked well with Turkey on counter-PKK operations, and the Obama administration negotiated a NATO anti- Iranian ballistic missile radar deployment. The 2019 Pence-Erdogan ceasefire in Northeast Syria still holds despite Turkish threats, and the two capitals handled well President Biden’s acknowledgment of Armenian genocide. And, ironically, despite deep geostrategic hostility and recent military clashes, Russia and Turkey maintain productive presidential-level relations, with Putin and especially Erdogan usually following a ‘no-surprises’ principle.

The Turks understand that accession of Sweden and Finland to NATO is critically important for a positive Ukraine outcome.

The Turks understand that accession of Sweden and Finland to NATO is critically important for a positive Ukraine outcome. They know it would strengthen the West’s long-term against Russian aggression and underline the solidarity of the international front against Moscow, without, as Putin admitted, directly threatening Russia. But what Ankara may not get is that its penchant for dangerous haggling, not only over accession but with its Aegean and northern Syria threats, undercuts that solidarity and the whole Russia containment categorical imperative. Turkey would then be blamed and likely ostracized permanently within NATO. So, the question is, why does it keep running such risks?

Turkey’s risks

Beyond the specific difficulties with President Erdogan and his domestic political and economic woes, underlying issues stymie cooperation; although they could be managed if understood better. **Most immediate are Turkey’s concerns about its ‘near abroad’ security issues in the Caucasus, Iraq, Syria, the Aegean, and** Eastern **Mediterranean** abutting Turkey’s access to the world. Above all, Turkey sees the Kurdish PKK insurgency as an existential threat. While its terrorism in Turkey has been largely suppressed, it has large bases in Iraq and Syria, including the PKK offshoot YPG commanding the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in northeast Syria fighting with US and other Western support against ISIS.

Turkey understands but cannot politically accept this support to the SDF, as Ankara fears one day the Americans will leave, and the SDF will turn on Turkey. Likewise **it sees Greece asserting legally unjustified positions in the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean as choking off Turkish access to undersea riches and** eventually even international **air and sea communications.** Finally it views Armenia as a hindrance to its alliance with Azerbaijan, with important energy and security benefits and linguistic and ethnic ties.

Making everything worse, Turks, drawing on their 19thcentury great power experiences, fear that powerful real or potential foes will exploit these near abroad dangers. They point here not only to Russian support to Armenia but Iranian collaboration with PKK elements in Iraq and Syria. They also see US and other Western, notably French, military arrangements with Athens as aimed at them, citing Washington’s and Paris’s criticism of Turkey’s actions while ignoring Greek sins (its troops on Aegean islands demilitarized in various treaties, illegitimate air space claims, and Law of the Sea provisions imposed on non-signatory Turkey).

These near **abroad security issues predate Erdogan and are hard-wired into Turkish foreign policy** and popular sentiment, but because of the often irritating way Ankara presents even reasonable arguments, Washington and European capitals dismiss or belittle them.

This problem is compounded by Washington’s difficulties, understanding that if it wants states to support its global security agenda against Russia or China, it has to take those states’ immediate security concerns seriously. This includes not just Turkey but, for example, Saudi Arabia and the UAE with Iranian-backed Houthis in Yemen. Furthermore, Turkey’s near abroad opponents, the PKK movement, Greece, and Armenia, have strong diaspora lobbies in the US and Western Europe who effectively portray Turkey as an eternal enemy regardless of Ankara’s policies, even those which at times accommodated Kurdish, Greek, and Armenian interests.

Compromise, horse trading, and just saying no, staples of most diplomacy, are often seen on all sides as betrayals of NATO solidarity, Western values, and past contributions and sacrifices.

Finally, achieving productive, transactional deals between Ankara and the rest of the West, such as those cited above, is undercut by “band of brothers” thinking in all the relevant capitals. Compromise, horse trading, and just saying no, staples of most diplomacy, are often seen on all sides as betrayals of NATO solidarity, Western values, and past contributions and sacrifices. Most bilateral meetings with Ankara begin with long-winded recitation of what the other is doing wrong, with a naïve expectation that the other, if harangued enough, will stop doing things truly important to it, such as Ankara’s maintaining a complex relationship with Russia or Washington’s fighting ISIS with whatever partner works.

A new course

The first step out of this dilemma is for all sides to recognize that with Russian aggression, they face a unique international situation that requires subordination of all other priorities to the core objective. That sort of wisdom, familiar to Churchill, Roosevelt, Truman, military planners, and in a perverse way, Putin, has largely faded in the West since 1989, replaced by what has become conventional foreign policy thinking: nothing is critical and innumerable factors compete for consideration, for example moral, ideological, humanitarian, domestic, security, alliance, economic, personal, or usually some triangulation of them.

Both sides must prioritize vigorously containing Russia, seek transactional deals on those issues between them that can be resolved, and ignore the others.

In the impasse between Turkey and NATO, this conventional thinking encourages states, buffeted by various interests and negative voices towards Turkey, to treat it as a second class, suspect member of the alliance, while benefiting from its extraordinary NATO contributions. But conventional thinking also pushes Ankara, with its domestic pressures, to see the Ukrainian crisis as simply another opportunity to extort Europe over Turkey’s second-class status, EU accession, arms sales, and specific issues such as the PKK and the Aegean. Both sides thus must prioritize vigorously containing Russia, seek transactional deals on those issues between them that can be resolved, and ignore the others. In short, accepting partners as they are, not as they should be.

The immediate challenge is NATO accession. Here Turkey has to blink first and recognize that the stakes, not just stopping Russia but preserving its own relations with NATO, require accepting half a loaf (not always an Erdogan government trait). It cannot expect Sweden and Finland to extradite people to a state whose legal system is under continuous international criticism, nor for those countries to silence freedom of expression, even when it is sympathetic to the terrorist PKK cause. It should also be accepted that, while the fight against the PKK is truly important to Turkish security, it is still secondary to Russia advancing on its borders.

In return, Sweden should lift its ban on arms sales to Turkey (and the US Congress the same with its informal ban, now impacting the F-16 sale). Finland and especially Sweden, given their long affinity for “national liberation” movements, should cut official contacts with the PKK and its fronts, recommit to Helsinki Final Act on noninterference in others’ internal affairs and give assurances they would cooperate in NATO on issues important to Turkey.

Turkey’s partners should continue counseling it against a new incursion into northern Syria. But if Turkey compromises by only attacking PKK elements west of the Euphrates, away from US forces and the main anti-ISIS effort, Washington’s objections should be muted. Likewise, partners should urge Turkey to stop overflying Greek territory, but simultaneously speak out on provocative Greek policies.

While these steps can manage the immediate crises Turkey has launched, the longer-term solution, moving to a transactional relationship, needs highest level US leadership. First, such a relationship requires dealing with Erdogan; if Putin can do it with a geostrategic opponent, why cannot American and European leaders with an ally, however difficult, given the stakes. Second, the US needs someone at a very senior level to complement the American ambassador as the administration’s Turkish file lead, not to communicate with the Turks but to corral the undisciplined official and unofficial Washington policy worlds. That world can torpedo any foreign policy effort, but doing so regarding Turkey is child’s play in the absence of presidential engagement and a Washington champion.

None of that will make a difference, however, unless Turkey’s leadership recognizes it must change some policies and, more so, attitudes toward its NATO allies, whom at this point are all Turkey can count on faced with an existential threat from Russia.

**No Impact - NATO Checks**

**NATO and EU checks – empirics prove**

**Neophytos Loizides, 2011,** Professor in International Conflict Analysis at University of Kent School of Politics and International Relations, [Escalation of Interstate Crises of Conflictual Dyads: Greece-Turkey and India-Pakistan](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/44792522_Escalation_of_Interstate_Crises_of_Conflictual_DyadsGreece-Turkey_and_India-Pakistan), https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Result-of-the-diversionary-theory-of-war\_tbl1\_44792522, BradAs

Although Greece and Turkey escalated their crisis behaviour, crisis escalation was actu-

ally inhibited at lower levels by NATO and the EU. The empirical evidence from the

Greek–Turkish crises demonstrates that the presence of regional organizations which

cover states in a conflictual relationship is conducive to inhibiting a higher escalation of

interstate crises or the use of force/war for two reasons. First, for the most part, the EU

Table 4. Intervening factors and the extent of escalation

No. Event crisis Causal

pathway

Regional

organizations

Nuclear

weapons

Incomplete

democracy

Extent of

escalation

1 G-CyprusS30098 – 1 0 0 Low (TOW)

2 T-CyprusS30098 SD & DT 1 0 0 Low (TOW)

3 G-AegKardak96 SD & DT 1 0 0 Low (SOF)

4 T-AegeanImia96 SD & DT 1 0 0 Low (SOF)

5 G-AegeanOil87 SD & DT 1 0 0 Low (TOW)

6 T-AegeanOil87 SD & DT 1 0 0 Low (SOF)

7 I-Kalchak02 SD & DT 0 1 0 High (UOF)

8 P-Kalchak02 SD & DT 0 1 1 High (UOF)

9 I-Parliament01 SD & DT 0 1 0 High (UOF)

10 P-Parliament01 DT 0 1 1 High (UOF)

11 I-Kargil99 SD & DT 0 1 0 High (UOF)

12 P-Kargil99 DT 0 1 1 High (UOF)

SD is the security dilemma, DT is diversionary theory, TOW is the threat of war, SOF is the show of force

and UOF is the use of force.

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and NATO contributed to mitigating the Greek–Turkish crises through socialization and

third-party mediation (Tsakonas, 2010). Mitchell and Hensel (2007: 724) argue that

third-party intervention by regional organizations can reduce the security dilemma by

providing conflictual dyads with assurances that long-term cooperation will benefit their

national interests. Specifically, the incentives and disincentives of the EU/EC discour-

aged Greece and Turkey from going to war. Neither side, nor their leaderships, could

play the nationalist card to such an extent as to harm relations with the EU/EC. Greece

was in a vulnerable position within the Union because of its endemic economic crises,

while Turkey was anxious to make progress in its EU/EC membership (Loizides, 2002;

Rumelili, 2003: 223). While Mitchell (2006: 26 f.) demonstrates that joint regional

organization membership increases the probability of militarizing disputes, this is only

partly true for Greece and Turkey, since the two countries reached the brink of war in

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pathway

Regional

organizations

Nuclear

weapons

Incomplete

democracy

Extent of

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4 T-AegeanImia96 SD & DT 1 0 0 Low (SOF)

5 G-AegeanOil87 SD & DT 1 0 0 Low (TOW)

6 T-AegeanOil87 SD & DT 1 0 0 Low (SOF)

7 I-Kalchak02 SD & DT 0 1 0 High (UOF)

8 P-Kalchak02 SD & DT 0 1 1 High (UOF)

9 I-Parliament01 SD & DT 0 1 0 High (UOF)

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**No Impact – Diversionary Peace**

**Diversionary peace, not war**

**Holger Albrecht**, **2020**, Professor at the University of Alabama in Comparative Politics, Diversionary Peace: International Peacekeeping and Domestic Civil-Military Relations, <https://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1080/13533312.2020.1768073>, BradAs

This article introduced the theory of diversionary peace, which improves our understanding of the link between foreign policy making and contentious civil-military relations. Contributing to peace abroad can have coup proofing effects at home quite like the decision to go to war. A thick description of Tunisia served as an empirical plausibility probe of the mechanisms linking peacekeeping to coup-proofing. Participation in peacekeeping establishes feasibility obstacles for coup coordination, the allocation of economic resources to officers, the institutionalization of the military apparatus, and a professionalized ethos in the officer corps. In an emerging research programme on the interplay of peacekeeping and domestic politics, studying Tunisia reveals three novel findings. First, coup-proofing can be the unintended outcome of dynamics in civil-military relations where political incumbents did not design specific strategies to keep officers in the barracks. In Tunisia, it was the military leadership pushing for peacekeeping participation more so than the Ben Ali regime. Second, the Tunisian case reveals that coup-proofing through peacekeeping is particularly effective in countries with small armies, where battalion strength mission participation immediately introduces a high percentage of officers into a career trajectory contributing to individual and collective professionalization. It is in larger armies, with larger officer corps, where military 96Author interview with Tunisian journalist, Tunis, 17 May 2017. 608 H. ALBRECHT leaderships and political incumbents remain more selective on mission participants. Greater competition creates winners and losers for the perks of peacekeeping and hence individual grievances among those officers deprived of opportunities at professional advancement. Third, and relatedly, Tunisia shows which mechanisms prove particularly effective in advancing coup proofing. While peacekeeping contributes to institutional professionalization and the development of a professional ethos, these remain slow-moving facets of a military’s social fabric. Other dynamics and events, such as international support for military training, the effect of economic development on recruitment and procurement, and a military’s deployment in domestic or external conflicts certainly have an impact on military professionalism as well, perhaps at a higher degree than the provision or troops for international peacekeeping. Rather than such corporate factors, it is the individual-level mechanisms highlighted in this article – feasibility obstacles and the provision of material resources – where peacekeeping generates the most significant impact on coup-proofing. These findings have important empirical and theoretical implications for scholars in various thematic fields across Comparative Politics and International Relations. Experts of Middle East politics and civil-military relations will note the empirical blind spot in the works on coup-proofing in Tunisia and beyond. Peacekeeping participation has so far not been fully addressed as an important element of the Tunisian military’s engagement and helps us better understand why, for instance, the military returned to the barracks in 2011, that is, at a point in time where it could have assumed power through the post-Arab Spring transition period. Scholars interested in the theory and empirical practice of diversionary war may consider a limitation to the theory’s applicability for weak armies. While war may not always be an option, contributing to peace can be equally attractive for its positive effects on civil-military relations. In turn, the theory of diversionary peace offers a contribution to the research programme on international peacekeeping in that it proposes novel ideas about the rationale for troop commitments beyond geostrategic considerations. Further research will be necessary to explore the external validity of the findings from the Tunisian case. The broader applicability of the diversionary peace appears to be particularly promising for civil-military relations during democratic transitions, such as in Latin America, and the post-conflict environments of small states in sub-Sahara Africa. In fact, initial observations appear to reveal the explanatory power of the diversionary peace in multiple cases including Ghana, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, and Senegal. While the diversionary peace should be seen as an important component in the toolbox of foreign policy making, it remains a medium-range theory with its explanatory power subject to important context factors. For one, the theory works well for small armies in authoritarian regimes that, at the time of increased coup threat, would entertain opportunities for participation in peacekeeping missions. Perhaps more importantly, participation in peacekeeping missions is not a coup-proofing strategy equally available to authoritarian incumbents across time and space. The very existence of a peacekeeping mission along with the mission sponsor’s invitation to participate come as necessary conditions for incumbents to consider sending troops abroad. These constraints ultimately limit the applicability of diversionary peace to post-Cold War international politics for the dramatic increase in peacekeeping missions after 1990. Yet, since the number of interstate wars has declined quite considerably during that same period, diversionary war becomes less likely and diversionary peace merits greater attention in contemporary international politics

**Turkey prioritizes cooperation with great powers and defense, no risk of attack**

**Baba and Onsoy 16** – Assist. Prof. Dr., Department of International Relations, Social Science University of Ankara & King’s College London, Assist. Prof. Dr., Department of International Relations, Hacettepe University. (Baba, Gürol and Önsoy, Murat, “Between Capability and Foreign Policy: Comparing Turkey’s Small Power and Middle Power Status”, *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Volume 13, No. 51, 2016, pp. 9-20.) //RSG🌳

In the same era, Turkey followed “a passive strategy of renunciation” and stayed in the nonrevisionist camp.59 Turkey increased its defense expenditures (see Table 2) but its defenses were still only effective for limited regional warfare. Turkey could not face a major threat, such as the Italian or German Air Force.60 Ankara remained passive in the hope that the threat would disappear. Turkey also used international regimes, particularly when the revision of the Lausanne Straits Convention started with Turkey’s application to the League of Nations in April 1936. During the process, Turkey had pro-status quo tendencies carried out via multilateral diplomacy and international law.61 It managed to win the support of greater powers, i.e. Britain, to reshape other parties’ demands. Turkey invoked the rebus sic stantibus principle to terminate the Straits Convention.62 With these maneuvers, Turkey, through the Montreux Convention (1936), managed to offset Russia, and to achieve control over the Bosporus and the Dardanelles as regulatory authority on the transit of naval warships. Turkey then started shifting between varying alliance structures against Italian expansionism in the Eastern Mediterranean, which increased its value as a counterweight between antagonistic alliances.63 Against Italian armaments in the Dodecanese islands and Mussolini’s Mare Nostrum rhetoric, Turkey successfully cooperated with the British within the League to impose sanctions on Italy after the invasion of Abyssinia and the signing of the Balkan Entente of 1934. Once the Abyssinia Crisis cooled down, Italy tried to reharmonize relations with Turkey by revoking its claims over Turkish lands.64 In its relations with the Soviets, Ankara glossed over its anticommunist tendencies65 to test the opportunities for economic and security partnerships. Moscow contributed 8 million USD towards Turkey’s first five-year economic development plan after the Great Depression of 1929.66 Turkey, with Russia, proclaimed its opposition to Western dominance in the international economy but at the same time became a League member, which it considered to be of Western design.67 Turkey also rejected Stalin’s quest for security against Hitler via the joint Turkish-Soviet defense system on the Straits.68 Turkey managed to accomplish these relations while maintaining the framework of neutrality. In the 1930s, Ankara made a special effort to not be on either side of the polarizing international system, but did not completely detach itself either. Turkey did not conclude agreements with any one side, which could potentially have restricted its revenues from the other. Two clear examples were Ankara’s rejection of Stalin’s offer for a joint defense system of the Turkish straits against Germany and its non-conclusion of an agreement with the Germans for chrome, which could cut down on sales to the Allies.

**No Impact - No Nukes**

**Greece doesn’t want to use nukes. Same author as their ev.**

**Efstathiou & Kappis ’21** (Yvonni & Bill, Political Officer at the EU Delegation to the United Arab Emirates & Deputy Director and Lecturer at the Centre for Security and Intelligence Studies in the University of Buckingham (BUCSIS), as well as a visiting Professor at the War Studies University of Poland, “Weapons of Mass Debate - Greece: a Key Security Player for both Europe and NATO,” <https://www.institutmontaigne.org/en/blog/weapons-mass-debate-greece-key-security-player-both-europe-and-nato>) JHK

During the Cold War and until 2001, Greece hosted US nuclear weapons on its territory, as part of a NATO nuclear-sharing agreement. Yet, recent geopolitical developments - the US’s progressive military disengagement from the Middle East, its "pivot to Asia", debate around removing nuclear weapons from Turkey - highlight Greece’s potential to become a nuclear base again. Greece is sold to the idea of greater European strategic autonomy and is not suspicious of France, unlike other member states. However, Athen’s lack of reaction following French President Emmanuel Macron’s February 2020 speech is due to the country’s other internal priorities and its commitment to NATO as the only actor capable of offering nuclear deterrence at the moment. In this fifth episode of our series Weapons of Mass Debate, Yvonni Efstathiou, Programme Coordinator and Research Analyst for Defense and Military Analysis at IISS, and Bill Kappis, Lecturer at the Centre for Security and Intelligence Studies in the University of Buckingham, analyze Greece’s position on the future of European security.

There is hardly any evidence of a debate concerning nuclear weapons within the Greek military and political apparatus, mainly due to concerns regarding the sensitivity of the issue in international affairs, but also due to the political cost associated with the topic. Despite the fact that from 1978 to 2001, the Hellenic Airforce Araxos Air Base hosted the NATO 345 Air Munitions Company under the NATO nuclear sharing arrangements, **the Greeks are sceptical about nuclear deployments**, with most critics, unsurprisingly, hailing from the left of the political spectrum.

In any case, the fact remains that Greece has been one of just seven nations to have hosted US nuclear bombs on their territory, as part of NATO nuclear-sharing agreements. Yet, the **country’s decision not to retain its nuclear strike capability** by scrapping its A-7E warplanes, meant that Athens **curtailed its capacity to participate in the US nuclear deployment programme**. This reportedly resulted in the withdrawal of 20 US thermonuclear gravity bombs (B61) in 2001, following years of discussions around the subject. Nevertheless, **Greece continues to support the Alliance’s nuclear deterrence doctrine**, as indicated by the country’s endorsement of relevant Alliance statements.

Recent geopolitical developments suggest there should be a renewed interest in bolstering conventional and nuclear deterrence within NATO and, more specifically, within the European operational theatre. The reduction of US troop numbers in the continent has continued unabated since the first steps of American disengagement from Europe and the Middle East, during the Obama administration. The so-called US "pivot to Asia," meanwhile, suggests that future American deployments will be aimed at bolstering power projection in the Asia-Pacific, bearing an adverse impact on the only superpower’s capacity to face concurrent security crises across the globe. This major geopolitical shift will undoubtedly "test" the credibility of American deterrence in Europe. Extended deterrence (preventing an armed attack against another allied state or group of states) is, in theory, much more demanding to maintain in a credible manner, as the deterrer should, in principle, be perceived as both capable and willing to deliver an appropriate response to the perceived challenger. Providing a robust extended deterrence umbrella to both European and Asia-Pacific allies is conceivable for the US, but far from straightforward, even for the sole superpower.

The need for a renewed debate becomes all the more important as the demise of the INF treaty could further weaken Europe’s nuclear deterrence, as the INF was heavily geared towards intra-European strategic stability. The advent, moreover, of hypersonic missiles and their potential introduction into the European nuclear strategic landscape opens the door to additional pressures on the perceived credibility of the continent’s nuclear deterrence. Finally, the Russian and Iranian nuclear programmes, as well as the nuclear aspirations of other regional powers in Europe’s vicinity, (i.e. Turkey) should mobilize Europe and thereby Greece to revisit and reflect upon this policy domain. Taking into consideration Greece’s desire for a strategically autonomous Europe, Athens should be, at least in theory, in favour of a renewed debate around nuclear weapons both as part of NATO burden-sharing arrangements and as a proponent of French deterrent capabilities within the EU.

**No Impact – Its all staged**

**The conflict is all staged for domestic political purposes**

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The most recent war of words may have domestic political purposes

One hundred summers ago, the forces of the Turkish National Movement, led by the charismatic and confident Mustafa Kemal, had turned the tide and begun pushing the invading Greeks further and further west, with nowhere to go but into the sea.

Just a year prior, Greek military leaders had felt so confident advancing into the Anatolian heartland that they reportedly invited their British allies to a victory dinner in Kemal’s new Turkish capital, Ankara. But the Turks halted that advance at the brutal, game-changing Battle of Sarkaya, some 50 kilometres west of Ankara, and reversed the momentum.

In March 1922, the Allies, led by France, the UK, Italy and the US, suggested the two sides meet for an armistice. But, not unlike Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in recent weeks, ignoring western advice to hand land to Russia, Kemal instead hoped to push the invaders fully out of his territory.

To that end, Turkish forces launched what came to be known as the Great Offensive in late August and quickly took Afyonkarahisar and Dumlupinar. On September 1, Kemal famously urged his charges: “Your first goal is the Mediterranean. Forward!”

They reached their destination in a matter of days, a humbling defeat for the Greeks and a canonical victory for Kemal, who would sign the Treaty of Lausanne the next year, found the Republic of Turkey and later be dubbed “Ataturk”, or Father of the Turks.

This region-shaping moment came to mind last week when Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, amid fast-rising Greco-Turkish tensions, delivered a rare tweet stream in Greek, advising Athens to mind its manners in the Aegean. “We warn once again Greece to be prudent, to stay away from dreams, rhetoric and actions that will lead to results it will regret, as happened a century ago,” he tweeted.

Three decades of relative amity followed the war and the 1923 population exchange, but the two neighbours and rivals [have been at each other’s throats](https://www.thenationalnews.com/opinion/comment/2021/09/20/why-turkey-and-greece-are-at-it-again/) ever since: Turkish pogroms in 1955, Turkey’s [invasion of Cyprus](https://www.thenationalnews.com/opinion/comment/is-a-two-state-cyprus-a-real-possibility-1.1206048) in 1974 and the island’s ensuing division; banging the drums of war in 1987, 1996 and 2020.

Over the past year, a series of talks hinted at a thaw, until Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis visited Washington in late May, finalised a deal for F-35 fighter jets and urged the US Congress not to send military hardware, presumably F-16s, to Turkey. “He no longer exists for me,” Mr Erdogan said of Mr Mitsotakis in response. “I will never agree to meet with him.”

Greece came back with a dismissive comment and, as per the routine, the tensions soon escalated to include maritime border disagreements in the Mediterranean, Aegean island militarisation and violations of airspace.

Last week, after Ankara hinted that the sovereignty of certain Greek islands in the Aegean might come under question, Athens [sent letters to the UN](https://www.thenationalnews.com/world/europe/2022/05/27/turkey-told-to-stop-questioning-greeces-sovereignty-in-letter-to-un/) outlining its complaints and the US urged the Nato allies to resolve their disputes through diplomacy. High drama, yet also a bit of a broken record.

Amid the greatest hits, the longtime Turkish leader’s reference to what happened a century ago stands out. Setting aside the obvious point – Greece’s humbling – that Turkish victory still today represents a defeat of western imperialism.

Greek forces had captured a great swathe of Anatolia stretching from Izmir to Bursa and Eskisehir, while the Allies had taken control of the Mediterranean jewel of Antalya and the grand prize, Istanbul, as well as Canakkale – ensuring full control of the Turkish straits. Not since Fatih Sultan Mehmet II trotted into Constantinople on his white horse in May 1453 had Turks felt so vulnerable.

Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, right, talks to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan during their meeting in Istanbul in March. AP Photo

Mr Erdogan’s reference signalled that Turks today might feel similarly hemmed in by its supposed western allies: when Greece places troops on Aegean islands (though there’s little evidence of this); when the EU restricts Turkey’s maritime boundaries or access to Cypriot energy reserves; when the US partners with Turkey’s foes in northern Syria and opposes Ankara’s Syria policy.

The ruling AKP has in recent weeks received its lowest-ever polling numbers, just a year out from a national vote, and Turkish warnings of aggression against Greece are an assertion of nationalist might that is largely meant for a domestic audience.

Of course, it’s not all for show. Ryan Gingeras, a top Turkish historian and national security professor at the California-based Naval Postgraduate School, wrote last week that, in light of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, a new Greco-Turkish war “​​is not only possible but perhaps, at some point, probable".

**Yet at least for now, these standoffs almost appear staged. As each side, and each country’s opposition, takes political advantage of the moment, one can almost envision back-channel diplomats sending each other quiet thumbs up about the ramped-up rhetoric.**

As with Ankara’s looming [incursion into northern Syria](https://www.thenationalnews.com/opinion/comment/2022/05/31/can-turkey-still-make-military-gains-without-alienating-its-new-friends/) to take on Kurdish militants, a bit of rhetorical sparring with Greece underscores Turkey’s military’s confidence while also sticking it to the “imperialist” West. Domestically, that’s a win-win.

Going to war with Greece, on the other hand, would be disastrous for Turkey, Greece, the US and Nato – not to mention the Nato-backed war effort in Ukraine. But as recent history has shown, that it is an exercise in futility doesn’t mean it won’t happen.