

AUGUST 2013**THIS MONTH:****DOMESTIC POLITICS**

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DOMESTIC POLITICS**Turkish Court hands down sentences in coup plot**

A local court on August 5 sentenced at least 10 defendants out of 275, including a former army chief of staff, to life in prison for their role in plotting a military coup to overthrow Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and acquitted 17.

After five years in one of Turkey's most politically charged cases to date, the court, in a prison complex in Silivri, a western Istanbul province, sentenced some of the suspects, including Mustafa Balbay, an elected member of Parliament from the opposition Republican People's Party, to prison terms ranging from 6 months to 129 years. The court issued arrest warrants for 11 suspects who had been tried without being arrested.

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New York Times, 5 August 2013, Turkish Court Hands Down Sentences in Coup Plot

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/06/world/europe/turkish-court-hands-down-sentences-in-coup-plot.html?ref=world&r=0>

**Education in Kurdish not written into new Constitution**

The right to education in one's mother tongue has been left out of protection in the draft Constitution, a decision justified by its supporters on the grounds that it would be possible to arrange mother tongue education through laws.

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Hurriyet Daily News, 30 August 2013, Education in Kurdish not written into new Constitution
<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/education-in-kurdish-not-written-into-new-constitution.aspx?pageID=238&nID=53501&NewsCatID=338>

Turkey introduces warning labels for alcoholic drinks

Bottles and cans of alcohol sold in Turkey must soon bear warnings similar to those on cigarette packages, including the phrase "Alcohol is not your friend." The new regulations about the labels result from a law passed in May that restricts the sale and advertising of alcohol. The law was one reason a wave of anti-government protests hit Turkey in June. Demonstrators served it up as an example of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan overstepping his authority and imposing his Islamist views on a country with a strong secular history. The labels also must indicate that only people over the age of 18 can consume alcohol and warn pregnant women and drivers not to drink. Companies have 10 months to comply with the regulations, which were released on August 18.

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Washington Post, 12 August 2013, Turkey introduces warning labels for alcoholic drinks, including 'Alcohol is not your friend'

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/turkey-introduces-warning-labels-for-alcoholic-drinks-including-alcohol-is-not-your-friend/2013/08/12/5028f390-0366-11e3-bfc5-406b928603b2\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/turkey-introduces-warning-labels-for-alcoholic-drinks-including-alcohol-is-not-your-friend/2013/08/12/5028f390-0366-11e3-bfc5-406b928603b2_story.html)

### **'Irrevocable' articles stall constitution talks**

Turkey's political parties remain defiant as Constitution Conciliation Commission's attempts fail to form a consensus over what to do with the 'irrevocable' articles of the current Turkish Constitution. The parties could not attain a consensus during the session on Aug. 21, as deep cracks among the four parties were once more and strikingly highlighted during debates.

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Hurriyet Daily News, 22 August 2013, Turkey's political parties divided over 'red lines' in charter
<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkeys-political-parties-divided-over-red-lines-in-charter.aspx?pageID=238&nID=53059&NewsCatID=338>

FOREIGN POLICY**Turkey puts military on alert, says all options open on Syria**

Turkey has put its armed forces on alert to guard against threats from Syria as Western allies weigh military action against President Bashar al-Assad, Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said on 28 August.

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Reuters, 28 August 2013, Turkey puts military on alert, says all options open on Syria

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/28/us-syria-crisis-turkey-military-idUSBRE97R0TG20130828>

**Turkey's Erdogan levels conspiratorial accusations at Israel**

Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan accused Israel on Tuesday of having a hand in the Egyptian military's overthrow of President Mohamed Morsi, making comments likely to further undermine efforts to restore Ankara's strained ties with Israel.

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Reuters, 20 August 2013, Turkey's Erdogan sees Israel's hand in Egyptian overthrow

<http://ca.reuters.com/article/topNews/idCABRE97I0IK20130820?pageNumber=1&virtualBrandChannel=0>

Prime Minister Erdoğan's Gaza visit postponed due to turmoil in Egypt

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's long-awaited visit to Gaza Strip has been postponed due to the unfolding political turmoil in Egypt, Erdogan's chief advisor said on August 1. Ibrahim Kalın, chief advisor to Erdoğan, said via his Twitter account that the visit has been delayed due to the prolonged crisis in Egypt. The Turkish Prime Minister was expected to visit Gaza in mid-June, but the trip was postponed due to the Gezi protests. When Erdoğan planned to go to the coastal city in early July, the coup in Egypt changed his plans and led to another delay.

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Today's Zaman, 1 August 2013, PM Erdoğan's Gaza visit postponed due to turmoil in Egypt

<http://www.todayszaman.com/news-322418-.html>

**President Obama spoke with Prime Minister Erdoğan**

The White House Office of the Press Secretary released a statement stating that President Obama spoke by phone with Prime Minister Erdoğan of Turkey on August 7, at the Prime Minister's request, about developments in Syria and Egypt. The President and Prime Minister discussed the danger of foreign extremists in Syria and agreed on the importance of supporting a unified and

inclusive Syrian opposition. Obama and Erdoğan expressed concern about the situation in Egypt and a shared commitment to supporting a democratic and inclusive way forward. The two leaders agreed to have their teams continue to coordinate closely to promote their shared interests. Obama gave his best wishes to the Prime Minister and the Turkish people on the beginning of Ramadan holiday.

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The White House Office of the Press Secretary, 8 August 2013, Readout of President Obama's call with Prime Minister Erdogan of Turkey

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/08/07/readout-president-obama-s-call-prime-minister-erdogan-turkey>

As the crackdowns in Egypt grow, Turkey continues to condemn Egypt

After more than 600 people died on August 14 in Cairo when riot police smashed two sit-ins where Morsi's supporters had been camped out for six weeks to demand his reinstatement, Turkey continued to show its discontent with the situation with various statements made by high-level officials. On August 15, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said Egyptian leaders should stand trial for the military's move against the sit-ins. On August 15, Turkey's President Abdullah Gül called the violence in Egypt a "shame for Islam and the Arab world" as he described the situation as "unacceptable". After Gül's statement the two countries recalled their ambassadors for consultations. Meanwhile, hundreds of Turks marched to denounce the crackdown on supporters of ousted Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi. On August 19, Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a statement warning Turkish citizens to refrain from travelling to Egypt.

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Turkish Press Review, 15 August 2013, President Gül: Crackdown in Egypt 'completely unacceptable'

<http://www.byegm.gov.tr/yabanci-bultenler.aspx?d=15.08.2013&pg=1&ahid=140893&act=3#3>

Washington Post, 16 August 2013, Turkey, Egypt recall envoys, with Turkish president calling Cairo violence 'shame for Islam'

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/turkey-egypt-recall-ambassadors-as-relations-deteriorate/2013/08/16/6d7bce7e-0657-11e3-bfc5-406b928603b2\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/turkey-egypt-recall-ambassadors-as-relations-deteriorate/2013/08/16/6d7bce7e-0657-11e3-bfc5-406b928603b2_story.html)

## **ECONOMY/ENERGY**

### **Turkey Unexpectedly Raises Overnight Rate for Second Month**

Turkey's central bank unexpectedly raised its overnight lending rate for a second month, after the lira weakened and inflation accelerated to a 10-month high in July. The bank raised its overnight rate, the top end of its rates corridor, to 7.75 percent from 7.25 percent.

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Bloomberg Business Week, 20 August 2013, Turkey Unexpectedly Raises Overnight Rate for Second Month

<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2013-08-20/turkey-unexpectedly-raises-overnight-rate-for-second-month>

Babacan said Turkey is prepared for Fed stimulus cuts

Speaking to the reporters in New York on August 18, Deputy Prime Minister Ali Babacan noted that the Turkish government was prepared to mitigate the adverse affects of a potential Fed move to taper its stimulus. Following the Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke's statement, Babacan noted that Turkey planned to go through the new period of Fed moves and added: "Markets are in quest to establish a new balance in the global financial system, and we need to be prepared for the outcomes. We should brace ourselves for new ups and downs in the markets." In his statement following contacts with the representatives of the business and finance sector in USA, Babacan said "We met with the senior representatives of the credit rating institutions. Although it is the holiday season, our meetings were held at a high level of participation."

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Turkish Press Review, 19 August 2013, Babacan: Turkey prepared for Fed stimulus cuts

<http://www.byegm.gov.tr/yabanci-bultenler.aspx?d=19.08.2013&pg=1&ahid=141335&act=3#3>

### **Turkey signals cut in growth, export targets**

Deputy Prime Minister Ali Babacan says global fluctuations put pressure on Turkey, which will not be able to keep up with the current targets for growth and export. Turkey may slash its growth rate target to below 4 percent and its annual export target to below \$158 billion, mainly due to the global economic fluctuations, Deputy Prime Minister Ali Babacan said on August 6 during a live interview on Turkish Radio-Television (TRT).

"Growth targets have now been revised downward. It should not be surprising for Turkey to revise its growth rate below 4 percent, which is still very good under such global economic conditions," Babacan said, adding that there had appeared to be no need to make an official revision for now. "We set our annual target as \$158 billion, but it looks difficult to reach this target as well," he noted. The comments by Ali Babacan may trigger disagreements among the Turkish ministers about the growth rate as was recently the case at the end of last month.

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Hürriyet Daily News, 7 August 2013, Turkey signals cut in growth, export targets

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-signals-cut-in-growth-export-targets.aspx?pageID=238&nID=52121&NewsCatID=344>

Turkey 'ready' for free trade deal with Mexico, minister says

Turkey is ready to sign a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with Mexico, Turkish Economy Minister Zafer Çağlayan has said. "We hope to make necessary arrangements regarding the negotiations during Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto's upcoming visit," he said during his meeting with Mexican Secretary of Foreign Relations Jose Antonio Meade. The Mexican president's

Turkey visit planned for September, which would be the first one at presidential level from Mexico to Turkey, will be an opportunity to take new steps in customs cooperation and double taxation as well, according to Çağlayan.

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Hürriyet Daily News, 30 July 2013, Turkey 'ready' for free trade deal with Mexico, minister says  
<http://www.hurriyetaailynews.com/turkey-ready-for-free-trade-deal-with-mexico-minister-says.aspx?pageID=238&nID=51702&NewsCatID=345>