

BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD  
TURKEY

Weekly Report on Turkey's Political, Geo-Strategic, Economic and Social Issues,  
Period: 9<sup>th</sup> –16<sup>th</sup> September 2010.  
Submitted By: Aasia Khatoon khattak  
Presentation: 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2010  
Report no.137

---

**News Outline**

**Summary of the Report**  
**POLITICL NEWS**

**3-6**  
**7**

- Turkish reforms after referendum require over 200 new laws
- Referendum shows Turkish people prefer democracy: Govt
- President says "new era" begins for Turkey after referendum vote
- Turkey says "Yes" in referendum, opposition remains defiant
- Turkish election board unveils unofficial results of referendum
- Eastern Turkey says "Yes" in referendum despite campaigns
- Turkish support for referendum at 58 percent
- Polls close in Turkey referendum – UPDATED
- Turkish court orders removal of school boycott posters
- Police continue search at Turkish exam headquarters
- Turkish government plans to isolate PKK, news report says
- Kılıçdaroğlu to take on reorganization after Turkish referendum
- CHP Leader Apologizes for not Voting in Turkish Charter Poll
- CHP Respects Result of the Referandum, Kilicdaroglu
- 60 Detained in Ethnic-fueled Violence in Turkey
- Turkish Foreign Minister: "Turkish Party Wants to Find a Solution to Cyprus Issue"

**GEO-STRTEGIC NEWS**

**22**

- US official reaffirms ongoing dialogue with Turkey following report
- Turkey mulls participation in missile defense system
- Main Turkish opposition head meets with EU enlargement chief
- Turkey wants to exceed walls opening, Balkans, Middle East: FM
- Turkey, Azerbaijan establish Strategic Cooperation Council
- Turkey's Istanbul To Send 48-Member Team To Flood-Hit Pakistan
- EU Countries Home to 2.4 Millions Turks
- Senior official says Turkey, US have dialogue despite differences
- Debate Heats Up over New Border Gates
- Turkey Debates Merits of Turkish Judicial Board
- Turkey to Do Everything It Can for Israel-Syria Peace
- Greek Foreign Minister His Country Wants Close Cooperation with Turkey
- Turkey and Iran Agree to Open US-style Presidential System

- US Presidential System Unsuitable for Turkey, Experts Say
- Turkish FM: Turkey Ready To Reconcile Syria And Israel
- Turkey Strongest Country in OECD in 2010, Secretary General Gurrria Says

#### **ECONOMIC NEWS**

**33**

- Turkish PM wants closer trade links with Iran
- Turkish businessmen invited to invest in Kyrgyzstan
- Turkey's Istanbul attracts 4.5 million foreign tourists
- OECD urges Turkey to push ahead with structural changes
- Turkish banks sign loan deal with European Investment Bank
- Lira is held back by refusal to adopt 'fiscal rule,' RBS Says
- New rich thrive in era of Turkey's AKP rule

#### **SOCIAL NEWS**

**40**

- Turkey's Historic Success at 2010 World Basketball Championship
- Fog halts sea traffic on Istanbul's Bosphorus
- Researchers unearth 8,500-year-old bodies near Bursa

#### **COMMENTARY**

**41**

- Iranian refugees in Turkey: not welcome
- Self-rule for eastern (and western) Turkey?
- What's next? (1)
- AKP strengthened, but much excitement ahead
- Torn Turkey, European Turkey
- What's next? (2)
- A Solution to the Palestinian Refugees Issue

## **Summary of Political News**

- Turkey's ruling AK Party on Monday celebrated victory in a referendum on constitutional reform that was seen boosting its chances of winning a third term of single-party rule at an election due within 10 months.  
Unofficial results from the referendum Sunday showed that 58 percent of the voters approved the amendments while 42 percent voted against with all boxes counted.  
Voter participation rate is 77.4 percent. Turkey's Higher Electoral Board announced unofficial result of Sunday's referendum on the constitutional amendment package. With the approval of the 26-article constitutional amendment package in a public vote on Sept. 12, Parliament is eyeing changes to more than 200 standing laws once deputies return from the summer recess on Oct. 1.
- A Diyarbakır court ordered Thursday the collection of banners in the city calling on parents to boycott the first week of school in the name of the right of education in students' mother tongue, Anatolia news agency reported. A pro-Kurdish organization in Turkey had asked parents not to send their children to school during the first week of the school year to protest the lack of Kurdish-language education.
- Ankara's public prosecutor and police continued their investigation into the Student Selection and Placement Center, or ÖSYM, in the capital Thursday following a series of cheating scandals that called into question the facility's security.
- Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, the leader of Turkey's main opposition party, said he did not vote in the country's constitutional referendum Sunday because of a mix-up over where he should cast his ballot. Kemal Kilicdaroglu, chairman of the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP), said on Sunday that his party respected result of the referendum.
- Sixty people were detained Wednesday after police analyzed video footage of ethnic-fueled clashes in the Turkish province of Bursa in July. Social unrest in the city of İnegöl following an argument between bus drivers escalated into citywide violence after three people were alleged to have stabbed six others in a coffee house. Locals began attacking each other in groups after rumors spread that one party in the initial argument was of Kurdish descent. In addition to property damage to a police station and other buildings, several cars were torched, including police and municipality vehicles. The 60 people suspected of taking part in the riots were detained early Wednesday after authorities reviewed records from police cameras and listened to witness testimony. The suspects are expected to testify and will remain in custody for three days. The suspects are then likely to be tried in İnegöl on charges of "looting, resisting security officers, damaging public property and arson."

## **SUMMARY-GEO-STRATEGIC NEWS**

### **CYPRUS ISSUE**

Turkey's Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu reiterated during the informal meeting of the European Union foreign ministers in Brussels that the Turkish party wanted to find a

solution to the Cyprus issue as soon as possible, diplomatic sources said. Davutoglu recalled that the Turkish party has been trying to find a solution to the Cyprus issue since 2004. He said that since the Greek Cypriot party failed to display the same attitude, the issue could not be solved yet.

### **USA AND TURKEY**

A U.S. official has reaffirmed the close relationship between Turkey and the United States in response to a global survey in which Turkish participants expressed more interest in cooperation with the Middle East than with the West.

According to Philip Gordon, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs, there is no other country in Europe with which the United States has as much open, ongoing dialogue as it does with Turkey.

### **Turkey wanted to expand its regional cooperation areas in the Balkans, Middle East and Caucasus**

The Turkish foreign minister said on Thursday that Turkey wanted to expand its regional cooperation areas in the Balkans, Middle East and Caucasus.

Speaking at a TV program broadcast by private channel CNN Turk, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said Turkey had commitment to many regions due to its geographical position. Davutoglu also noted that Turkey both desired to reach EU standards and exist in Asia where the new economic and political power prevailed.

### **TURKEY AND AZERBAIJAN SIGNED AN AGREEMENT FOR ESTABLISHING HIGH-LEVEL STRATEGIC COUNCIL**

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev signed an agreement on establishment of Turkey-Azerbaijan High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council.

### **AID TO FLOOD-HIT PAKISTAN**

Istanbul Municipality (IBB) announced Monday it will send a 48-member team to flood-hit Pakistan to help infrastructure works and health authorities, World Bulletin reported. Turks, with a population around 2.4 million, constitute the largest expatriate community living in the European Union (EU).

### **2.4 million Turkish Population in European Union states**

According to the data released by EU's statistics authority Eurostat, there are currently 31.9 million foreigners living in EU-member states. Turks top the list with a population of 2.4 million and such figure constitutes 8 percent of the total number of foreigners within the EU, Eurostat says. Turkish community is followed by Romanians, Moroccans, Poles, Italians, Albanians and the Portuguese. Germany hosts the largest foreigner community within the union and nearly 7.2 million of its population is comprised of expats, Eurostat says.

### **TURKEY EXPRESSED HIGH MORALE TO CONTINUE STRUGGLE FOR ISRAEL AND SYRIA PEACE TALKS**

Turkey's foreign minister said on Tuesday that Turkey would continue to do everything in its power for a lasting peace between Israel and Syria. Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said Turkey did not want violence and blockade in its vicinity. Davutoglu said Turkey supported political dialogue, mutual economic dependence, multi-culturalism, co-existence and security in the region.

### **TURKEY AND ARMENIA**

Referring to protocols signed with Armenia, Davutoglu said they would be

implemented within the framework of a comprehensive peace in the Caucasus which also included Azerbaijan-Armenia peace.

#### **TURKEY'S STANCE AT IRAN ISSUE**

Davutoglu Iran said Turkey and the United States were of the same opinion regarding Iran. We do not want any countries to own nuclear weapons in our region, and we want solution of Iran's nuclear problem through diplomacy," he said.

#### **GREEK WANTS TO ESTABLISH CLOSED COOPERATION WITH TURKEY**

The Greek foreign minister said on Wednesday that his country wanted to establish a close cooperation with Turkey. Speaking at a press conference on the "Greek foreign policy" in Athens, Foreign Minister Dimitris Drucas said the Greek capital was eager to have a close cooperation with Ankara on matters of common interest. Drucas said rules of international law, as well as respect to the sovereign rights and territorial integrity of Greece would constitute the pre-condition for such cooperation.

#### **Turkey and Iran signed a series of agreements**

Turkey and Iran signed a series of agreements Thursday including the establishment of new border gates as well as cooperation in higher education, culture and youth.

The agreements were signed in a meeting between Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Iranian First Vice President Mohammed Reza Rahimi in Istanbul.

#### **REFERENDUM VICTORY INITIATED NEW IDEA TO BRING U.S.-style presidential system IN TURKEY**

The multifaceted momentum triggered by Sunday's heady referendum victory has turned new attention to an old idea of Turkey's ruling party: a U.S.-style "presidential system" to replace the current European-style parliamentary mode of governance.

#### **OECD REMARKS ABOUT TURKEY**

Secretary General of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Angel Gurría said Wednesday Turkey was the strongest country in the OECD in 2010. Turkish State Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Ali Babacan and Gurría held a joint press conference in Ankara upon announcement of OECD's Turkey report for 2010. Speaking at the press conference, Babacan said that the OECD published country reports every two years and that these reports included wide analysis.

There was full international confidence regarding Turkey's growth. Turkey was able to attract the confidence of investors and was able to maintain such confidence. The well balanced stability packages resulted in more international confidence in the Turkish economy. Turkey's growth of 11 percent in the first six months of 2010 was very impressive. We were proud with such figures from Turkey. We were actually expecting a growth rate of seven percent. We can see a very positive picture in Turkey, Gurría said.

#### **SUMMARY-ECONOMIC NEWS**

Kyrgyzstan's interim President Roza Otunbaeva said on Wednesday that her country offered great opportunities for Turkish businessmen.

Speaking at the Turkey-Kyrgyzstan Trade and Investment Forum in Istanbul, Otunbaeva said Kyrgyzstan had eased its control mechanism over businessmen and private sector in the recent term. A statement by Istanbul Culture and Tourism Directorate 4.5 million foreign tourists visited Istanbul, Turkey in the first eight months of 2010. Turkey's Akbank and Halkbank signed a 150 million-euro loan agreement with the European Investment Bank, Matthias Kollatz-Ahnen, EIB's deputy president, said Thursday. The

Turkish lira is held back by the government's refusal to adopt a "fiscal rule" that would limit the budget deficit, according to Royal Bank of Scotland Group Plc.

### **SUMMARY-SOCIAL NEWS**

Turkey's national basketball team achieved a historic success at 2010 World Basketball Championship by getting ranked the second behind the United States. Heavy fog over Istanbul's Bosphorus shut down cross-city sea traffic early Thursday morning, Anatolia news agency reported. Ancient bodies believed to be 8,500 years old have been unearthed at a burial mound in the Akçalar area of the Marmara province of Bursa. The five bodies, reportedly belonging to two adults and three children aged between 3 and 5, were found at the Aktopraklık mound.

## **POLITICAL NEWS**

### **Turkish reforms after referendum require over 200 new laws**

With the approval of the 26-article reforms in a public vote on Sept. 12, Parliament is eyeing changes to more than 200 standing laws once deputies return from the summer recess on Oct. 1.

Monday, 13 September

World Bulletin / News Desk

With the approval of the 26-article constitutional amendment package in a public vote on Sept. 12, Parliament is eyeing changes to more than 200 standing laws once deputies return from the summer recess on Oct. 1.

The laws need to be modified to be brought into alignment with the constitutional amendment package. Bekir Bozdağ, the ruling Justice and Development Party's (AK Party) parliamentary group deputy chairman, told Cihan news agency, that the laws will be changed and new laws will be passed in a two-step package that will also include 17 EU harmonization laws.

It is estimated that it will take at least six months for Parliament to complete aligning the laws with the 26-article package.

“We will bring laws that need to be passed immediately to Parliament as soon as October. We may collect them under a new harmonization package. But we may need more than one package. Relevant ministries will prepare separate reports as to which laws need to be passed the earliest. Some laws are more urgent than others. And some are not urgent at the moment. We may defer them until 2011. We may collect them under a separate harmonization package,” Bozdağ noted.

Ministries are awaiting an order from the government to make necessary legal preparations to complete the harmonization process. The harmonization recommendations that come from those ministries directly affected by the legal change will be evaluated and adjusted by the Justice Ministry and then forwarded for approval to the Prime Ministry and then Parliament. If this process goes smoothly, all preparatory work for the harmonization process will be completed in the summer months -- and Turkey will have completed its most comprehensive legal reform toward democratization since the Sept. 12, 1980 military coup d'état.

Which laws will be changed?

An addition to Article 10 of the Constitution that says “Precautions to be taken to protect special groups such as children, the elderly and persons with disabilities shall not be considered in contradiction with the principle of equality” will necessitate multiple changes to the Law on the Establishment and Trial Procedures of Juvenile Courts, the Population Law, the Green Card Law, the Social Security Institution (SGK) Organization Law and the Turkish Citizenship Law. The changes to these laws will be included in the first harmonization package.

A foreseen change to Article 41 of the Constitution will also make changes having to do with protection of the family and children's rights. This will require a review of the Civil

Code, the Social Services and Child Protection Agency (SHÇEK) Law, the Law on Disabled Persons and the Education Ministry Organization Law.

A change to Article 20 of the Constitution will protect personal data, requiring changes to the Turkish Penal Code (TCK), the Law on Acquisition of Information and the Law on the Protection of Personal Data.

A change to be made to Article 23 of the Constitution will put an end to the arbitrary restriction of foreign travel on Turkish citizens -- meaning that nothing short of a court order can bar a person from leaving the country. In order to accomplish this, however, changes will need to be made to a slew of existing legislation: the Law on Debts, the Turkish Commercial Law, the Customs Law, the Passport Law, the Banks Law, the Checking Law, the State Tender Law, the Real Estate Tax Law, the Income Tax Law, the Establishment Tax Law, the Inheritance and Devolution Law, the Bankruptcy and Enforcement Law, the Law on Foundations, the Tax Methodology Law, the Capital Markets Law, laws on the organization of the police forces and many more laws related to the economy.

Turkish Foreign Minister: "Turkish Party Wants to Find a Solution to Cyprus Issue"  
What will unions on 'no front' do?

The government is expected to frequently quarrel with labor unions that were opposed to the constitutional amendment package. The unions have not made a statement about the results of the referendum, and it is still a mystery what kind of a stance they will adopt when Parliament starts to make changes to laws that concern the business world.

Changes to Article 53 of the Constitution will also bring changes to the Unions Law, the Social Security Law, the Law on Civil Servants' Unions, the Economic Social Council Law, the TCK and the Collective Bargaining, Strike and Lockout Law -- to repeal current laws on the right to collective bargaining and strikes. Because the right to collective bargaining will be given to retired persons, the relevant legislation will also be updated. The establishment of an ombudsman system to be brought about via the amendment of Article 74 of the Constitution will mandate changes to the Law on Acquisition of Information, the Parliament bylaws and the laws on the Court of Accounts, the Supreme Court of Appeals and the Council of State. Meanwhile, Parliament bylaws will also have to be amended due to planned changes to Article 84 of the Constitution regarding the election and terms of office of members of Parliament.

Amendment on military-related laws

The proposed amendment to Article 125 of the Constitution in the constitutional amendment package seeks to open up a judicial path for those expelled from the military -- by decision of the Supreme Military Council (YAŞ) -- to appeal the decision. But this will require a scouring of the TCK, the Military Penal Code, the Law on Civil Servants, the Municipalities Law, the State Personnel Law, the Administrative Trial Methodology Law, the Law on Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) Personnel, the Gülhane Military Academy of Medicine (GATA) Law and the War Academies Law for sections that must be amended. In addition, the laws on the organization of the four force commands will also be reviewed.

Meanwhile, the changes proposed to Article 145 of the Constitution aim to pave the way for bringing members of the military to trial in civilian courts when it comes to crimes committed outside the scope of their military duties. This change to one article of the Constitution will require amendments to nearly 20 laws, including the Military Penal

Code, the Law on the Establishment and Trial Procedure of Military Courts, the TCK, the Law on Criminal Trial Procedure, the Law on Legal Trial Procedure, the GATA Law, the Law on the National Security Council (MGK), the Law Regarding the Establishment and Duties of Military Administrative Courts, the Military Appellate Court Law, the Military Judges Law, the TSK Internal Administration Law, the Law on the Duties and Authorities of the Office of the General Staff, the Law on War Academies and the Law on Mobilization and Wartime.

Change on HSYK structure may take months

The amendment to Article 114 of the Constitution will spell change for the Law on the Supreme Board of Judges and Prosecutors (HSYK).

A change to the structure of the HSYK also requires changes to the Justice Ministry Organization Law, the Law on the Supreme Court of Appeals, the Law on the Council of State, the Attorney Law, the Notary Law, the Law on Criminal Trial Procedure, the Law on the Trial of Civil Servants and Other Public Employees and the Law on the Establishment, Jurisdiction and Duties of the Constitutional Court. Making these changes alone could take Parliament several months and lead to serious debates.

---

### **Referendum shows Turkish people prefer democracy: Govt**

Government spokesman said that Turkish people and democracy won in Sunday's referendum on constitutional amendments.

Tuesday, 14 September 2010  
WORLD BULLETIN

Government spokesman said on Monday that Turkish people and democracy won in Sunday's referendum on constitutional amendments.

Cemil Cicek, state Minister & government spokesman, said after the Council of Ministers meeting that September 13 --the day after the referendum, was a new and fresh beginning for Turkey.

According to the results of the referendum, it was seen that democracy was the fundamental preference of Turkish people, noted Cicek, adding that democracy was not a temporary thing for Turkish people.

With their preference in the referendum, Turkish people displayed a very clear decision in favor of change and democracy, said Cicek.

Unofficial results showed that 58 percent of the voters approved constitutional amendments while 42 percent voted against.

The constitutional amendments include measures favouring children, the elderly, the disabled, widows and orphans of martyrs and veterans also measures for the prevention of child abuse and the protect of the child against all forms violence.

The reform package amends arrangements regarding the right to travel abroad which it says may be restricted only during ongoing criminal probes and upon a judge's order.

The amendment would allow membership in more than one labour union it would allow individuals to file complaints and requests for information to a government-appointed ombudsman.

The changes would end the practice of expelling members of parliament whose actions were cited by a court as grounds to ban a political party.

Soldiers discharged by a Supreme Military Council decision would have the right to appeal against such decisions.

Military personnel who allegedly commit crimes against state security and the constitutional order would be tried in civilian courts instead of military courts. Civilians would not be tried in military courts.

The amendments also include change in structure of Supreme Board of Judges and Prosecutors, as well as the Constitutional Court, country's top judiciary body. The package abolishes the provisional article 15 of the constitution which does not allow trial of the members of the National Security Council formed after the military coup in 1980, the ban on right to general strike; and paves the way for a citizen to become a member of more than one labor union, and civil servants and other public officials the right to collective bargaining.

It also paves the way for trial of parliament speaker, chief of general staff, and senior commanders by the High Tribunal on charges of crimes they commit regarding their positions.

---

### **President says "new era" begins for Turkey after referendum vote**

Turkish President Abdullah Gul said about result of the referendum on the constitutional amendment package, "a new era has begun for my country."

Monday, 13 September 2010 11:15

WORLD BULLETIN

Turkish President Abdullah Gul said about result of the referendum on the constitutional amendment package, "a new era has begun for my country."

In an interview with the Italian La Repubblica newspaper, President Gul said, "people of Turkey made a choice and we have to accept it. I have always advocated that the constitution in Turkey should be prepared by civilians."

"All the articles in the constitutional amendment package are about bringing Turkey's standards to the European level under Turkey's European Union membership process," he said.

Upon a question about Turkey-Israel relations following an attack on a six-ship flotilla carrying humanitarian aid to Gaza earlier this year, President Gul said, "Turkey has expressed its concerns about the tragedy in Gaza stemming from the embargoes. It does not mean that Turkey drifted apart from the Western world. On the contrary, it shows that Turkey shares the values of the Western world. We do not have any problems with Israel or Israeli people. Improper preferences by Israeli politicians cause problems."

"No one can ignore the fact that Turkish ships were attacked by soldiers of another country in the international waters. And some people lost their lives in that attack. If Israel makes apology and seeks for a solution including compensation, it helps restoring of the bilateral relations," he said.

Referring to Turkey-European Union relations, President Gul said that the Union had an important responsibility in the recent slowdown of Turkey's membership negotiations.

"Turkey has taken significant steps in its integration with the European Union. Today, Turkey is a more democratic country with a brilliant future. If the European Union keeps its promises, it leads to good results for both parties," President Gul added.

---

### **Turkey says "Yes" in referendum, opposition remains defiant**

AKP celebrated victory in a referendum on constitutional reform that was seen boosting its chances of winning a third term at an election due within 10 months.

World Bulletin / News Desk

Turkey's ruling AK Party on Monday celebrated victory in a referendum on constitutional reform that was seen boosting its chances of winning a third term of single-party rule at an election due within 10 months.

Unofficial results from the referendum Sunday showed that 58 percent of the voters approved the amendments while 42 percent voted against with all boxes counted.

Voter participation rate is 77.4 percent.

No sooner had Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan declared victory than he stoked hardline secularists' worst fears by serving notice that his AK party would start work on a brand new constitution.

The High Election Board is expected to announce the official results on Monday.

"'Yes', but it is not enough," said a headline in the liberal Radikal daily, saying the result showed enthusiasm for change and the desire for a totally new constitution.

Turks voted on the 30th anniversary of the 1980 military coup, and Erdogan had whipped up public support to change a charter written during army rule by reviving memories of the brutal repression that followed the generals' takeover.

"Turkey cleans away the shame of the coup," said a headline in the pro-government Sabah daily.

"Opposition's poor showing"

The secularist opposition's poor showing was completed by a mix-up that prevented Kemal Kilicdaroglu, chairman of the Republican People's Party (CHP), from voting. A CHP statement said its party leader had been "unaware" of changes to regulations limiting where members of parliament could vote. The CHP has pinned hopes on Kilicdaroglu to galvanise the party of Turkey's founder, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, before next year's vote.

Kilicdaroglu said that the nation was the final decision-maker in a democracy, and therefore, he respected the will expressed by citizens.

"When we look at the result, we see that AK Party has taken a very important step towards creating a judiciary mechanism that is entirely dependent on itself," Kilicdaroglu said.

Kilicdaroglu also noted that CHP would continue to stand against all the steps taken by AK Party in an effort to intensify pressure over the jurisdiction, and warn the citizens on such issue.

"We respect the referendum's result, however, it should be known that Turkey cannot and should not proceed on its way with decisions or regulations made by two people only," he said.

"What reforms brings"

Constitutional amendments include change in structure of Supreme Board of Judges and Prosecutors, as well as the Constitutional Court, country's top judiciary body.

The package abolishes the provisional article 15 of the constitution which does not allow trial of the members of the National Security Council formed after the military coup in 1980, the ban on right to general strike; and paves the way for a citizen to become a member of more than one labor union, and civil servants and other public officials the right to collective bargaining.

It also paves the way for trial of parliament speaker, chief of general staff, and senior commanders by the High Tribunal on charges of crimes they commit regarding their positions.

Critics believe the AK government will push through legislation without fear of the Constitutional Court blocking its way, as it did in 2008 when it struck down moves to lift a ban on women in headscarves attending university.

Erdogan's government has won over many Turks by spearheading a drive to oversee reforms and a period of unprecedented economic growth that have transformed Turkey from a financial basket case to a star emerging market.

A deep recession last year dented AK's election hopes, but a robust recovery has restored voters faith judging by the outcome of Sunday's plebiscite.

"The comfortable margin of the "yes" vote is market positive as it indicates that the AKP has good prospects of winning a third term at the general elections due by July 2011," Wolfgang Piccoli, a London-based analyst at Eurasia Group consultancy, said in a note.

---

### **Turkish election board unveils unofficial results of referendum**

Turkey's Higher Electoral Board announced unofficial result of Sunday's referendum on the constitutional amendment package.

Monday, 13 September 2010 13:24

WORLD BULLETIN

Turkey's Higher Electoral Board announced unofficial result of Sunday's referendum on the constitutional amendment package.

Accordingly, 38.36 million people, among the electorate of 52 million, cast their votes.

The turnout was put at 73.7 percent.

The Board said that 21.78 million people (57.88 percent) voted 'yes' while 15.85 million others (42.12 percent) voted against the constitutional amendment package. Votes of 725 thousand people were invalid.

The highest turnout was in the southern province of Burdur with 89.30 percent while the lowest turnout was in the southeastern province of Hakkari with 9.05 percent. The 'yes' votes were highest in the eastern province of Agri with 95.75 percent while the 'no' votes reached top level in the eastern province of Tunceli with 81.02 percent.

196,299 people cast their votes in customs gates. 61.53 percent of them voted 'yes' while the 38.47 percent voted against the package.

Unofficial Results of the Referendum in Provinces, Customs and Turkey in General:

ADANA	1,386,290	1,009,435	992,202	17,233	434,066	43.75	558,136	56.25	72.82
ADIYAMAN	358,247	292,354	287,491	4,863	231,222	80.43	56,269	19.57	81.61
AFYONKARAHISAR	483,583	421,921	411,452	10,469	270,258	65.68	141,194	34.32	87.25
AGRI	274,121	154,668	148,624	6,044	142,311	95.75	6,313	4.25	56.42
AMASYA	233,005	205,982	202,159	3,823	118,637	58.68	83,522	41.32	88.4
ANKARA	3,341,633	2,669,069	2,632,709	36,360	1,423,477	54.07	1,209,232	45.93	79.87
ANTALYA	1,354,787	1,046,905	1,027,278	19,627	444,748	43.29	582,530	56.71	77.27
ARTVIN	122,503	96,838	94,707	2,131	47,164	49.80	47,543	50.20	79.05
AYDIN	719,726	598,062	585,485	12,577	209,820	35.84	375,665	64.16	83.1
BALIKESIR	859,259	735,639	722,075	13,564	348,417	48.25	373,658	51.75	85.61

BILECIK 141,196 124,512 121,762 2,750 60,256 49.49 61,506 50.51 88.18  
BINGOL 154,117 118,652 115,651 3,001 110,167 95.26 5,484 4.74 76.99  
BITLIS 174,195 121,962 116,543 5,419 108,471 93.07 8,072 6.93 70.01  
BOLU 198,972 172,551 169,077 3,474 110,644 65.44 58,433 34.56 86.72  
BURDUR 184,987 165,187 160,711 4,476 84,511 52.59 76,200 47.41 89.3  
BURSA 1,843,820 1,517,902 1,490,239 27,663 839,892 56.36 650,347 43.64 82.32  
CANAKKALE 360,770 314,284 308,723 5,561 123,926 40.14 184,797 59.86 87.11  
CANKIRI 130,511 109,633 107,527 2,106 82,272 76.51 25,255 23.49 84.0  
CORUM 384,676 338,874 333,237 5,637 226,051 67.83 107,186 32.17 88.09  
DENIZLI 665,282 575,622 562,978 12,644 260,643 46.30 302,335 53.70 86.52  
DIYARBAKIR 851,241 296,245 278,871 17,374 261,916 93.92 16,955 6.08 34.8  
EDIRNE 296,576 254,358 249,744 4,614 66,233 26.52 183,511 73.48 85.76  
ELAZIG 374,530 302,605 296,663 5,942 242,611 81.78 54,052 18.22 80.8  
ERZINCAN 143,843 123,158 121,643 1,515 77,880 64.02 43,763 35.98 85.62  
ERZURUM 474,085 379,988 373,026 6,962 324,031 86.87 48,995 13.13 80.15  
ESKISEHIR 570,044 472,251 463,957 8,294 213,331 45.98 250,626 54.02 82.84  
GAZIANTEP 984,683 716,358 701,112 15,246 489,706 69.85 211,406 30.15 72.75  
GIRESUN 306,396 244,438 240,153 4,285 152,479 63.49 87,674 36.51 79.78  
GUMUSHANE 88,536 67,596 66,396 1,200 52,110 78.48 14,286 21.52 76.35  
HAKKARI 128,572 11,634 10,512 1,122 9,910 94.27 602 5.73 9.05  
HATAY 922,012 767,414 756,763 10,651 362,011 47.84 394,752 52.16 83.23  
ISPARTA 298,726 251,725 245,664 6,061 141,226 57.49 104,438 42.51 84.27  
MERSIN 1,123,115 818,141 804,397 13,744 299,004 37.17 505,393 62.83 72.85  
ISTANBUL 9,206,124 6,743,672 6,641,160 102,512 3,643,896 54.87 2,997,264 45.13  
73.25  
IZMIR 2,870,888 2,283,928 2,246,593 37,335 815,943 36.32 1,430,650 63.68 79.55  
KARS 183,800 125,998 122,490 3,508 80,243 65.51 42,247 34.49 68.55  
KASTAMONU 269,272 228,815 223,044 5,771 140,006 62.77 83,038 37.23 84.98  
KAYSERI 812,554 692,502 680,984 11,518 498,812 73.25 182,172 26.75 85.23  
KIRKLARELI 251,751 220,111 216,797 3,314 55,542 25.62 161,255 74.38 87.43  
KIRSEHIR 156,339 125,002 122,527 2,475 71,258 58.16 51,269 41.84 79.96  
KOCAELI 1,071,556 864,871 848,323 16,548 516,533 60.89 331,790 39.11 80.71  
KONYA 1,327,534 1,117,186 1,096,922 20,264 857,167 78.14 239,755 21.86 84.15  
KUTAHYA 418,071 372,393 364,178 8,215 272,217 74.75 91,961 25.25 89.07  
MALATYA 497,796 413,038 408,425 4,613 307,133 75.20 101,292 24.80 82.97  
MANISA 960,069 829,573 810,917 18,656 402,626 49.65 408,291 50.35 86.41  
KAHRAMANMARAS 653,042 547,100 539,219 7,881 428,103 79.39 111,116 20.61  
83.78  
MARDIN 385,674 165,856 157,664 8,192 147,344 93.45 10,320 6.55 43.0  
MUGLA 593,187 492,611 483,363 9,248 149,763 30.98 333,600 69.02 83.04  
MUS 208,405 112,730 107,806 4,924 99,403 92.21 8,403 7.79 54.09  
NEVSEHIR 196,436 167,489 164,404 3,085 111,049 67.55 53,355 32.45 85.26  
NIGDE 219,841 180,549 176,309 4,240 107,474 60.96 68,835 39.04 82.13  
ORDU 508,677 400,122 391,422 8,700 248,557 63.50 142,865 36.50 78.66  
RIZE 229,426 180,309 177,369 2,940 134,961 76.09 42,408 23.91 78.59  
SAKARYA 612,621 505,267 496,127 9,140 333,871 67.30 162,256 32.70 82.48

SAMSUN 874,952 722,865 709,959 12,906 476,774 67.16 233,185 32.84 82.62  
 SIIRT 150,645 76,648 72,342 4,306 68,845 95.17 3,497 4.83 50.88  
 SINOP 149,452 124,319 121,213 3,106 73,262 60.44 47,951 39.56 83.18  
 SIVAS 429,921 355,596 350,504 5,092 268,472 76.60 82,032 23.40 82.71  
 TEKIRDAG 567,415 465,412 458,124 7,288 158,825 34.67 299,299 65.33 82.02  
 TOKAT 423,544 359,680 353,708 5,972 228,442 64.58 125,266 35.42 84.92  
 TRABZON 543,650 428,766 421,131 7,635 288,911 68.60 132,220 31.40 78.87  
 TUNCELI 56,409 37,918 37,260 658 7,072 18.98 30,188 81.02 67.22  
 SANLIURFA 827,755 566,490 556,434 10,056 523,882 94.15 32,552 5.85 68.44  
 USAK 245,586 216,999 211,620 5,379 105,432 49.82 106,188 50.18 88.36  
 VAN 530,745 231,449 220,748 10,701 208,501 94.45 12,247 5.55 43.61  
 YOZGAT 319,155 257,444 253,675 3,769 196,153 77.32 57,522 22.68 80.66  
 ZONGULDAK 455,043 380,435 369,517 10,918 184,931 50.05 184,586 49.95 83.6  
 AKSARAY 245,874 194,680 190,600 4,080 146,102 76.65 44,498 23.35 79.18  
 BAYBURT 48,973 41,432 40,777 655 34,687 85.07 6,090 14.93 84.6  
 KARAMAN 158,392 136,818 133,482 3,336 88,019 65.94 45,463 34.06 86.38  
 KIRIKKALE 195,333 159,578 156,827 2,751 108,586 69.24 48,241 30.76 81.7  
 BATMAN 260,951 105,987 99,500 6,487 94,218 94.69 5,282 5.31 40.62  
 SIRNAK 197,046 44,326 37,749 6,577 33,626 89.08 4,123 10.92 22.5  
 BARTIN 140,105 121,146 116,891 4,255 64,713 55.36 52,178 44.64 86.47  
 ARDAHAN 69,508 53,635 51,835 1,800 28,510 55.00 23,325 45.00 77.16  
 IGDIR 105,349 53,822 51,941 1,881 28,023 53.95 23,918 46.05 51.09  
 YALOVA 148,306 115,990 113,885 2,105 58,304 51.20 55,581 48.80 78.21  
 KARABUK 163,081 136,555 133,024 3,531 84,821 63.76 48,203 36.24 83.73  
 KILIS 75,649 63,243 61,936 1,307 41,411 66.86 20,525 33.14 83.6  
 OSMANIYE 308,075 255,251 250,480 4,771 133,827 53.43 116,653 46.57 82.85  
 DUZCE 237,477 201,385 197,817 3,568 143,443 72.51 54,374 27.49 84.8  
 TURKEY  
 IN GENERAL 52,051,828 38,369,253 37,643,290 725,963 21,788,911 57.88 15,854,379  
 42.12 73.71

\* Votes cast at customs and prisons are included in figures for TURKEY IN GENERAL  
 CUSTOMS TOTAL 2,556,335 196,299 194,737 1,562 119,817 61.53 74,920 38.47 7.68

AA

-----  
**Eastern Turkey says "Yes" in referendum despite campaigns**

Preliminary results showed that votes for "No" stuck in 10 percent in the most of the eastern and southeastern Turkish provinces in a referendum for constitutional reforms.

Sunday, 12 September 2010 21:21

World Bulletin / News Desk

Preliminary results showed that most of the eastern and southeastern cities in Turkey say "Yes" to the constitutional reform package despite call of pro-Kurdish party for boycott and hardline leftist opposition party's campaign for "No".

In the mainly Kurdish populated areas in east and southeast Turkey, the votes against the reforms could not pass the 10 percent. 5 percent of electors say "No" in Batman, Bingol and Siirt.

Meanwhile, "No" votes stuck in 6 percent in Diyarbakir, seen as the castle of the pro-Kurdish BDP party, Sanliirfa, Mardin and Van. Also, 7 percent "No" votes were counted in Bitlis and Hakkari where a vehicle carrying ballot boxes was attacked.

8 percent of the electors voted against in eastern province of Mus.

A unofficial, preliminary count showed 58 percent of Turkish voters approved a raft of constitutional amendments in a referendum on Sunday, according to a private television channel.

Ninety-nine percent of ballot boxes have been counted, the broadcaster said.

BDP party campaigned for a boycott to vote in the East and Southeast Turkey, critics say this call seemed as pressure on the Kurdish people, as secular CHP called on Kurdish-origin people for "No" in its rare campaign in this region. CHP has often been criticised for its neglect of the eastern and southeastern Turkey in its election campaigns. The latest chairman, Kemal Kilicdaroglu, held a meetings in the east for first time in the CHP history which is the first party of Turkish Republic. It was the only party during around fifty year in pre-democratic Turkey.

The only eastern province that say "No" in the referendum is Tunceli, a realm of Kilicdaroglu who could not cast his vote because of a problem in voter list.

---

### **Turkish support for referendum at 58 percent**

Unofficial results from a referendum in Turkey over a package of constitutional reforms showed that 58 percent of the voters approved the amendments.

Sunday, 12 September 2010 20:29  
WORLD BULLETIN

Unofficial results from a referendum Sunday in Turkey over a government-backed package of constitutional reforms showed that 58 percent of the voters approved the amendments while 42 percent voted against.

Voter participation rate is 77.4 percent.

Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan, whose AK Party faces a re-election bid in a poll due by July 2011, had pushed strongly for changes, while most opposition parties campaigned against the referendum.

Agencies

---

### **Polls close in Turkey referendum – UPDATED**

Polls closed on Sunday in a referendum on whether to amend Turkey's military-drafted constitution.

Sunday, 12 September  
WORLD BULLETIN

Polls closed on Sunday in a referendum on whether to amend Turkey's military-drafted constitution, a vote seen as a test of support for Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan before a 2011 general election.

The citizens voted in 32 provinces in east of Turkey between 07.00 a.m -4.00 p.m. and in 49 provinces in west of Turkey in 08.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.

Constitutional amendments include change in structure of Supreme Board of Judges and Prosecutors, as well as the Constitutional Court, country's top judiciary body.

Turkey's Constitutional -off the package as a whole.

Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan has said the changes to a charter drafted in the 1980s after a military coup exactly 30 years ago are needed to strengthen democracy.

The package abolishes the provisional Court has annulled parts of the package in July, rejecting to overturn the entire package in a move to upset country's main opposition party, CHP, which had appealed to the top court to scrape article 15 of the constitution which does not allow trial of the members of the National Security Council formed after the military coup in 1980, the ban on right to general strike; and paves the way for a citizen to become a member of more than one labor union, and civil servants and other public officials the right to collective bargaining.

It also paves the way for trial of parliament speaker, chief of general staff, and senior commanders by the High Tribunal on charges of crimes they commit regarding their positions.

"Street clashes over boycott call"

Street clashes marred voting at several polling stations in provinces with large Kurdish populations. A Kurdish party has urged supporters to boycott the ballot.

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan voted in Istanbul with his wife and daughter, posing for the media with the envelope in his hands and saying the referendum was an important step for Turkish democracy.

"Turkish democracy is at a turning point today, we are sitting an important test," Erdogan said after voting in Uskudar district of Istanbul, as police sharpshooters lay in position on rooftops around the school serving as a polling station.

How Kurds vote could prove important in a tight race. Erdogan said the boycott had little impact except in Hakkari district bordering Iran.

The date evoked Turkey's traumatic past. Sunday was the 30th anniversary of a coup that curbed years of political and street chaos but led to widespread arrests, torture and extrajudicial killings, and PKK militants launched a rebellion a few years later that continues today.

If approved, the constitutional amendments would also remove immunity from prosecution for the engineers of the 1980 coup. Kenan Evren, the military chief who seized power and became president, is 93 and ailing.

The election board barred the broadcast of any results until 9 p.m. (1800 GMT), but the ban was expected to be relaxed and preliminary official results might be available by around 6 p.m. (1500 GMT).

Agencies

---

### **Turkish court orders removal of school boycott posters**

Thursday, September 16, 2010

ISTANBUL – Daily News with wires

A Diyarbakır court ordered Thursday the collection of banners in the city calling on parents to boycott the first week of school in the name of the right of education in students' mother tongue, Anatolia news agency reported.

“It has been decided that the statements in the banners are similar to the discourse toward the [outlawed Kurdistan Workers’ Party] PKK’s supportive base, its sympathizers and it is like a call for the society to digest, accept and apply the organization’s beliefs and thoughts,” the court decision said. The decision was sent to Diyarbakır police.

The banners, in Kurdish, were on billboards in several places around the city, which has a large Kurdish population.

A pro-Kurdish organization in Turkey had asked parents not to send their children to school during the first week of the school year to protest the lack of Kurdish-language education. A group calling itself the Kurdish Education and Language Movement, or TZP-Kurdi, proposed the boycott in Diyarbakır on Wednesday and won vocal support from Turkey's main pro-Kurdish political party, the Peace and Democracy Party, or BDP. TZP-Kurdi launched its campaign with the slogan, "We want education in our mother tongue." By law, public schools in Turkey can only educate students in Turkish, the country's sole official language.

---

### **Police continue search at Turkish exam headquarters**

Thursday, September 16, 2010

ISTANBUL - Daily News with wires

HURRIYT

Ankara’s public prosecutor and police continued their investigation into the Student Selection and Placement Center, or ÖSYM, in the capital Thursday following a series of cheating scandals that called into question the facility’s security.

Prosecutor Şadan Sakınan arrived at ÖSYM Thursday with police officers and held a meeting with Mustafa Solak, head of the supervisory board of the Higher Education Board, or YÖK, for about an hour, news website CNNTürk reported Thursday.

Meanwhile, ÖSYM head Professor Ünal Yarımağan met YÖK head Professor Yusuf Ziya Özcan on Thursday at the latter’s building. Yarımağan told members of the press that he had attended the meeting upon the request of Özcan.

Suspicious of cheating arose after 350 candidates correctly answered all 120 questions in the education sciences section of the recent Public Personnel Selection Examination, or KPSS, which candidates must pass to become eligible to teach.

Suspicious grew after daily Radikal revealed that at least 20 of the 350 were relatives, spouses or roommates.

Over 800,000 candidates sat the KPSS exam in the hopes of becoming public servants.

ÖSYM said last week that 12 exams would be postponed until the Ankara Public Prosecutor’s Office had completed its investigation of the scandal.

---

### **Turkish government plans to isolate PKK, news report says**

Thursday, September 16, 2010

ANKARA - Hürriyet Daily News

A top-secret meeting held in the prime minister’s office at Dolmabahçe Palace on Wednesday and attended by top government officials has determined the path Turkey is set to take following the end of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party, or PKK, cease-fire on Sept. 20.

Also on the agenda was the one-week school boycott suggested by Peace and Democracy Party, or BDP, leader Selahattin Demirtaş, in support of “native language” education in Kurdish.

In addition, the referendum process and outcome was analyzed based on data collected. Meeting participants concluded that security measures taken during the referendum and the number citizens who voted were all positive.

According to the daily Habertürk, new economic and political measures will be taken to isolate the terrorist organization from citizens by severing all ties with the PKK.

New security measures will also make the government’s presence over citizens felt, Habertürk reported.

The two-hour meeting was attended by Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Deputy Prime Minister Cemil Çiçek, Interior Minister Beşir Atalay, Justice Minister Sadullah Ergin, Prime Ministry Undersecretary Efkan Ala, National Intelligence Organization, or MIT, Undersecretary Hakan Fidan, Public Safety Undersecretary Muammer Güler and Director General of Public Security Oğuz Kağan Köksal.

---

### **Kılıçdaroğlu to take on reorganization after Turkish referendum**

Wednesday, September 15, 2010

GÖKSEL BOZKURT

ANKARA - Daily News Parliament Bureau

HURRIYET

Republican People’s Party, or CHP, leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu has decided to reorganize his party after raising his party’s votes in the referendum.

Kılıçdaroğlu’s first task following the referendum was the long-awaited appointment of Gürsel Tekin to deputy party leader.

The CHP top management is not leaning toward former leader Deniz Baykal’s call for a general assembly, citing the nine months that remain until the elections as the reason.

Kılıçdaroğlu had a hard time appointing Istanbul Provincial Chairman Gürsel Tekin to the party assembly due to resistance from CHP Secretary-General Önder Sav.

After working for a month before the referendum to appoint Tekin to the party’s Central Executive Board, or MYK, Kılıçdaroğlu was finally able to bring Tekin to the position of deputy leader.

Prior to the 2011 election campaign, Kılıçdaroğlu will also work to remedy deficiencies in the party organization.

Kılıçdaroğlu appointed Gürsel Tekin as the “deputy leader in charge of civil society, trade associations and public relations.”

The party leader will also assess reports from the provincial party branches, possibly making staffing changes to present a younger face of the party.

CHP turns to ‘middle class’

According to information obtained by the Hürriyet Daily News, Kılıçdaroğlu is planning to appeal to the middle and working classes following an assessment at the MYK.

“The new middle class will shape the future of Turkey,” said Kılıçdaroğlu, pointing out that the party is growing among the socio-economically advanced and educated class.

“This expansion is growing inward from the shorelines.”

Kılıçdaroğlu also asked for an election commission to determine the party’s new political style.

Speaking to journalists prior to his trip to Brussels, Kılıçdaroğlu said, “A new election strategy will be determined in the upcoming period, and the referendum results will be examined, too.”

Baykal asks for general assembly

Former CHP party leader Baykal, speaking to daily Taraf in an interview published Wednesday, asked for a general assembly to be convened.

“A new roadmap and new start is essential. The CHP must go to a general assembly. CHP members who have been left out must be brought back into the party. The new guidelines must be brought to life. They must go to the elections under the leadership of Mr. Kemal [Kılıçdaroğlu],” said Baykal.

A representative supporting Baykal spoke to the Hürriyet Daily News & Economic Review, saying: “As supporters of Baykal, we do not want to go to the elections with the fear of being eliminated. A general assembly must convene, a new party council must be created and everyone must be embraced.”

Responding to Baykal’s suggestion in Brussels on Wednesday, Kılıçdaroğlu said the delegates convening the general assembly would make the decision.

Baykal later said Taraf had taken liberty in interpreting his thoughts and that they were not an official statement from the former party leader.

Top management not supportive

However, the CHP’s top management is not leaning toward Baykal’s general assembly suggestion because just nine months remain until the election.

The final decision is still up to Kılıçdaroğlu, but after the reorganization of the party’s infrastructure, Kılıçdaroğlu is expected to direct his entire attention to the election.

After the general election, Kılıçdaroğlu has indicated that he will again appeal for a general assembly.

---

### **CHP Leader Apologizes for not Voting in Turkish Charter Poll**

Monday, 13 September 2010

Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, the leader of Turkey's main opposition party, said he did not vote in the country’s constitutional referendum Sunday because of a mix-up over where he should cast his ballot.

USK PUBLICATION

“I want to apologize to my fellow party members if I have upset them,” Kılıçdaroğlu, chairman of the Republican People’s Party, or CHP, told reporters late Sunday at a press conference at his party’s headquarters.

“It was my responsibility to check the register of electors, but I could not do it due to my intense referendum campaign,” he said, adding that his name was removed from the electors list without his knowledge.

“My name was removed from the list, but I was not informed of it. I voted in Istanbul in the 2009 local elections, and I thought that I could vote in the same constituency,” he said.

“Even the headman [or muhtar] was not informed of the move,” he said. He explained that he was notified only two days ago that he could not vote and added that talks with the Supreme Election

Board, or YSK, did not result in a solution.

“I should note that it is not the ideal picture for our democracy, but unfortunately this is the picture,” he said.

Kılıçdaroglu’s day-long silence ended late Sunday, but his explanation did not answer all the questions. One important confusion came when Kılıçdaroglu’s wife could vote in Ankara though he was unable to.

According to the party statement, Kılıçdaroglu was unaware of changes made by the YSK to electoral regulations regarding the limitations on where parliamentary deputies were eligible to cast their votes, the statement said.

According to previous regulations, deputies were able to vote wherever they wanted, the statement said.

---

### **CHP Respects Result of the Referendum, Kilicdaroglu**

Monday, 13 September 2010

Kemal Kilicdaroglu, chairman of the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP), said on Sunday that his party respected result of the referendum.

"Turkey can not continue on its path with decisions that satisfy only one of two people. CHP will continue its political struggle," Kilicdaroglu told a news conference while commenting on the result of the referendum.

Responding to a question, Kilicdaroglu said Justice & Development (AK) Party would make the decision on early elections.

"They have numerical majority in the parliament. We are of course ready for early elections if it takes place," Kilicdaroglu said.

Monday, 13 September 2010

USK PUBLICATION

---

### **60 Detained in Ethnic-fueled Violence in Turkey**

Sixty people were detained Wednesday after police analyzed video footage of ethnic-fueled clashes in the Turkish province of Bursa in July.

Social unrest in the city of İnegöl following an argument between bus drivers escalated into citywide violence after three people were alleged to have stabbed six others in a coffee house.

Locals began attacking each other in groups after rumors spread that one party in the initial argument was of Kurdish descent. In addition to property damage to a police station and other buildings, several cars were torched, including police and municipality vehicles.

The 60 people suspected of taking part in the riots were detained early Wednesday after authorities reviewed records from police cameras and listened to witness testimony.

The suspects are expected to testify and will remain in custody for three days.

The suspects are then likely to be tried in İnegöl on charges of "looting, resisting security officers, damaging public property and arson."

The fight started over a disagreement between two families, but the course of the events changed after people started saying one of the families had a Kurdish background.

Local residents gathered in front of the hospital where the stabbing victims had been taken and the crowd quickly swelled to 1,000 people, demanding the suspects be handed over to them. Members of the crowd then began to riot, setting fire to police vehicles and damaging other property. Ten police officers were injured in the fray.

Wednesday, 15 September 2010  
USK PUBLICATION

---

### **Debate Heats Up over Turkish Judicial Board**

USK PUBLICATION

Thursday, 16 September 2010

Heated debate started among the judiciary when the undersecretary fo the Justice Ministry announced online that he may stand as a candidate for membership on Turkey's Supreme Board of Prosecutors and Judges, or HSYK.

The most-debated article on the recently approved constitutional amendment package, regarding member selection of the HSYK, has already started a "selection list" tension. Amid the countdown for the selection of seven main and four reserve members for the HSYK, Justice Ministry Undersecretary İbrahim Okur announced on the ministry's website that he may announce his own candidacy.

The Judges and Prosecutors Association, or YARSAV, and the Democrat-Judiciary objected to his statement.

Okur posted on an Internet forum on Aug. 30 that he was considering standing as a candidate for HSYK membership. Rumors of a possible candidate list prepared by Okur are also circulating.

The Democrat-Judiciary immediately responded with a statement titled "The ruling government's judicial representatives should not interfere with the judiciary."

Democrat-Judiciary Co-Chairman Orhangazi Ertekin, speaking to the daily Radikal, said, "Government representatives, given instructions by the executive branch, are attempting to appear in the elections of the judiciary, which is against the logic of the [constitutional amendment] package."

Nuh Hüseyin Köse of YARSAV said as long as the justice minister is granted the authority to supervise all judges and prosecutors as well as inspectors, he poses a threat to all judges and prosecutors to be elected to the HSYK.

"If 10 judges and prosecutors act in line with the justice minister [during the HSYK's decision-making process], then the board will be overtaken by the executive power," Köse said.

---

### **GEO-STRATEGIC NEWS**

#### **Turkish Foreign Minister: "Turkish Party Wants to Find a Solution to Cyprus Issue"**

Tuesday, 14 September 2010

Turkey's Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu reiterated during the informal meeting of the European Union foreign ministers in Brussels that the Turkish party wanted to find a solution to the Cyprus issue as soon as possible, diplomatic sources said.

Sources denied news reports in the Greek Cypriot press claiming that Davutoglu and Foreign Minister Markos Kyprianou of the Greek Cypriot administration had an argument during the meeting.

Sources told the A.A that Davutoglu addressed the foreign ministers of the European

Union-member states and Kyprianou was in attendance at the meeting to represent the Greek Cypriot administration.

"Davutoglu reiterated that Turkey aimed at becoming a full member of the Union, and he added that there were two problems about Turkey's membership. He said that one of the problems was the Cyprus issue which could not be resolved because of the Greek Cypriots' attitude and the second one was France's blockade," sources said.

"Davutoglu recalled that the Turkish party has been trying to find a solution to the Cyprus issue since 2004. He said that since the Greek Cypriot party failed to display the same attitude, the issue could not be solved yet. He said that the Turkish party wanted to find a solution to the Cyprus issue as soon as possible, and added that the other parties should make efforts to reach a solution," sources added.

Greek Cypriot Fileleftheros newspaper claimed that a row blew up between Davutoglu and Kyprianou during the meeting in Brussels over the Cyprus issue.

Tuesday, 14 September 2010

**USK PUBLICATION**

---

### **US official reaffirms ongoing dialogue with Turkey following report**

Thursday, September 16, 2010

WASHINGTON - Anatolia News Agency

HURRIYT

A U.S. official has reaffirmed the close relationship between Turkey and the United States in response to a global survey in which Turkish participants expressed more interest in cooperation with the Middle East than with the West.

According to Philip Gordon, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs, there is no other country in Europe with which the United States has as much open, ongoing dialogue as it does with Turkey.

Speaking at the German Marshall Fund on Wednesday, Gordon said Turkey and the United States had many common interests and policies although they had some differences of opinion on some issues. The German Marshall Fund of the United States had conducted the survey that included Turks' views on the Middle East.

Gordon said Turkey and the United States had similar thinking on preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, but differences of opinion on whether or not the Islamic republic had fulfilled required criteria regarding this matter. The assistant secretary said the two countries were behaving sincerely toward each other regarding the controversy over Iran's nuclear program.

The U.S. official said Ankara and Washington also exhibited sincerity in dealing with their differences of opinion regarding Hamas and the Israeli attack on the Mavi Marmara, part of a flotilla of aid ships to the Gaza Strip.

Turkey's relations with Armenia are another point of diverging perspectives, the assistant secretary said, adding that the United States was supporting the normalization process between the two countries.

Gordon said normalization would be beneficial to both countries and to the region, an idea also supported by the Turkish government. The assistant secretary said he did not agree with claims that Turkey has turned its back to the West.

Closer ties with the Middle East were supported by 20 percent of Turkish participants, double last year's rate, in the annual "Transatlantic Trends" survey, conducted

internationally by the German Marshall Fund of the United States and the Compagnia di San Paolo in Italy and released Wednesday.

Gordon said Turkey had been interested in the Middle East for a long time, but had always stood close to the United States and the West. Adding that Turkey is also still interested in the European Union accession process, he said the EU should take some steps to get Ankara's focus back on the process and underlined the importance of encouraging Turkey in its bid.

Turkey's EU accession depends on both Turkey and the European Union, he said, noting that the United States continues to support Turkey.

Gordon said the EU would become stronger with inclusion of a Turkey that had fulfilled EU membership criteria. The United States' dialogue with the Turkish government was not in line with the view that Turkey has become distant from the West, he said.

The U.S. official said all remarks from Turkey indicated that it was still seeing itself as a distinguished member of NATO, that it is eager for EU membership and that it places importance on cooperation with the United States.

Gordon also said the United States was trying to establish a model partnership with Turkey and attached importance to its relations with the country and the views of the Turkish people. He defined U.S. relations with Turkey as important and strategic and said the relationship is a fruitful one for both countries.

---

### **Turkey mulls participation in missile defense system**

Wednesday, September 15, 2010

ÜMİT ENGİNSOY

ANKARA - Hürriyet Daily News

Turkey is yet to make a final decision regarding a Washington proposal that it participate in a collective missile defense system designed to counter potential threats from Iran.

"For our decision, we need to see a united NATO position on the missile defense matter, and it is not there at this point," a Turkish Foreign Ministry official said recently.

"There have been discussions with several members of NATO to include Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, in terms of parts of this phased-adaptive approach missile defense architecture, and whether countries would support installations and capabilities for this overall architecture," Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, said during talks held in Turkey on Sept. 4.

Turkey, however, has yet to clarify its position on a defense system.

Some government officials, mainly from the Foreign Ministry, support Ankara's participation in the collective missile defense system but others have concerns over rousing Iran's ire, said multiple sources.

US plans changed in a year

The United States' collective missile defense plans underwent major changes over the past year. U.S. President Barack Obama in September 2009 moved to cancel an earlier plan to set up anti-Iranian missile defense bases in the Czech Republic and Poland and opted for a regional approach instead.

The White House said at the time that under the latest intelligence assessments, the threat from Iran's short- and medium-range missiles was developing more rapidly than previously projected and that in the near-term, the greatest missile threats from Iran

would be to U.S. allies and partners, as well as to personnel deployed by the U.S. in the Middle East and in Europe.

Accordingly, a plan developed during former president George W. Bush's term to deploy radars and interceptors in the Czech Republic and Poland to hit Iran's potential long-range and intercontinental ballistic missiles was abandoned. The countries, however, will still be integrated into the Obama plan in a new fashion.

In phase one of the Obama plan, the U.S. will deploy state-of-the-art SM-3 interceptor missiles and radar surveillance systems on sea-based Aegis weapons systems by 2011. In phase two – to be completed by 2015 – a more capable version of the SM-3 interceptor and more advanced sensors will be used in both sea- and land-based configurations. In later phases three and four, intercepting and detecting capabilities will be further developed.

Among countries Mullen said the U.S. hopes to bring into providing “architectural” support for the system, former Warsaw Pact member and new NATO ally Romania voiced willingness in February to host interceptor missiles, while talks are continuing with Turkey and Bulgaria for the deployment of strong X-band radar stations to detect incoming missiles.

Despite Iran's controversial nuclear program, Turkey is one of Tehran's strongest economic and trade partners. A move by Turkey, a nonpermanent member of the U.N. Security Council, to vote against fresh sanctions on Iran's nuclear program in June angered Washington. Ankara says it wants a fully diplomatic and peaceful solution to the dispute.

In Ankara, Mullen said he did not plan to "question or rebut" Turkey over the U.N. vote. Instead he said the U.S. and Turkey agree that Iran should not achieve a nuclear weapons capability and that "we need to do all we can to ensure that."

Turkey's national missile defense program

Turkey is involved in an effort to buy a national missile defense system to protect strategic areas and installations from potential ground-to-ground ballistic missile strikes, a program whose first phase is expected to cost between \$1 billion and \$2 billion. Competing in an ongoing competition to win the Turkish tender are U.S.-based Lockheed Martin and Raytheon, with their Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) systems; Russia's Rosoboronexport, marketing the S300; the China Precision Machinery Export-Import Corp., or CPMIEC, offering its HQ-9; and the Italian-French consortium Eurosam, maker of the Aster 30.

Turkey is expected to decide on the tenders next year. The difference between the SM-3, the proposed U.S.-led collective defense system's main component, and the PAC-3, S300, HQ-9 and Aster is that while the systems competing for the Turkish contract are designed to defend only a specific area and can hit an approaching ballistic missile, the SM-3 is able to intercept the ballistic missile during its ascent phase.

---

### **Main Turkish opposition head meets with EU enlargement chief**

Thursday, September 16, 2010

BRUSSELS – Anatolia News Agency

HURRIYT

Staging his first trip overseas as head of the main opposition, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu met with the European Union's chief commissioner for enlargement, Stefan Füle, in Brussels on Thursday to discuss recent events in Turkey.

Füle said he had had "a very fruitful" meeting with Kılıçdaroğlu, adding that the recent referendum in Turkey regarding a raft of government-backed constitutional amendments topped the agenda of their talks.

"I explained to Kılıçdaroğlu why we had insistently described the constitutional package as 'step in the right direction.' I think that the constitutional amendments will affect Turkey's EU accession drive in a very positive way," Füle told reporters.

Füle said he also stressed that the Turkish government should welcome positive contributions when drafting a new constitution, adding that commitments made by the Turkish president and prime minister to include all segments of the society in the new constitution had been well received by the EU.

The EU minister said the commission would closely monitor the implementation of the amendments approved in Sunday's referendum in line with standards set by the EU.

---

### **Turkey wants to exceed walls opening, Balkans, Middle East: FM**

The Turkish foreign minister said that Turkey wanted to expand its regional cooperation areas in the Balkans, Middle East and Caucasus.

Thursday, 16 September 2010 17:54

#### WORLD BULLETIN

The Turkish foreign minister said on Thursday that Turkey wanted to expand its regional cooperation areas in the Balkans, Middle East and Caucasus.

Speaking at a TV program broadcast by private channel CNN Turk, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said Turkey had commitment to many regions due to its geographical position.

"We want Turkey to meet with its natural geography. Previously there were walls around us and we thought these walls provided protection. We thought Anatolia was a more secure place for us. However, walls imprison us and we want them to be removed," Davutoglu said.

Commenting on Turkey-EU relations as well, the foreign minister said Europeans understood Turkey's importance better nowadays.

Pointing to the extraordinary contributions Turkey could make to peace in Europe and the world, Davutoglu said the EU was also eager to improve its strategic dialogue with Turkey.

Davutoglu also noted that Turkey both desired to reach EU standards and exist in Asia where the new economic and political power prevailed.

AA

---

### **Turkey, Azerbaijan establish Strategic Cooperation Council**

Erdogan and Aliyev signed an agreement on establishment of Turkey-Azerbaijan High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council.

Thursday, 16 September 2010 10:22

#### WORLD BULLETIN

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev signed an agreement on establishment of Turkey-Azerbaijan High-Level Strategic

Cooperation Council.

Erdogan and Aliyev signed the agreement at a ceremony at Ciragan Palace in Istanbul within the scope of a summit meeting of heads of state & government of the Turkish Speaking Countries.

Erdogan said that Turkey and Azerbaijan had sound friendly ties and Turkey-Azerbaijan High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council would boost these close relations.

After the signing, Erdogan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev held a joint press conference in Istanbul.

Erdogan said Turkish-Azerbaijani cooperation was based not only on sound solidarity between the two countries but also deep-rooted history and sound ties between the two peoples.

Turkey and Azerbaijan were working for peace, stability and prosperity in the region, he said.

Aliyev said that Azerbaijan and Turkey were working to enhance relations.

After the ceremony, Aliyev told reporters that today Turkey and Azerbaijan had a historic day.

"We are working to boost ties. Turkey has always stood by us," he said.

---

### **Turkey's Istanbul To Send 48-Member Team To Flood-Hit Pakistan**

Istanbul Municipality (IBB) announced Monday it will send a 48-member team to flood-hit Pakistan to help infrastructure works and health authorities, World Bulletin reported.

In a written statement issued Monday, IBB said that the 48-member team would be sent upon a report prepared by the first group that went to Pakistan from the IBB after floods devastated this Asian country recently.

According to the IBB, the 48-member team will be led by Ismail Hakki Turunc and assist infrastructure and health services so that the lives of Pakistani people return to normal as soon as possible.

Pakistan's worst-ever floods killed at least 1,600 people and displaced more than 20 million.

As many as 17 million acres of farm land have been submerged and billions of dollars of crops destroyed, Pakistani authorities announced earlier.

So far, Turkey has sent \$10 million financial aid and 244 tons of relief support that included vaccines, medicine, medical stuff to Pakistan.

Turkey has sent as well a 42-member medical team, two fully equipped mobile hospitals, an ambulance, and a 4x4 truck for medical rescue efforts.

Tuesday, 7 September 2010

**USAKPUBLICATION**

---

### **EU Countries Home to 2.4 Millions Turks**

Tuesday, 7 September 2010

Turks, with a population around 2.4 million, constitute the largest expatriate community living in the European Union (EU).

According to the data released by EU's statistics authority Eurostat, there are currently 31.9 million foreigners living in EU-member states.

Turks top the list with a population of 2.4 million and such figure constitutes 8 percent of the total number of foreigners within the EU, Eurostat says.

Turkish community is followed by Romanians, Moroccans, Poles, Italians, Albanians and the Portuguese.

Germany hosts the largest foreigner community within the union and nearly 7.2 million of its population is comprised of expats, Eurostat says.

Spain, Britain, Italy and France follow Germany in the ranking, the authority adds.

Moreover, Turkey is currently home to 103,800 foreigners and 45,300 of such figure are nationals of EU countries, according to Eurostat.

Tuesday, 7 September 2010

## USK PUBLICATION

---

### **Senior official says Turkey, US have dialogue despite differences**

The U.S. assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs said on Wednesday that Turkey and the United States had an ongoing dialogue.

Thursday, 16 September 2010 09:51

WORLD BULLETIN

The U.S. assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs said on Wednesday that Turkey and the United States had an ongoing dialogue.

Assistant Secretary Philip Gordon said there was no other country in Europe than Turkey with which the United States had that much open and ongoing dialogue.

Speaking at the German Marshall Fund, Gordon said Turkey and the United States had "many common interests and policies" although they had some differences of opinion on some issues.

Gordon said Turkey and the United States were thinking similarly on preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, however they had differences of opinion on whether or not Iran had fulfilled required criteria regarding this matter.

The assistant secretary said the two countries were "behaving sincerely" towards each other regarding Iran's nuclear program.

Gordon said Turkey and the United States also had some differences of opinion regarding the Israeli attack on "Mavi Marmara" aid ship and Hamas, however they were sincere to each other.

The assistant secretary enumerated Turkey's relations with Armenia as another different perspective between Turkey and the United States, and said his country was supporting the normalization process between the two countries.

Gordon said the normalization would be beneficial to both countries and the region, which was also an idea supported by the Turkish government.

The assistant secretary said he did not agree with claims that Turkey turned its back to the West.

Gordon said Turkey was interested in the Middle East for a long time, and Turkey had always stood close to the United States and the West.

Turkey was still interested in European Union (EU) accession process, he said.

Gordon said the EU should take some steps to get Turkey's focus back on the process and underlined importance of encouraging Turkey.

Turkey's EU accession depended on both Turkey and the EU, however the United States continued to support Turkey, he said.

Gordon said the EU would get stronger with a Turkey, which had fulfilled EU

membership criteria.

The United States' dialogue with the Turkish government was not in line with the view that Turkey had been distant from the West, Gordon said.

Gordon said all remarks of Turkey had indicated that it was still seeing itself as a distinguished member of NATO, it was eager for EU membership, and it attached importance to cooperation with the United States.

Also, Gordon said the United States was trying to establish a model partnership with Turkey, and attached importance to its relations with that country and the views of the Turkish people.

Gordon defined U.S. relations with Turkey as important and strategic, and said that relationship was "fruitful" for both countries.

---

### **Turkey to Do Everything It Can for Israel-Syria Peace**

Wednesday, 15 September 2010

Turkey's foreign minister said on Tuesday that Turkey would continue to do everything in its power for a lasting peace between Israel and Syria.

Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said Turkey did not want violence and blockade in its vicinity.

"We will try to do everything we can for a permanent peace between Israel and Syria," Davutoglu said during a dinner hosted at Istanbul's Ciragan Palace on occasion of the World Leaders Symposium.

Davutoglu said Turkey supported political dialogue, mutual economic dependence, multi-culturalism, co-existence and security in the region.

Referring to protocols signed with Armenia, Davutoglu said they would be implemented within the framework of a comprehensive peace in the Caucasus which also included Azerbaijan-Armenia peace.

Davutoglu also touched on Iran during his speech, and said Turkey and the United States were of the same opinion regarding Iran.

"We do not want any countries to own nuclear weapons in our region, and we want solution of Iran's nuclear problem through diplomacy," he said.

Davutoglu underlined importance of Turkish-U.S. cooperation in global and regional sense, and said it would create a perfect synergy.

Turkey's relations with the United States would contribute to world peace, and nobody should have concerns about U.S.-Turkish relations, he also said.

Wednesday, 15 September 2010

### **USK PUBLICATION**

---

### **Greek Foreign Minister His Country Wants Close Cooperation with Turkey**

Wednesday, 15 September 2010

The Greek foreign minister said on Wednesday that his country wanted to establish a close cooperation with Turkey.

Speaking at a press conference on the "Greek foreign policy" in Athens, Foreign Minister Dimitris Drucas said the Greek capital was eager to have a close cooperation with Ankara on matters of common interest.

Drucas said rules of international law, as well as respect to the sovereign rights and territorial integrity of Greece would constitute the pre-condition for such cooperation.

The Greek foreign minister also noted that Greece supported Turkey's EU perspective within the framework of full membership. Commenting on the result of Sunday's referendum in Turkey, Drucas said such result would help Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan to conduct more decisive reforms on issues such as minority and human rights, respect to international law, good relations with neighbors and settlement of the Cyprus issue.

The Greek foreign minister also said result of the referendum would be "a window of opportunity" for the Turkish government.

Regarding the ongoing negotiation process in Cyprus, Drucas said Cyprus issue was a matter of priority for Greece.

Noting that the issue was going through a tough process nowadays, Drucas said Greek Cypriot leader Demetris Christofias brought up proposals for the solution of the matter, adding a positive approach was expected from the Turkish Cypriot side

Wednesday, 15 September 2010

USK PUBLICATION

---

### **Turkey and Iran Agree to Open New Border Gates**

Friday, 17 September 2010

Turkey and Iran signed a series of agreements Thursday including the establishment of new border gates as well as cooperation in higher education, culture and youth.

The agreements were signed in a meeting between Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Iranian First Vice President Mohammed Reza Rahimi in Istanbul.

The two leaders held a joint press conference following their meeting.

Speaking at the press conference, Erdogan said that Iran's nuclear program was in a sensitive period.

There are excellent opportunities to resolve Iran's nuclear program issue peacefully, Erdogan said.

Erdogan said that Ankara did not want nuclear weapons in the region but was not against use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Friday, 17 September 2010

USAK PUBLICATION

---

### **Turkey Debates Merits of US-style Presidential System**

Wednesday, 15 September 2010

The multifaceted momentum triggered by Sunday's heady referendum victory has turned new attention to an old idea of Turkey's ruling party: a U.S.-style "presidential system" to replace the current European-style parliamentary mode of governance.

Just where American icons like "states' rights," "limited" central government and the supremacy of "local authority" will come in... those appear to be ideas for later.

At first brush, the afterglow of victory has apparently wetted Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's appetite for a different governmental architecture. The first president in the new system would, of course, be Erdoğan.

That possibility is anathema to the country's opposition parties.

"The presidential system, according to [the ruling party's] understanding, will bring an uncontrollable single-man administration. Judicial freedom will become even less protected," Atilla Kart, a member of the Constitutional Commission and a Konya

representative of the main opposition Republican People's Party, or CHP, told the Hürriyet Daily News & Economic Review on Tuesday.

"That system will bring suspicious developments in the name of democracy," Kart said, adding that such a system would not be suitable for Turkey. "Encompassing a state system, it will also accelerate separation."

In April, Erdoğan suggested that "Turkey could adopt a presidential system" if the Turkish people extend their support to the ruling Justice and Development Party, or AKP, in the 2011 general elections. Many believe a victory in 2011 would lead Erdoğan to change the Constitution and be voted in to a newly empowered presidency in 2012.

The prime minister reportedly gave Burhan Kuzu, the head of the AKP's Constitution Commission instructions on the matter of a new presidential system, but AKP deputy leader Ömer Çelik has stated that "no concrete discussions will be held at the Central Executive Board today, or anywhere else, regarding a switch to the presidential system." Debates on a new system are healthy for Turkey both politically and intellectually, Çelik said, though he also said they should not be turned into a "regime" issue. He added that the debate on creating a new constitution could last until after the elections.

"The presidential system could become a matter of debate if it matures in vastly different conditions, [but] Turkey's current conditions do not allow for this," CHP chief Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu told Fikret Bila of daily Milliyet. "The presidential system is not on Turkey's agenda. These types of changes cannot happen simply by saying, 'Hey, let's start.'"

**MHP warns of separatism**

Echoing Kart's concerns about separation, Nationalist Movement Party, or MHP, group deputy chairman Mehmet Şandır said the presidential system could bring about separation and division within the country.

"Democracy should not have the power to change the parliamentary system, a part of the founding law of the Republic of Turkey," Şandır told the Daily News. "The presidential system lays the foundation for a state system. It is not right to be talking about this at a time when PKK [outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party] is becoming politicized and separatist politics are becoming law."

MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli is also known to oppose the idea of a presidential system for Turkey.

**Change 'cannot be imposed,' BDP says**

The idea of switching to a presidential system is something that could be debated, but should not be imposed by the AKP, Ayla Akat Ata, the group deputy chairman of the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party, or BDP, told the Daily News. He said certain steps needed to be taken before such a switch could be made.

"Steps need to be taken to solve the Kurdish issue, representation in Parliament needs to be strengthened and the 10 percent electoral threshold needs to change. This cannot be imposed, like the referendum [was]," Ata said.

A presidential or a semi-presidential system is in use in 38 countries worldwide. France provides perhaps the best example of a semi-presidential system: The country is a republic, and is headed by both the president and the prime minister, with the president having the final say. The United States, on the other hand, has been governed by a full presidential system since 1792.

USAK PUBLICATIONS

---

## **US Presidential System Unsuitable for Turkey, Experts Say**

A presidential system similar to that used in the United States would be difficult to replicate in Turkey, a legal expert has said following rumors the government is toying with the idea of adopting a new system of government.

“The presidential system in the United States is a model which developed as a result of its own historic, social, political and economic circumstances. It has no other [models] and was only applied successfully in the United States,” Erdoğan Teziç, a constitutional law professor, told the Hürriyet Daily News & Economic Review.

The main reason behind the difficulty is Turkey’s lack of the U.S.’s social and political background.

“It has been applied in a liberal and democratic country. It is thus hard to apply the same model in countries where these conditions have not yet emerged,” he said, adding that the U.S. presidential model operates on a federal political structure in which each state has a say in electing the country's leader.

“Could this be achieved in Turkey?” he asked, hinting that the strongest political party’s candidate would likely be elected for the post in Turkey if the system were adopted.

‘Model may lead to dictatorship’

Ekrem Ali Akartürk, a professor of constitutional law at Yeditepe University, echoed the remarks when he said the system was successful in the United States because of the strong democratic tradition in that country, whereas in Turkey it would likely create one-party rule because the system essentially invests almost all executive power in the office of the president.

“The U.S. presidential system is a model that was created by the country’s own circumstances and this model has failed to produce democratic results in countries other than the U.S.,” Akartürk said.

“The model has proved to be successful there because the U.S. has a federal administrative structure where all states have their own laws, local assemblies, judiciary and governors. This federal structure doesn’t allow for a possible dictatorship or grant one party excessive authority,” he said.

For Akartürk, the strong, independent judicial system, and the democratic tradition of compromise on liberal values between the two central political parties, the Democrats and Republicans, also made the system successful. Furthermore, presidents generally wield their authority carefully because the people have the ultimate power to unseat them with their votes.

“However, the application of the system in Turkey, where the existence of these elements is in question, may lead to a single-party dictatorship. The disadvantage of the system is that the authority of the president and the government is gathered in president. The system thus grants almost all executive power to the president,” Akartürk said.

“And it is not healthy to take some parts of the system and leave the other parts by applying a model based on Turkey’s own conditions. The system has integrity in itself. If you apply a model you also have to take its other elements, including the congress and federal structure,” he said.

The government agenda

İlter Turan, professor of International Relations at Bilgi University, said political party leaders in Turkey had excessive power, adding that there was lack of supervision over them.

“So, the presidential system is in a way applied in Turkey,” he said. “I don’t think the presidential system will meet the needs of the country, but it seems it will meet the needs of political party leaders.”

Ruling Justice and Development Party, or AKP, spokesman Ahmet İyimaya told the Daily News that the presidential system was not on their agenda as they were focusing on post-referendum legislative work.

However, in recent remarks, the AKP’s Burhan Kuzu said Turkey’s parliamentary system did not recognize the separation of powers thoroughly enough and added that the presidential system was the healthiest political model regarding the protection of the separation of powers.

The Daily News was unable to contact Kuzu for comment Tuesday but some believe recent discussions indicate the rumors regarding Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s supposed presidential ambitions may be more than speculative.

Wednesday, 15 September 2010

Hurriyet Daily News&Economic Review

USK PUBLICATIONS

---

### **Turkish FM: Turkey Ready To Reconcile Syria And Israel**

Wednesday, 15 September 2010

USK PUBLICATION

The Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu has said Ankara is willing to exert all efforts to achieve a lasting and comprehensive peace between Syria and Israel, the Anadolu news agency reports.

He said Turkey doesn't want violence and blockades in the neighboring countries.

"We will do everything to establish a permanent peace between Israel and Syria,"

Davutoglu told journalists in Istanbul.

Indirect peace talks between Israel and Syria, mediated by Turkey, broke down in December 2008 when Israel launched a major offensive in the Gaza Strip. Damascus demands that Israel return the Golan Heights, which it has occupied since 1967, before a new round of talks.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy on Monday sent a letter to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, in which he stressed the importance of restarting indirect negotiations between the sides, which will lead to direct dialogue.

**Wednesday, 15 September 2010**

---

### **Turkey Strongest Country in OECD in 2010, Secretary General Gurria Says**

Wednesday, 15 September 2010

USK PUBLICATION

Secretary General of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Angel Gurria said Wednesday Turkey was the strongest country in the OECD in 2010.

Turkish State Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Ali Babacan and Gurria held a joint press conference in Ankara upon announcement of OECD's Turkey report for 2010.

Speaking at the press conference, Babacan said that the OECD published country reports every two years and that these reports included wide analysis.

Such reports are not prepared merely for Turkey but for a total of 40 countries, Babacan said.

The OECD reports include objective and scientific analysis and proposals. We pay high attention to these reports and have made use of them in the past. We will continue to benefit from the reports, Babacan said.

The most recent report on Turkey was published in 2008. OECD's 2010 report will be presented by Secretary General Angel Gurria, Babacan said.

Turkey has gone through the global economic crisis successfully. This transition provided a golden opportunity for full economic growth, Gurria said.

We analyze countries and as a result believe that in Europe the German and Turkish economies will remain strong while the economies of United States, Canada and Japan will shrink, Gurria said.

The growth in many OECD countries did not meet expectations but Turkey was an exception, Gurria stressed.

Turkey realized an impressive crisis management. The fiscal reforms implemented after 2002 made great contribution to Turkey's success in dealing with the crisis, Gurria underlined.

There was full international confidence regarding Turkey's growth. Turkey was able to attract the confidence of investors and was able to maintain such confidence. The well balanced stability packages resulted in more international confidence in the Turkish economy. Turkey was the strongest country in the OECD as we entered the year 2010, Gurria said.

Turkey's growth of 11 percent in the first six months of 2010 was very impressive. We were proud with such figures from Turkey. We were actually expecting a growth rate of seven percent. We can see a very positive picture in Turkey, Gurria said.

Wednesday, 15 September 2010

---

## **ECONOMIC NEWS**

### **Turkish PM wants closer trade links with Iran**

Thursday, September 16, 2010

ISTANBUL – Daily News with wires

HURRIYT

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan called for closer economic ties with Iran on Thursday, despite Western pressure for tougher action against the Islamic republic over its nuclear activities.

"Why can't we establish a mechanism of unrestricted trade with Iran similar to the one we have with Europe? I personally don't see any reason why we should not be able to accomplish this," Erdoğan said in a speech at a Turkish-Iranian business forum in Istanbul, Anatolia news agency reported.

"If we complete as soon as possible the talks on a preferential trade agreement ... we can reach \$30 billion [in bilateral trade] in five years. We have to achieve that," he said, Agence France-Presse quoted him as saying.

Ankara has said it will abide by U.N. sanctions on neighboring Iran but not by tougher restrictions imposed by the United States or the European Union, with which Turkey has a customs union agreement and is seeking to join.

Erdoğan said the trade volume between Turkey and Iran currently stood at \$10 billion, most of it from Iranian natural gas sales to Turkey.

"There are lots of things that we can give to Iran. Turkey has made a serious industrial leap," Anatolia quoted Erdoğan as saying.

"Our geographic proximity offers us unique opportunities to improve our commercial and economic ties," he said.

Turkey's improving ties with Iran, coupled by a deep crisis in relations with one-time ally Israel, have sparked concern that Erdoğan's Islamist-rooted government is taking NATO's sole mainly Muslim member away from the West.

Turkey insists on a diplomatic solution to tensions over Iran's nuclear program and in May – together with Brazil – hammered out a nuclear fuel swap deal with Tehran.

In a move that irked Washington, the country voted "no" to fresh sanctions against Iran, adopted by the U.N. Security Council in June, insisting that the swap deal should be given a chance.

'No friends like Turkey'

Iran's First Vice President Muhammad Rıza Rahimi pledged that his country would exert its best efforts to remove any obstacles to doing business with Turkey.

"You might have problems from time to time in doing business with us but these are not done on purpose. Please do not get offended if you had encountered any problems in Iran. Under orders from Ahmadinejad, we will remove all obstacles. We have no friend like Turkey in today's world," Rahimi said at a forum organized by the Turkish-Iranian Business Council in Istanbul.

Rahimi said Turkey has played big roles in the world with its power and stable government, adding that Turkey's neighborhood, for Iran, was of utmost importance.

"We have started to lay down the foundation of a very strong relationship with Turkey. I hope this relationship will never be damaged," Rahimi said, adding that Turkey and Iran agreed during a visit by the Turkish prime minister to Tehran to boost trade volume to \$30 billion, adding that new opportunities had presented themselves for the two countries.

Turkey's state minister for foreign trade said Thursday that the trade volume between Turkey and Iran was up 86 percent in the first seven months of 2010.

Minister Zafer Çağlayan underlined the importance of the rise in the Turkish-Iranian trade volume in the first seven months of 2010. "It seems that we will reach the trade volume we had before the 2009 global crisis in 2011," Çağlayan said at the forum.

Çağlayan said bilateral trade volume was \$2.3 billion in 2002 and reached \$11 billion in 2008.

"However, it fell to \$5.5 billion in 2009 due to the global crisis and the decline in oil and natural gas prices in the world," he said.

Border trade agreement

Çağlayan said Turkey had ratified a border trade agreement and sent it to Iran but that border trade could not be launched as Iran had not approved the agreement yet. Initiatives to establish a joint industrial zone were also about to be completed, he said. Turkish Energy Minister Taner Yıldız also met with Rahimi. Yıldız told Anatolia news agency after the meeting that existing natural gas projects were high on the agenda of the meeting. "The U.N. still has sanctions on Iran. This issue was not discussed at the meeting since the decisions of the U.N. Security Council are binding."

---

### **Turkish businessmen invited to invest in Kyrgyzstan**

Kyrgyzstan's interim President Roza Otunbaeva said that her country offered great opportunities for Turkish businessmen.

Thursday, 16 September 2010 10:06  
WORLD BULLETIN

Kyrgyzstan's interim President Roza Otunbaeva said on Wednesday that her country offered great opportunities for Turkish businessmen.

Speaking at the Turkey-Kyrgyzstan Trade and Investment Forum in Istanbul, Otunbaeva said Kyrgyzstan had eased its control mechanism over businessmen and private sector in the recent term.

Pointing to Turkey's major investments in Kyrgyzstan, Otunbaeva said her country attached great importance to these investments and she believed there were many more attractive opportunities in Kyrgyzstan for Turkish entrepreneurs.

Delivering a speech at the gathering, Rizanur Meral, the head of Turkish Confederation of Industrialists and Businessmen (TUSKON), said that today's forum would help members of his confederation to establish closer relations with Kyrgyzstan.

Meral also said Turkish businessmen had the opportunity to invest particularly in Kyrgyzstan's health, tourism, textile and construction sectors.

As part of the Turkey-Kyrgyzstan Trade and Investment Forum, more than 100 Turkish businessmen held bilateral talks with their Kyrgyz counterparts.

The businessmen mainly discussed cooperation opportunities in fields of construction, construction materials, concrete production, textile, agriculture, mining, health, tourism, construction of hospitals and furniture manufacturing.

---

### **Turkey's Istanbul attracts 4.5 million foreign tourists**

4.5 million foreign tourists visited Istanbul, Turkey in the first eight months of 2010.

Tuesday, 14  
WORLD BULLETIN

4.5 million foreign tourists visited Istanbul, Turkey in the first eight months of 2010.

A statement by Istanbul Culture and Tourism Directorate said on Tuesday that a total of 4,543,544 foreign people came to Istanbul between January and August 2010.

13 percent of foreign visitors were from Germany, 5.8 percent each from Italy and Russia and 5.2 percent from Britain.

---

### **OECD urges Turkey to push ahead with structural changes**

Wednesday, September 15, 2010

ANKARA – Bloomberg

HURRIYT

Turkey's rapid recovery from the global crisis gives the country a "golden opportunity" to make changes to improve budget transparency, keep inflation low and manage its current-account deficit, the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development said.

Turkey's performance during the crisis has won it a measure of investor confidence and credibility, the Paris-based OECD said Wednesday in a report. "The government should grasp this opportunity and introduce structural reforms which make the most of this positive shock," it said.

Gross domestic product expanded an annual 10.3 percent in the second quarter of the year, the government's statistics agency TurkStat said Tuesday. The pace of growth matched China's in the period and means that "the disinflationary buffer that opened up during the crisis is narrowing rapidly," Ahmet Akarli, an economist for Goldman Sachs in London, wrote in an e-mailed report late Tuesday.

The central bank has outlined its plans to withdraw the additional liquidity it provided the market during the financial crisis. That process of "normalization" should be accelerated and the bank should raise the benchmark interest rate before the end of this year, the OECD said.

The bank has held rates unchanged at 7 percent for nine months citing risks to global growth and signaled it won't increase them in the near future. Most economists do not expect rate rises before next year.

The government's decision to postpone indefinitely legislation to limit the budget deficit is "unfortunate," the OECD said. The measure would be "highly welcome" and the government should also take steps to improve the transparency of its budget reporting, which is one of the few among the OECD's 33 members that doesn't match international standards, it said.

#### Structural weakness

Turkey's growth may be hindered by a structural weakness that causes the current-account deficit to widen whenever the economy expands, the report said. The government should take steps to improve labor market flexibility and improve education and the skill of its workforce in order to boost domestic savings and productivity, the organization said.

The country's credit ratings, which are below investment grade, don't reflect the fundamental strengths of the economy, it also said.

#### Barclays revises forecast

Barclays Capital increased its growth forecast for the Turkish economy this year to 7.5 percent citing second-quarter data.

Barclays raised its forecast from a previous 6.3 percent, Christian Keller, chief economist for European emerging markets in London, said in an e-mailed report late Tuesday.

"Turkey looks less like Europe and more like Asia - and this is a good thing these days," he said. "Although high frequency indicators signal the economy will slow in the second half, we find annual growth of about 7.5 percent a realistic forecast."

Barclays expects the pace of the economic expansion to halve to below 4 percent next year "in a more moderate global growth environment," Keller said.

---

### **Turkish banks sign loan deal with European Investment Bank**

Thursday, September 16, 2010

ISTANBUL – Anatolia News Agency

HURRIYT

Turkey's Akbank and Halkbank signed a 150 million-euro loan agreement with the European Investment Bank, Matthias Kollatz-Ahnen, EIB's deputy president, said Thursday.

Speaking at a press conference on the deal in Istanbul, Kollatz-Ahnen said the loan – facilitated in cooperation between EIB and the European Union – would be used to support small- and medium-size enterprises in Turkey.

Kollatz-Ahnen said the EIB projected a total of up to 2.5 billion euros for Turkey this year, and around 2 billion euros for 2011.

"Akbank and Halkbank will each receive 75 million euros, of which 20 percent and 80 percent is obtained from European Commission and EIB funds, respectively," Kollatz-Ahnen said.

The EIB official said the loan would offer reduced borrowing costs for small- and medium-size enterprises to help boost their ability to recover from the economic crisis.

---

### **Lira is held back by refusal to adopt 'fiscal rule,' RBS Says**

Thursday, September 16, 2010

LONDON – Bloomberg

HURRIYT

The Turkish lira is held back by the government's refusal to adopt a "fiscal rule" that would limit the budget deficit, according to Royal Bank of Scotland Group Plc.

The lira has changed little since gross domestic product figures released three days ago showed the economy grew an annual 10.3 percent in the second quarter, matching China's growth as the fastest expansion in the period among the Group of 20 major economies.

The government of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan has as yet refused to implement a fiscal rule limiting the budget deficit until after a general election next year, against the advice of the International Monetary Fund and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. This is one reason for the lira's weak performance, according to Timothy Ash, head of emerging-markets research at RBS.

"While there is recognition that the Treasury's cash position is strong, the government's failure to legislate for a new fiscal rule - as promised - is acting to create broader unease," Ash wrote in an e-mailed note late Wednesday.

An unwillingness among the ratings companies to upgrade Turkey also meant the lira is anchored around the 1.50 level against the dollar, said Ash, who forecasts the lira at 1.53 against the dollar at year end.

---

### **New rich thrive in era of Turkey's AKP rule**

Wednesday, September 15, 2010

BENJAMIN HARVEY / MARK BENTLEY

ISTANBUL - Bloomberg

HURRIYT

As Nahit Kiler shows off an apartment on the 40th floor of his 54-story Istanbul Sapphire, he can look down on offices belonging to some of his business rivals.

His Kiler Holding, which built this \$250 million blue glass tower, the tallest in Europe outside of Moscow, was primarily a grocery operator as recently as a decade ago. Since Recep Tayyip Erdoğan became Turkey's prime minister in 2003, beginning a period in which gross domestic product per capita has climbed by 150 percent, the company has expanded into construction, energy and tourism and tripled its revenue.

"Today we are among the biggest companies in the construction sector," Kiler says.

Two nearby buildings owned by the billionaire Sabancı family, central to the country's economy for three generations, are now dwarfed by Kiler's sparkling apartment and shopping complex, Bloomberg Markets magazine reported in its October issue.

Kiler Holding is one of a crop of companies, thriving under Erdoğan that threaten to overshadow the business dynasties that have dominated Turkey for decades. "We've seen a lot of them being very successful, even in sectors where they weren't involved at all," says Wolfango Piccoli, an analyst who tracks Turkish politics at Eurasia Group in London.

This new business elite has roots in Anatolia, the eastern portion of Turkey that's part of Asia rather than Europe, and conservative religious views shared with Erdoğan and his Justice and Development Party, or the AKP, Piccoli says.

It helps to be pious when doing business with Erdoğan's government, says Hakan Kalkan, who helps oversee \$1 billion in investments at Autonomy Capital Research in London. "Let's say you want some business from the government; you're going to have to act a little more religious now," he says. The success of these enterprises has begun to create wealth approaching that of older business dynasties.

Nahit Kiler is worth \$500 million to \$750 million, according to an October 2009 ranking by daily Hürriyet. Ahmet Çalık, head of a privately held group of construction, textile and telecommunications businesses, was reported to be worth \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion. Erdoğan and the AKP have been very successful in liberalizing the economy and shifting the center of power in the business community, Kalkan says. "The entrepreneurs who got these trends right, they increased their wealth," he says. "The status quo guys who were looking for government help lost."

Çalık Holding, managed by Chief Executive Officer Berat Albayrak, Erdoğan's son-in-law, has built power plants in Turkmenistan, bought a bank and cell phone company in Albania and invested in an oil pipeline project backed by the Turkish government. The company had \$1.7 billion in sales in 2008, more than double its 2003 revenue.

Mining group Koza Anadolu Metal Madencilik İşletmeleri has doubled sales in the past four years. Its shares are up more than eightfold since they began trading in February 2003. The company sold shares in its gold mining unit, Koza Alton İşletmeleri AS, in February in an offering that raised \$443 million.

Some of Turkey's old-guard business groups have also done well under Erdoğan.

Revenue at the Sabancı family's Hacı Omer Sabancı Holding rose 86 percent in four years to \$12.6 billion in 2009. Koç Holding A.S.'s revenue doubled from 2004 to 2006, though it dropped 25 percent after that to \$26.3 billion last year.

Aydın Doğan, whose media company controls half the country's newspaper market, including Hürriyet and the Hürriyet Daily News & Economic Review, has had the sharpest conflicts with the Erdoğan government. He failed in 2006 to get a government permit for construction of an oil refinery in Ceyhan. Çalık Holding got permission instead.

### Referendum success

The success of the constitutional referendum undermines the power of the generals and judges who have opposed Erdoğan. The vote is a prelude to a complete overhaul of Turkey's Constitution, written under military rule in 1982, Erdoğan said after the referendum.

Eurasia Group's Piccoli says the vote signals that Erdoğan has a good chance of winning a third term in general elections that must be held by July.

While gross domestic product shrank in the first three quarters of 2009 because of the global financial crunch, Turkey has recovered strongly. In the first quarter of 2010, the economy grew at an 11.7 percent annual pace, though the International Monetary Fund predicts that growth will slow later this year.

The average annual pace of growth in Turkey from 2004 to 2008 was 6.1 percent, more than triple the rate in the previous five years. Turkey's exports were \$102 billion last year, up from \$36 billion in 2002, even as the economies of Turkey's trading partners contracted.

The moves Kiler Holding has made into construction and energy make sense because of Erdoğan's economic successes, Kiler says. "We have started these investments with confidence in the government's decisions," he says. "A single-party government without opposition speeds things up."

### Çalık Holding

Erdoğan's critics in the opposition Republican People's Party, or the CHP, say some companies have benefited from something more than good stewardship of the economy. Çalık Holding is the subject of their most-strenuous complaints. Ahmet Çalık stood beside the prime minister at the wedding in 2004 of Erdoğan's daughter Esra to Albayrak, the son of a columnist for Yeni Safak, a newspaper that supports the AKP. When Albayrak was in New York working on his business degree at Pace University, he had already begun working for Çalık. By 2007, at age 30, Albayrak was CEO of the holding company.

In 2007, Çalık Holding beat out Luxembourg-based RTL Group S.A. in the bidding for Turkey's second-biggest media company, Merkez Yayın, owner of the Sabah newspaper and ATV television news channel. To help the company fund the \$1.25 billion deal, two government-controlled banks came in with \$375 million each in loans.

### Censure attempt

The CHP, then led by Deniz Baykal, asked the Parliament to lift Erdoğan's immunity so he could stand trial over the Çalık transaction. Baykal said the deal was part of a scheme by Erdoğan to expand his influence over media outlets. The prime minister denied the allegations, and his party defeated a censure motion brought by opposition lawmakers by a vote of 318 to 134. Ahmet Çalık didn't respond to requests for comment.

"There's never been as much corruption and cronyism in Turkey as during the time of this government," says Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, the current leader of the CHP. The sale of Sabah and ATV to Çalık and the bank loans show that Erdoğan will cross the line in his effort to control the media, the business world, charities and unions in Turkey, Kılıçdaroğlu says.

"The fact that Tayyip Erdoğan's close relatives are working with Çalık does not mean they are being favored," says Murat Mercan, an AKP member of parliament who is part

of Erdoğan's inner circle. "These people have excellent educations, good skills," says Mercan, who is head of the Parliament's foreign relations committee.

Reading it right

The acquisition of Sabah and ATV has so far been a drain on Çalık Holding's finances, according to Fitch Ratings, which as of August had the company's debt at B-, six steps below investment grade.

Rizanur Meral, who runs Tuskon, one of the Islamic business groups that works with the government promoting Turkish industry, says complaints about favoritism are misplaced. Newly successful Turkish companies, including members of Tuskon, have been far-sighted and smart. "They are reading the world of politics and economics much better than anyone else," he says.

For foreign investors, who may have worked with Turkey's older business dynasties in the past, Meral has a message: "There is a new generation. The way of doing business in Turkey has changed. We suggest they look for new partners in Turkey."

---

## **SOCIAL NEWS**

### **Turkey's Historic Success at 2010 World Basketball Championship**

Monday, 13 September 2010

USK PUBLICATION

Monday, 13 September 2010

Turkey's national basketball team achieved a historic success at 2010 World Basketball Championship by getting ranked the second behind the United States.

It was the third time that Turkey took part in world basketball championship. The national team played in the final for the first time in their history and won silver medal. Turkey ranked 9th in their first appearance at World Basketball Championship in the USA in 2002 and they finished 6th in the 2006 World Basketball Championship in Japan.

Turkey's national basketball team who are called "12 Giant Men" also won silver medal after being beaten by Yugoslavia 78-69 at the 32nd European Basketball Championship in Turkey in 2001.

The team became the silver medalists after a 81-64 defeat over the U.S. team in the final of the 2010 World Basketball Championship losing their first match ever out of eight games in the championship.

---

### **Fog halts sea traffic on Istanbul's Bosphorus**

Thursday, September 16, 2010

ISTANBUL – Daily News with wires

HURRIYT

Heavy fog over Istanbul's Bosphorus shut down cross-city sea traffic early Thursday morning, Anatolia news agency reported.

Istanbul Vessel Traffic Services Directorate said vessel traffic was halted at 5:20 a.m. but was restarted after the weather pattern dissipated.

Ferry services between Sirkeci, on the European side, and Harem, on the Asian side, were also halted because of the fog.

Slight increase in temperatures

Temperatures are expected to increase slightly toward the weekend in the Marmara region, private news site CNNTürk reported, adding that it would roughly 27-28 degrees Celsius. In the Aegean region, present winds are expected to weaken, meaning temperatures will be around 20 degrees in İzmir.

Rain is expected to fall in the western Black Sea region Friday before the pattern moves eastward to dump moisture on the middle and eastern Black Sea region Saturday.

The mercury, meanwhile, will be highest in southeastern Anatolia, where temperatures are expected to hover at 35 degrees over the weekend.

---

### **Researchers unearth 8,500-year-old bodies near Bursa**

Thursday, September 16, 2010

BURSA — Anatolia News Agency

HURRIYT

Ancient bodies believed to be 8,500 years old have been unearthed at a burial mound in the Akçalar area of the Marmara province of Bursa.

The five bodies, reportedly belonging to two adults and three children aged between 3 and 5, were found at the Aktopraklık mound.

“Their arms were tied behind their backs, indicating that they may have been killed or sacrificed,” said Associate Professor Necmi Karul, head of the prehistory department at Istanbul University’s literature faculty and leader of the excavation.

One of the children were hogtied while the other children were found between the legs of the adults, he said.

Although noting that the find would provide an important repository of data for prehistory, Karul said it was too early yet to determine whether the bodies belonged to a single family, whether they had been punished, their exact age or any other particular details.

Karul said they had been working at the excavation every summer for the past seven years.

“We have reached very important traces of Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods. The information will not only enlighten Bursa history but serve for all humanity,” said Karul, adding that in previous years, they had located important living areas surrounded by moats.

Now, however, archaeological teams had unearthed special constructions belonging to the administrators of the region, the researcher said.

Karul said the oldest settlement in the region was 8,500 years old, adding that some settlements had existed in the area even before the community centered on Aktopraklık emerged.

There was plenty of migration after Aktopraklık, Karul said, but added that forms of human settlement continued to exist in the area for thousands of years afterwards.

---

### **COMMENTARY**

#### **Iranian refugees in Turkey: not welcome**

Wednesday, September 15, 2010

ELDAR MAMEDOV

HURRIYT

Turkey is going to remove Iran from its official 'list of foreign enemies'. This is a logical result of the Turkish efforts to improve bilateral ties in the recent years, including the vote against new United Nations Security Council sanctions on Iran over its controversial nuclear program.

Turkey's desire to have "zero problems with neighbours," as its foreign policy doctrine proclaims, is to be respected. Not so Ankara's steadfast refusal to even mildly rebuke Tehran over its dismal human rights and democracy record. Turkey, under the leadership of the Islamist-rooted Justice and Development Party, or AKP, was one of the first (and few) countries to recognize the validity of the fraudulent presidential elections in Iran in 2009. Prime-Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan embraced Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as a "friend" after the latter presided over a massive crackdown on the Iranian opposition, and the foreign minister Ahmet Davutoğlu absurdly characterized the post-election events in Iran as a "healthy political struggle."

Turkey's indifference to human rights violations in Iran stands in sharp contrast to its visceral criticism of Israel's treatment of Palestinians. While opposing Gaza's blockade is entirely legitimate, the silence on the repression in Iran makes the AKP vulnerable to the charges of double standards and highly selective interest in international justice.

A good way to start changing this would be to address the situation of Iranian refugees in Turkey. Iranians can enter Turkey without visas, and according to the Turkey office of the UNHCR, U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, there are currently about 6,000 Iranian refugees in Turkey. Most of them are political and human rights activists, journalists, students, members of persecuted faiths, like Baha'is, or simply ordinary Iranians fleeing the repression in their country. Turkish laws, bizarrely, deny asylum to refugees from non-European countries, which means that Iranians have to apply to the local office of the UNHCR in the hope that a Western country will grant them asylum. Their requests can be processed during a period of up to three years, and in the meantime Turkish authorities send asylum-seekers to provincial towns in Turkey for temporary settlement. There they are legally barred from getting a job, but they still have to pay local residence fees of up to \$200 every six months, and are responsible for their food and living expenses. Worse still, according to the Association for Solidarity with Asylum-Seekers and Refugees, a Turkish nongovernmental organization, there have been cases when the refugees were threatened or even attacked by suspected agents of the Islamic republic.

To Ankara's credit, Turkey does not repatriate Iranians back home, despite pressure from the Islamic republic to do so. In fact, it has allowed several high profile dissidents, including the lawyer of Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani, an Iranian woman condemned to death by stoning, to transit in Turkey on their way to Western countries. Some refugees shared with the international press, from the relative safety of their Turkish shelter, valuable details of torture they were subjected to in notorious Iranian prisons.

But some deportations were halted only after the intervention of the European Court of Human Rights, or ECHR. The decisions of the ECHR are binding for Turkey as a member of the Council of Europe. The court has warned Ankara not to return Iranian refugees to their home country because of the harassment or even death penalty they could face there.

In January 2010, the court awarded 20,000 euros in damages to an Iranian woman who had converted to Christianity, after Turkey planned her deportation to Iran without

considering her application to the UNHCR for refugee status. Conversion to another faith constitutes the crime of apostasy under the Iranian Islamic law and is punishable by death. In April 2010 the ECHR warned Turkey against expulsion of 10 Iranian refugees. Particularly frightening is the situation of gay asylum seekers from Iran. Homosexuality is punished by death in Iran, but is legal in Turkey. Still, social attitudes change much more slowly than laws. The Turkish government has re-located a number of Iranian gays to the conservative Anatolian town of Kayseri, no doubt, a bizarre choice. According to the accounts of some of the refugees, they are perceived by local population as degenerates who destroy moral values and promote prostitution. They escaped death in Iran only to face 'concerned citizens' and occasionally law enforcement agents striving to make their lives miserable.

It is not enough for Turkey to simply tolerate the presence of the refugees in its territory. Under the European Convention on Human Rights and the Geneva Convention, Turkey has a legal obligation to safeguard their basic rights and dignity. Furthermore, as a democratic state, it also has a political obligation to support victims of the repression by the Islamic republic. This means first of all three things: 1) ending the legal limbo, in which the refugees currently find themselves in Turkey and which prevents them from working and sustaining their livelihoods; 2) placing curbs on the activities of the Iranian agents who intimidate and sometimes attack the refugees; 3) not putting obstacles on the way of the politically active refugees who wish to peacefully act against the Islamic republic. Turkey's civil society, media and the opposition should demand that the government act swiftly and decisively in this regard, its friendship with the Islamic republic notwithstanding.

Eldar Mamedov is an international-relations analyst based in Brussels.

---

### **Self-rule for eastern (and western) Turkey?**

Tuesday, September 14, 2010

BURAK BEKDİL

HURRIYT

No doubt, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's sixth consecutive election victory in eight years (two general and two municipal elections plus two referenda) make him Turkey's unchallenged political leader. His Justice and Development Party, or AKP, is a near perfect political machine too hard for its rivals to compete with. With solid evidence pointing to an invincible armada, its supporters have every right to be jubilant after Sunday's vote.

And they are jubilant indeed, putting the pretty slogan "liberal democracy" at the heart of their euphoria: "A new beginning;" "Getting rid of Kemalist tutelage;" "A post-Kemalist republic is in the making;" "Giant step toward consolidation of a liberal democracy;" "It's the nation's turn to speak;" "Sun rises over a new Turkey;" "We set sail for new horizons;" "The end of a 100-year period of exception." The last line heralds the demise of Turkey's "Kemalist DNA," according to its source.

In the not-so-short-term, however, the results may also herald other endings – and beginnings. Behind the triumphant façade of referendum results there may be not-so-triumphant realities awaiting the AKP.

The 58 vs. 42 percent win was more comfortable for the ruling elite than many people predicted (including this columnist, whose pre-poll guess was 54 vs. 46). All the same,

the 42 percent anti-AKP block (which, in case of elections, would be higher) is still too large for the AKP to simply ignore. It does not necessarily herald the Turkey of the AKP's choice. But the post-Kemalist republic may be in the making, as one of the pro-AKP newspapers heralded.

Statistically speaking, 43.3 percent of the registered voters voted in favor of the constitutional amendments package (57.8 percent of 73.1 percent who turned up at the ballot box, according to the website of the Supreme Election Board at 4 a.m. Tuesday). This is in no way to underestimate the AKP's victory. It is to suggest a different political analysis than the easier but misleading "50 percent-plus Turks would have voted for the AKP if Sunday were a parliamentary election" conclusion. A safer conclusion to forecast the net AKP vote could be any figure in the 40-45 percent band.

Naturally, none of that overshadows the grandiose AKP victory. The future trouble for Mr. Erdoğan et al is not hidden in percentages. The referendum result, combined with the outcomes of the 2007 general and 2009 municipal elections, tell us that Turkey is ideologically divided into three zones that are more or less also geographically separated from each other: the southeast and most of the east representing the pro-Kurdish boycotters, central Anatolia and Black Sea, home to the "yes" camp and the Aegean and Mediterranean coastline featuring a firm "no."

There are a few exceptions to the trilateral divide, with Istanbul and Ankara featuring a more balanced (54 vs. 46) ideological posture. The Kurdish-controlled areas boasted a mere 37 percent turnout rate, or a 36 percentage point deviation from the nationwide average. The 90-plus-percent "yes" votes in main Kurdish provinces can be misleading read-out because "yes" cannot be the winner if hundreds of thousands boycotted the vote while 55 out of 65 voters in a particular ballot box did vote "yes."

The voting "map" looks more like a real map with borders. It represents deepening divisions along ideological lines and fading chances of peaceful cohabitation. In simplistic terms, Turkey houses three socio-political types of non-reconciliatory citizens: autonomy-minded Kurds in the east, an alliance of conservative Muslims and liberals in the Anatolian heartland and secular Turks on the western and southern coastline. What's more complicated is the fact that each zone hosts, in non-negligible quantities, minority groups from the other two typologies/zones.

The referendum came at a time when the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK's, leader, Murat Karayılan, said that his guerrillas may surrender arms to the United Nations if Ankara granted Kurds a Catalan-style autonomy. The pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party, or BDP, immediately echoed the same demand. And the AKP's liberal supporters have already begun campaigning for an altogether new and liberal constitution.

Autonomy, Catalan or Basque-style, can be a good idea, as many pro-AKP liberals have advocated. But autonomy is not necessarily merely an ethnic privilege. In western democracies there are plenty of examples, in either federal, regional self-rule or a cantonal basis, featuring various degrees of autonomy based on ethnic and/or regional differences.

It's time the invincible AKP and its liberal supporters should roll up sleeves for a truly democratic charter granting autonomy to the Kurds and others, including, perhaps, "coastal" Turks. Autonomy cannot be a right to be granted only to those who take up arms and kill, can it?

---

## **What's next? (1)**

Tuesday, September 14, 2010

YUSUF KANLI

HURRIYT

The popular vote on the constitutional amendment package produced a strong 58 percent national endorsement. The package that was legislated by the ruling Justice and Development Party, or AKP, parliamentary majority with a unilateralist and majoritarian understanding shunning compromise and consensus politics – Turkey rarely have them anyhow – has now acquired legitimacy and entered into force with a quite clear national endorsement. The national endorsement of the package, and some remarks of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan before and after the national vote regarding the probability of Turkey moving on to a presidential system of governance and writing a new constitution, however, has brought to the agenda some very serious questions and consequently a flood of scenarios.

Can Turkey sentence Evren?

The first and foremost issue is of course whether or not the 1980 coup leaders, the coup government and the interim Consultative Assembly members that were appointed and served under the dictate of the coup leaders can be brought in front of a court for the crimes – headed by the coup itself – committed during the 1980-83 coup period. Was Provisional Article 15, abolished with Sunday's vote, an amnesty regulation, an arrangement of judicial immunity? Since more than 30 years have passed since the coup, did not the statute of limitations expire or does the statute of limitations period start just now with Sunday's lifting of the constitutional shield preventing trial of the coup leaders and the collaborators? A flood of petitions demanding the trial of the coup leaders started to pour in to courts all over the country. What will be the verdict of courts on such petitions?

Irrespective how they voted in Sunday's referendum, obviously most of the Turks want coup leaders be brought to justice not only because of the coup they staged but for many crimes, including murders, mass detentions and widespread torture during that period. Yet, though it appears not probable at all under norms of law, can Turkey indeed be able to bring the 90-year-old coup leader Kenan Evren and others in front of the court?

Early elections?

Perhaps as a tactic to distract public attention from the failure of the Nationalist Movement Party, or MHP, in convincing its supporters to vote "No" in the referendum and thus signaling a serious erosion in public support for the nationalist party, the MHP's leader demanded an early election. This appears not possible now. Yet, the ruling party has started signaling the probability of going to polls in May or June next year instead of the scheduled end-of-July election date. Can there be a snap poll? It appears unlikely.

Presidential system

Prime Minister Erdoğan repeatedly declared over the past months that the 2011 parliamentary elections will be his last parliamentary elections. The prime minister is known to aspire to become the first publicly elected president of the country. Yet, it is still uncertain whether the term in office of the president in office is five or seven years; whether Turkey will go to a presidential vote in 2012 or in 2014. The first discussion of the period ahead will therefore be regarding the term of President Abdullah Gül.

Just before Sunday's referendum Erdoğan let the cat out of the bag by saying Turkey perhaps will go to a referendum on whether to introduce a presidential system of governance. Coupled with his desire to become the first popularly elected president and the instruction he delivered publicly during the post-referendum victory speech to the AKP's constitutional tsar Burhan Kuzu that he should start working on writing a new constitution, can it be said that Erdoğan has firmly decided to run for president? Sunday's referendum result might be considered as a successful rehearsal for the future popular presidential vote. Erdoğan must have been encouraged with the result even though he was aware that the entire 58 percent who said yes were not probable voters of his party. Will the next presidential elections indeed turn into a change in the governance system of the country from the current parliamentary democracy into a presidential system? Will a country having immense difficulties in running a parliamentary democracy manage to move on to a presidential system without falling into the abyss of an autocratic one-man rule? Particularly after the government has with Sunday's vote added important powers to influence the high judiciary, and in the absence of a checks and balances system, will it be possible for Turkey to sustain democratic rule after moving on to a presidential system?

---

### **AKP strengthened, but much excitement ahead**

Monday, September 13, 2010

SEMİH İDİZ

HURRIYT

The results of Sunday's referendum on the government's package of constitutional amendments provided a higher yes vote than expected. This has undoubtedly strengthened Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's hand prior to next year's general elections.

The opposition had turned this referendum into a vote of confidence on Erdoğan and his Justice and Development Party, or AKP. That being the case it can be said that the electorate has endorsed the policies of Prime Minister Erdoğan.

The result of Sunday's referendum also minimizes the threat of populist spending by the government for the sake of general elections. Having gotten a strong endorsement Prime Minister Erdoğan knows he does not have to pander to the public now, and can therefore continue with the economic policies which have been maintaining relative stability for the Turkish economy.

The European Union is also pleased of course, and has officially said so, because it had already endorsed the package of constitutional changes. It appears that for all the problems in Turkish-U.S. ties, the outcome of the referendum was also welcomed in Washington. U.S. President Barack Obama was reported by the Turkish press as being one of the first to call Prime Minister Erdoğan to congratulate him on Sunday.

Erdoğan's victory also appears to have pleased many in the Middle East, except in Israel where he has more or less become an object of hate. The belief in the region is clearly that a politically strengthened Erdoğan will be in a better position to support the rights of the Palestinians in Gaza, something which many Israelis will not be too pleased about.

The main opposition Republican Peoples Party, or CHP, and its new leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu are clearly not among the winners of this referendum. But it is hard to argue

that they are the total losers. There was, after all, a 42-percent “no” vote and much of this came about as a result of Kılıçdaroğlu’s efforts.

Put another way, perhaps the CHP cannot look forward to the next general elections with the confidence it would have liked, but it cannot be said that it is now despondent because of the referendum results. Mr. Kılıçdaroğlu can still make an impression on the social democratic wing of the political spectrum in the months leading up to general elections.

The great loser from Sunday’s vote is, of course, the ultra-nationalist Nationalist Movement Party, or MHP, leader Devlet Bahçeli. Mr. Bahçeli had directed vitriolic barbs at Prime Minister Erdoğan, accusing him openly of betraying the country over his approach to the Kurdish question, and maintaining that a “yes” vote for the package of constitutional changes would amount to endorsing the physical division of Turkey. Neither this nor the claim that the AKP is clipping the wings of the Turkish military appears to have had much effect on the electorate, though. It can be said, therefore, that Sunday’s referendum was a bad day for ultra-nationalists, and ultra-nationalism in Turkey. The proof of this is the fact that a the voters in almost all the constituencies where the local government is in the hands of the MHP cast a “yes” vote despite Bahçeli’s often spine-chilling warnings.

As for the other main winner in Sunday’s referendum, this is, of course, the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party, or BDP, which is more or less the political wing of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers’ Party, or PKK. Both the BDP and the PKK had called for a boycott of the referendum on the grounds that the government refused to meet their conditions.

There were suggestions that this call for a boycott could backfire on the BDP and the PKK if people thronged to the ballot box, but this proved not to be the case. Even allowing for intimidation by the PKK of those planning to vote, it must be admitted that the remarkably low turnout in the Southeast shows that most voters opted to go along with the BDP, which now sees itself political stronger as a result of this. This is crucial of course, given that the main problem facing the Erdoğan government is still the Kurdish issue.

Another thing that is for certain, however, is that this referendum will not have put an end to the bitter political fighting in Turkey. Trouble can be expected during the implementation of the constitutional changes that will now come into force. The question of who should have what say over the judiciary is still an open wound.

On the other hand, talk has already started that Prime Minister Erdoğan is planning for even more constitutional changes, including one that will empower the president in such a way as to turn the political system in Turkey into a presidential one.

The claim is that Mr. Erdoğan is eyeing that job as the next step in his seemingly unstoppable political career. The bottom line in all this is, keep tuned to Turkey. Much excitement still lies ahead.

The view from Baku

I received a letter from the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Ankara signed by Mr. Itibar Mammadov.

In his letter Mr. Mammadov takes issue with my contention, in my opinion piece “More Bad News for Baku (Daily News, Aug. 31), that “if Baku had not spoiled the implementation of the Turkish-Armenian protocols, it would have more options today

vis-à-vis Nagorno-Karabakh. For one thing Turkey would also be playing an active role in the settlement of this seemingly intractable problem.”

I believe Mr. Mammadov has a right to be heard so here is my translation of his letter, which was written originally in Turkish:

Mr. İdiz,

Firstly I would like to share some memories. It was 2003 and NATO foreign ministers were meeting in Madrid. When then-Foreign Minister Mr. Abdullah Gül met with his Armenian counterpart, he conveyed four conditions for Turkish-Armenian relations to be normalized.

The first two conditions were about Armenian genocide claims, the question of compensation, and Armenian claims for land. Only the remaining two conditions were about the solution to the Upper Karabakh problem, and the question of Azeri refugees. In other words Turkey also has serious problems with Armenia and these problems continue today. Turkey is not alone here and will not be left alone. The people and state of Azerbaijan will stand by Turkey to the very end and without any reservations.

On the other hand I would like to point out to a matter in your article. A certain type of thinking that we see in you and the other respectable members of the Turkish media is of great concern to us. The contention is that “the normalization of relations with Armenia, in spite of Azerbaijan, would have ended with a settlement to the conflict over Upper Karabakh,” or that “the pressure applied by Ankara would have been more effective then.”

This is a totally wrong way to think. If Armenia does not stop its offensive policies at a time when its border with Turkey is closed, is it going to accept Turkish pressure if the border is opened? Forgive me but this is “political myopia.”

Respectfully,

İtibar Mammadov

---

### **Torn Turkey, European Turkey**

Tuesday, September 14, 2010

SONER ÇAĞAPTAY

HURRIYAT

Sam Huntington was right to consider Turkey his chief example of a “torn country.” The results of the Sept. 12 vote on the constitutional amendments proposed by the ruling Islamist-rooted Justice and Development Party, or AKP, show that officially secular Turkey is torn not just between the East and the West, but that it is also divided internally.

The amendments, which among other things allow the AKP to appoint a majority of the judges to the high courts, enable the governing party to consolidate its power. Though the amendments passed by 58 percent, 42 percent of Turks, over thirty-two million people, said no to the AKP. The split is indeed serious, as well as regionalized: The AKP was rejected in all Turkish provinces along the densely populated and prosperous Aegean and Mediterranean coastlines, as well as in Thrace, and in middle-class districts of large cities. Conversely, voters from lower middle-class urban areas as well as those in the Central and Eastern Anatolian provinces supported the party at rates reaching 75 percent. Moreover, nationalist Kurds boycotted the AKP in droves, heeding the call of the Kurdish nationalist Peace and Democracy Party, or BDP, to skip the referendum in

protest of the AKP's Kurdish policy or lack thereof: in southeastern Hakkari province along the Iranian and Iraqi borders, for example, only 7 percent of the people went to the polls. Although many Kurds in Eastern Turkey and along the Euphrates Valley, as well as those in the large cities – more than half of Turkey's Kurds now live in metropolitan Western Turkey – did not follow the BDP's call, in extreme southeastern Turkey, a bastion of hard Kurdish nationalism, the boycott worked. In a number of provinces in this region, a majority of the voters abstained from voting.

Herein lies the challenge for perhaps the world's most important ongoing political experiment: can the AKP, which came to power in 2002 by promoting its vision of a democratic European Turkey, unite the country despite the divisions between secularists and Islamists and between Kurdish nationalists and supporters of a unified Turkey? Can the AKP win the trust of almost thirty-five million opponents?

The AKP has long suggested that the secular military and the courts were undemocratically blocking its power and reforms on the way to Europe. The party has now jettisoned both of these institutions. Following allegations of a coup plot involving military officers the Turkish military has withdrawn to its barracks. Now, the courts will be reshaped in the image of the conservative-cum-Islamist AKP.

The party also wields influence over the powerful secular media and business world. After eight years of hard work, the AKP's stars are finally aligned: the party is in near control of all three branches of government and is able to coerce the Fourth Estate. For the first time since 2002, the AKP is not only governing, but is also holding the reins of power, effectively unchecked. Although the AKP has received a plurality of the vote in previous polls, Sept. 12 was a vote of confidence for the party as it garnered majority support for the first time. The real test of where the AKP wants to take Turkey begins now.

In this regard, the first test of the AKP's commitment to a European Turkey and its ability to keep a torn Turkey whole is already in the offing. In the aftermath of the Sept. 12 vote, the AKP has already promised to draft a new constitution for Turkey. Will this new constitution form the groundwork of a liberal society? Here, the outside world should pay as much attention to what happens on the ground as it does to the party's promises.

For instance, one of the articles that the AKP presented as a constitutional amendment on Sept. 12 pertains to the privacy of communication. This new article stipulates that personal information shall be protected. The Turkish constitution now guarantees the privacy of all communication – great news! According to news reports, however, the number of wiretapped phone calls in Turkey increased approximately 50 percent annually between 2007 and 2009 (from 63,576 in 2007 to 90,163 in 2008 to 142,135 in 2009). While passing such a progressive amendment is commendable, reality under the AKP is seemingly different.

Clearly, the world ought to consider not just whether the AKP is drafting a liberal democratic constitution, but whether it is also practicing liberal democracy.

Now that it is in full control of all political levers, the AKP may choose to dismiss its opponents and forgo liberal democracy further. However, the party may be better served accommodating these opponents and embracing democracy, considering a secular Turkey is much too large for the AKP to digest. Opinion polls that measure attitudes toward the

AKP, its conservative values and the Sept. 12 vote suggest that 30-35 million Turks would never support the AKP or resolve to live in a country shaped solely by its values. Therefore, once the AKP finishes basking in its victory, it must envision a new Turkey that is for everyone, Muslim and non-Muslim, Kurdish nationalist and unified Turkey-supporter, religious and non-religious, Islamist and secularist alike. This is indeed a very tall order. Yet, the AKP must find a new and lasting political balance for a torn Turkey. The solution is a European Turkey.

---

## **What's next? (2)**

Font Size: [Larger](#)|[Smaller](#)

Wednesday, September 15, 2010

YUSUF KANLI

HURRIYT

It has become apparent from the victory statement of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan political debate during the next ten or so months before the 2011 parliamentary elections as well as the election campaign itself will most probably be centered on a new constitution.

Will the ruling Justice and Development Party, or AKP, insist on writing an “AKP constitution” and shun compromise and consensus politics once again? Or will Erdoğan, for a change, abide with his well-worded victory speech decorated with an unprecedented apology “for any wrong done” during the referendum campaign and really try to draft a new national charter through a widest possible consensus? A similar post-2007 election victory statement of Erdoğan applauded by everyone and his course of behavior since then do not leave much room for optimism. Yet, in awareness that the 58 percent “Yes” was not solely AKP vote and the traditional arrogance of Erdoğan might be an impediment, an Erdoğan who might aspire to run for presidential election can indeed tone down his much-accustomed “tension politics” in the period ahead... Will that be the case?

In any case, discussing a new constitution would require some creative and perhaps magical way out from the fundamental three main dividers of Turkish society. Though it was not an issue in either 2007 elections or in the past referendum campaign, how Turkey will write a new constitution without resolving the perennial religion-secularism standoff? Besides, the state and the ruling AKP has so far failed in embracing all religious beliefs. Turkey is of course not composed solely of Islam’s Sunni Hanefi school, there are other sects and religions. Will Turkey finally manage to embrace all religions and soothe worries of secular Turks that the country will not eventually turn into a religious autocracy under AKP and Erdoğan? Even though the religion-secularism quagmire did not figure out in the referendum campaign, the Aegean and Mediterranean shores voting predominantly “No” while the rest of the country voted “Yes” underscores the deep divide in the Turkish society.

The second and equally important quagmire is the ethnicity or identities issue. A section of the Turkish society aspire recognition of their “Kurdish” identity, while another section of the society has been suffering from a “Yugoslavia syndrome” and scared of the probability of disintegration of the country. Will Turkey indeed manage to develop a national compromise, develop an “equality of all citizens” or manage to make all people living in this country feel they are “first class citizens”? An overwhelming majority of

people are sensitive on “national and territorial integrity” of the country, while ethnic Kurdish politics has been demanding “democratic autonomy” and converting Turkey into some sort of a federation more and more loudly. Even though more than 25 percent of the country’s ethnic Kurdish population did not participate the boycott call of the separatist gang and its political wing the Peace and Democracy Party, or BDP, referendum results clearly demonstrated the need to somehow engage at least the BDP in efforts aimed at bringing an end to separatist terrorism. The poor referendum performance of the Nationalist Movement Party, or MHP, showed that ultra-nationalism might no longer be a valid currency in Turkish politics. Yet, will the AKP government find an acceptable way of engaging BDP – and indirectly engaging the separatist gang – and reviving its faltered Kurdish opening? Or, encouraged with the relative success of the boycott campaign will the BDP – and the separatist gang – continue and even accelerate the “democratic autonomy” rhetoric – and the gang intensifies violence – and castrate any prospect of success for the Kurdish opening?

Then we have the perennial “power sharing” problem. Unfortunately this country could not achieve to firmly establish separation of powers, a fundamental pillar of democratic governance. With an executive efficiently controlling the legislative and, particularly after Sunday’s changes, strongly influencing the judiciary and revelations that the AKP or at least Erdoğan himself, is aspiring to move on to a presidential system of governance, the power sharing problem of Turkey is apparently turning into an even more intractable quagmire. At the heart of this problem, of course, lies the religion-secularism standoff, or the perception of Islamist threat to secular republic and the revanchist designs of political Islam from the secular republic.

A new and effective checks and balances system is needed to be established in this country which besides clearly defining and limiting the powers of the executive, legislative and the judiciary must as well ensure the masses that there can be no existential threat to the secular republic or to their lifestyle. Of course in such a Turkey the place of the Turkish Armed Forces should as well be redefined. Will this be possible at all?

---

### **A Solution to the Palestinian Refugees Issue**

Alon Ben Meir

JTW Columnist

USK PUBLICATION

Friday, 17 September 2010

Of all the conflicting issues Israelis and Palestinians must resolve in the negotiations - including territorial claims, secure borders and the future of East Jerusalem - the Palestinian refugee problem in particular has the potential to stymie any pragmatic solution to the conflict. As Israelis and Palestinians renew direct talks, the European Union can and must begin to play a key role in helping the parties resolve this difficult and thorny issue.

The E.U. is uniquely suited to utilize its formidable economic resources and political clout to take the lead in initiating and facilitating such a resolution. In doing so, the E.U. would establish itself as an indispensable interlocutor in the effort to achieve a

sustainable Arab-Israeli peace agreement, while at the same time enhancing its strategic and economic interests in the Middle East. Although European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton should have been present at the launch of direct talks between Israelis and Palestinians in Washington last week, her absence should not be interpreted as an indication that the E.U. will not be critical to ensuring that the renewed peacemaking efforts succeed.

There is only one realistic solution to the refugee issue: compensation, resettlement and rehabilitation in a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. While majorities of Palestinians support a "right of return" to the State of Israel as a matter of principle, polls have shown that only a small number of refugees actually seek to return to Israel proper. Meanwhile, Israel has refuted the principle of "right of return" in every encounter with the Palestinians since 1988, consistently stating that sustaining its Jewish majority is a sine-qua-non to any agreement. Any solution must, therefore, be based on resettlement and rehabilitation in a future Palestinian state or in their current country of residences. Many Palestinian and Arab leaders have also previously conceded that apart from a symbolic number of refugees (20-30,000) returning to Israel proper as part of family reunification, the solution lies largely in the new state of Palestine. This formula would fulfill Palestinian aspirations to return to their homeland, albeit not their original homes. Such a solution would be consistent with the 1967 United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, which calls for "achieving a just settlement to the refugee problem" as well as with the Arab Peace Initiative, which calls for "a just solution to the Palestinian refugee problem to be agreed upon in accordance with U.N. General Assembly Resolution 194." It should be noted, however, that UNSCR 242 supersedes the non-binding 1948 United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194.

To change the political dynamics surrounding the renewed talks, the European Union should take the lead in beginning to create the means that would make such a resolution possible. European nations have championed the cause of Palestinian refugees for decades and traditionally have been a leading contributor to Palestinian projects, including collectively serving as the largest donor to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees. Considering its substantial support for the Palestinians - as well as the Palestinian inclination to turn to the E.U. as a balance to the close US-Israeli relationship - the E.U. is uniquely positioned to influence the Palestinian position regarding the status of the 4.5 million Palestinian refugees registered by the United Nations. Facilitating a resolution would require ample capital, perhaps in excess of 10 billion dollars-far more than the 264 million allotted for UNRWA. Guaranteed money for refugee resettlement would provide an incentive for Palestinians to think practically about how to utilize such compensation constructively, rather than continue to use the issue as a political tool.

Of course, the Europeans cannot solve the refugee issue alone. The United States, Russia, China, the Arab states and Israel must also significantly contribute to this effort. It would also require close cooperation with the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan where many of the refugee camps are located. The Arab states in particular should provide logistical and organizational support. In addition, the Arab states can play a

particularly important role in promoting a new narrative regarding the "right of return" to a newly established Palestinian state. President Obama's comment at the launch of direct talks that "A lot of times I hear from those who insist that this is a top priority and yet do very little to actually support efforts that could bring about a Palestinian state," was a call on the Arab states to match their rhetoric in support of peace with greater action-political and material to achieve it. The Arab states that have historically used the plight of the refugees to cover for their own shortcomings and misguided policies now have an opportunity to answer the President's call while benefiting the people who have been living in squalid conditions for decades, and helping to facilitate a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Such a measure would be welcomed by Israel in that it would mitigate calls for a return to Israel proper.

The resettlement of the refugees would require large-scale economic investment for the creation of jobs, contracts for housing and schools, and other measures to ensure that existing Palestinian communities can absorb an influx of new Palestinian citizens. To this effect, the E.U. should support the P.A.'s creation of a new ministry tasked with resettling refugees and aiding in their transition. Such an initiative is fundamentally different than any previous attempts to address the Palestinian refugee issue, as it is premised on beginning to facilitate a resolution to the issue even before negotiations are concluded.

The re-launch of direct negotiations offers the E.U. an opportunity to begin promoting this concept as their official position, emphasizing that this is not a controversial idea. All of the negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians in the past have been based on the premise of UNSC 242 and refugee resettlement in a future Palestinian state.

Some Arab leaders who have been involved in previous negotiations argue that while the solution rests with resettlement and compensation, it would be difficult to advocate publicly such a solution in advance of reaching a comprehensive agreement fearing that it would instigate public backlash. But providing the means to settle the refugee problem now will begin to change the current situation of the refugees and at the same time serve to modify the public perception about the practical meaning of the "right of return."

Moreover, such an approach would bolster Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Salaam Fayyad's plan to establish a de facto state in the West Bank and Gaza by next year and many refugees can start returning to their homeland and investing in their new communities. For the 60% of refugees currently living in camps in the West Bank and Gaza, this will mean working with the P.A. in an organizational capacity to pull their families out of refugee status and into proper housing. Clearly, resolving the Palestinian refugee problem will require a substantial amount of money. But above all, it will require political commitment to navigate through the thickets of a highly emotional issue in order to find a practical solution. There is no party better suited to lead this effort than the European Union, and no better time to start than now.

Friday, 17 September 2010

Statements of facts or opinions appearing in the pages of Journal of Turkish Weekly (JTW) are not necessarily by the editors of JTW nor do they necessarily reflect the opinions of JTW or ISRO. The opinions published here are held by the authors themselves and not necessarily those of JTW or ISRO.

Materials may not be copied, reproduced, republished, posted without mentioning the mark of JTW or ISRO in any way except for your own personal non-commercial home

use. For the news and other materials republished by the JTW you must apply the original publishers. JTW cannot give permission to republish this kind of materials."

---