

November 2013

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Foreign Policy

Turkey, its allies struggling, tempers ambitions to lead region

Turkey is rethinking its effort to reshape the region, and is instead reaching out to the Middle East's two Shiite Muslim powers, Iraq and Iran.

The idealism of leading a new Sunni alliance has given way to a more pragmatic approach centered on securing access to oil and gas for its economy, improving conditions for Turkish businesses and finding a way out of the intractable conflict in Syria. Many analysts describe the shift as a return to the mantra of "zero problems" with neighbors, a slogan that had previously guided Turkey's foreign policy under the governing party.

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New York Times, 21 November 2013, Turkey, its allies struggling, tempers ambitions to lead region

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/22/world/europe/turkey-its-allies-floundering-tempers-its-ambitions-to-lead-region.html>

### **Hagel says US will keep Patriot missile batteries in Turkey for another year**

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel says the U.S. will continue to provide two Patriot missile batteries in Turkey for another year as part of that country's air defenses while the civil war rages on in Syria.

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Washington Post, 18 November 2013, Hagel says US will keep Patriot missile batteries in Turkey for another year

http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/hagel-says-us-will-keep-patriot-missile-batteries-in-turkey-for-another-year/2013/11/18/0cb5edea-506c-11e3-9ee6-2580086d8254_story.html

Iraqi Kurdish president in Turkey to back PM's peace effort

The president of Iraqi Kurdistan called on Turkey's Kurds to back a flagging peace process with Ankara on 16 November, making his first visit to southeastern Turkey in two decades in a show of support for Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan.

Masoud Barzani's trip to Diyarbakir, the main city in Turkey's Kurdish-dominated southeast, comes as Ankara finalizes billions of dollars of energy deals with his semi-autonomous region and amid mutual concern over the ambitions of Kurdish militias in the chaos of neighboring Syria.

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Reuters, 16 November 2013, Iraqi Kurdish president in Turkey to back PM's peace effort

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/16/us-turkey-kurdistan-idUSBRE9AF05L20131116?feedType=RSS&feedName=topNews>

### **Secretary Kerry and Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoğlu hold joint press conference**

Secretary of State John Kerry held a joint press conference with Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu on 18 November. The two focused on a variety of issues, including the ongoing conflict in Syria and developments pertaining to the Iranian nuclear negotiations.

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State Department, 18 November 2013, Remarks with Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2013/11/217710.htm>

Washington Post, 18 November 2013, Destruction of Syrian chemical stockpile is 'on schedule,' Kerry says

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/destruction-of-syrian-chemical-stockpile-is-on-schedule-kerry-says/2013/11/18/b28ad1f8-509a-11e3-a7f0-b790929232e1_story.html

Al-Qaeda recruits entering Syria from Turkey safehouses

Hundreds of al-Qaeda recruits are being kept in safe houses in southern Turkey, before being smuggled over the border to wage “jihad” in Syria.

These foreign jihadists have now largely eclipsed the “moderate” wing of the rebel Free Syrian Army, which is supported by the West. Al-Qaeda’s ability to use Turkish territory will raise questions about the role the Nato member is playing in Syria’s civil war.

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The Telegraph, 30 October 2013, Al-Qaeda recruits entering Syria from Turkey safehouses

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/10415935/Al-Qaeda-recruits-entering-Syria-from-Turkey-safehouses.html>

### **Domestic Politics**

#### **Turkey’s draft constitution appears dead**

After more than two years of intense work, Turkey's hopes for a civilian constitution have been declared dead, ready to be buried.

The announcement, coming from various parts of the so-called Conciliation Commission, brings new doubts to the fore about the future of the country's dragging, slow-motion democratization process, for it raises new questions on whether or not there are any options left for a badly needed social contract.

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Al-Monitor, 20 November 2013, Turkey’s draft constitution appears dead

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/11/davutoglu-turkey-foreign-policy-isolation-middle-east.html>

Turkey's Kemalists see secularist legacy under threat

Tension between religious and secular elites has long been one of the underlying fault lines in the predominantly Muslim but constitutionally secular republic, forged from the ruins of an Ottoman theocracy by Ataturk 90 years ago.

But a stream of provocative comments from Erdogan, who is expected to stand for president in elections next year, has heightened accusations of religiously-motivated interference in private life and exacerbated secularists' sense of siege.

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Chicago Tribune, 17 November 2013, Turkey's Kemalists see secularist legacy under threat

<http://webmail.tusiad.org/mail/bcanseve.nsf?OpenDatabase>

**TUSIAD President Muharrem Yılmaz says co-ed housing row inopportune and waste of time**

President of TUSIAD Muharrem Yılmaz has criticized the over-politicization of the debate on mixed-student housing during an interview with Hürriyet, describing it as inopportune and a waste of time. "This inopportune row, which we consider as occupying too much space on [Turkey's political] agenda, carries marks of the 1980 Constitution's features promoting centralization and standardization of the individual," Yılmaz said.

The debate was triggered after Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan expressed his opposition against female and male students living under the same roof, subsequently leading to a public uproar. He also announced that the government was ready to take the necessary legal steps to prevent such accommodation arrangements. Yılmaz said in response that such debates were harming the country's stability by further polarizing society, adding that an individual's right to privacy was constitutionally protected.

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Hürriyet Daily News, 8 November 2013, Co-ed housing row inopportune and waste of time, says Turkish business group chair

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/co-ed-housing-row-inopportune-and-waste-of-time-says-turkish-business-group-chair.aspx?pageID=238&nID=57582&NewsCatID=341>

Turkish lawmakers end taboo on head scarves

A decadeslong taboo in Turkey was broken on Thursday when four female lawmakers from the ruling party attended Parliament wearing Islamic-style head scarves, marking the latest shift from the country's staunchly secular tradition.

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Wall Street Journal, 31 October 2013, Turkish lawmakers end taboo on head scarves

[http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303618904579169563232921736?mod=djemITP\\_h](http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303618904579169563232921736?mod=djemITP_h)

**Amid debate, Turkey unveils rail tunnel under Bosphorus**

Officials cut the ribbon on a \$4 billion, 8.5-mile rail tunnel that runs almost 200 feet below the Bosphorus seabed, part of a broader project called the Marmaray meant to bind Europe and Asia closer together, ease congestion in the city and, in more grandiose visions, eventually form part of a trade route between Europe and China.

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New York Times, 29 October 2013, Amid debate, Turkey unveils rail tunnel under Bosphorus

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/30/world/europe/amid-debate-over-safety-turkey-to-unveil-bosphorus-tunnel.html?partner=rss&emc=rss&_r=0

Energy/Economy**Turkey, Iraqi Kurds make progress on oil deal**

Turkey and the Kurdish Regional Government in northern Iraq are quickly forging ahead with a series of deals that would let the semiautonomous region start piping oil to world markets as soon as early next year. But the central government in Baghdad remains a major obstacle.

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Wall Street Journal, 21 November 2013, Turkey, Iraqi Kurds make progress on oil deal

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304337404579212124235012640>

**Net \$8.7 bln FDI entered Turkey in first nine months**

Approximately \$8.7 billion of net foreign direct investment (FDI) entered Turkey in the first nine months of the year, according to data released by the Ministry of Economy on Tuesday.

Out of the total FDI of \$8.698 billion in the first nine months, \$3.321 billion entered the economy via operations of intermediary financial institutions, \$1.215 billion came from the electricity, gas and water sector and \$1.187 billion from the manufacturing sector. Also, 60.5 percent of the cash capital came from European Union countries.

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Today's Zaman, 19 November 2013, Net \$8.7 bln FDI entered Turkey in first nine months

<http://www.todayszaman.com/news-331863-net-87-blm-fdi-entered-turkey-in-first-nine-months.html>

Turkey and Japan sign formal agreement to build second nuclear plant in Sinop

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe signed on Oct. 29 the official agreement for building Turkey's second nuclear plant in the Black Sea province of Sinop.

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Hurriyet Daily News, 30 October 2013, Turkey and Japan sign formal agreement to build second nuclear plant in Sinop

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-and-japan-sign-formal-agreement-to-build-second-nuclear-plant-in-sinop.aspx?pageID=238&nID=57069&NewsCatID=348>

**Energy needs trump Turkey-Israel tension**

Turkey and Israel's political divergence in the past few years is of little concern to businessmen, especially when some of the world's largest natural gas deposits are at stake.

Israel, together with Cyprus, sits on more than 120 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in the Eastern Mediterranean, according to U.S. Geological Survey assessments. That's enough to meet natural gas needs for 2,400 years in energy-starved Turkey, which relies on Russia for 60% and Iran for 20% of its imports.

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Wall Street Journal, 1 November 2013, Energy needs trump Turkey-Israel tension

<http://blogs.wsj.com/middleeast/2013/11/01/energy-needs-trump-turkey-israel-tension/>