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RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF EUROPEAN & AMERICAN STUDIES (RIEAS)

Athens, Greece

With escalating tensions in the Aegean, and mounting Turkish provocations aiming to create an “accident,” or a [Gleiwitz incident](#), in the Archipelago or along the Greek-Turkish land frontier, as a pretext for war, RIEAS inaugurates today the **TURKEY MONITOR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER**.

TURKEY MONITOR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

June 13, 2018

[Is Erdogan losing his grip on Turkey?](#)

In Turkey, politics means everything. But football is life. So it’s hard not to take seriously the internal elections of one the most important teams in the country, Fenerbahce. Ali Koc, a Harvard-educated businessman, thrashed Aziz Yildirim, the club’s chairman of 20 years and an ally of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in a landslide.

[Turkey’s Election Is Too Close to Call, Bloomberg Poll Shows](#)

Turkey’s election this month could go down to the wire, with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan facing a tougher battle to cement power or even an upset, according to a poll commissioned by

Bloomberg. Erdogan can win the presidential vote in the first round on June 24 with 50.8 percent support and get the backing of a majority in parliament, the survey by Foresight Danismanlik of 500 people on June 7-11 found. But a surprise victory for the opposition is also within the margin of error.

[U.S. senator introduces bill for sanctions against Turkey](#) **(RECOMMENDED)**

U.S Senator and Helsinki Commission Chairman Roger Wicker introduced a bipartisan resolution on June 12 urging President Donald Trump to take action against seven countries, including Turkey, for what it described as violations of religious freedom.

[Turkey's fragile economy worries voters before election](#)

Turkey's economy will be the biggest issue in elections that take place on 24 June, opinion polls say. The Turkish lira has fallen dramatically this year and inflation has risen. The situation became so bad that one struggling farmer took matters into his own hands.

[Turkey to Use Russia's S-400 Air Defense Systems If Necessary, Erdogan Says](#)

"We purchase them [S-400 systems] in order not to store them in warehouses. They will be used appropriately if it is necessary. And what should we do with these defensive systems if not to use them? To rely again on mercy of the United States?" Erdogan said in the air of TGRT broadcaster.

[2.5 million more people may flock to Turkey from Syria's Idlib: UN](#)

The U.N. humanitarian agency's top official for Syria has expressed concerns about recent airstrikes in rebel-held Idlib province, warning that "we may have not seen the worst of the crisis" in Syria even after seven years of war. "With this escalation, with this deterioration, we worry about seeing really two and a half million people becoming displaced more and more toward the border of Turkey if this is to continue," Panos Moutziz of U.N. OCHA said on June 11.

TURKEY MONITOR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

May 2, 2018

[The Islamization of Turkey](#) **(RECOMMENDED – PRIORITY)**

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is focusing his Islamization policy on the education system in his bid to raise a "pious generation". "Jihad" has become a frequent reference in the Turkish regime's rhetoric, while Syrians in the country and in areas controlled by Turkish troops in northern Syria are eating off the same plate. The international community should act to stop a "Turkish bin Laden" in the making and al-Qaeda-like authoritarian rule.

[Is Erdogan's re-election a foregone conclusion?](#)

Is Turkey's strongman Recep Tayyip Erdogan's re-election as president in the snap elections to be held June 24 a foregone conclusion? Almost every Turkey observer said it was when new Erdogan ally Devlet Bahçeli, the chairman of Turkey's Nationalist Action Party, called for early elections and Erdogan heeded his call within 48 hours.

[Germany moving to limit arms sales to Saudi Arabia, UAE, Turkey](#)

A draft bill in Germany aims to ban weapons exports to Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Turkey for their involvement in military conflicts. The bill aims to prevent weapons exports and all other related goods and services to countries that may use them for human rights abuses.

[Senate Bill To Ban F-35 Sales To Turkey An Unprecedented Attempt To Check Erdogan's Actions](#)

(RECOMMENDED – PRIORITY)

A bipartisan bill introduced by Senators Lankford (R-OK), Tillis (R-NC), and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) would prevent the transfer of F-35s to Turkey and keep the country from establishing a maintenance depot for the stealth fighters. Turkey has been one of six prime F-35 partner nations since 2002 and one of its biggest customers, with 116 of the stealth fighters on order.

[How Women Activists in Turkey Keep Fighting in a Climate of Fear](#)

Last year, the Van Women's Association in Turkey was about to sign a contract with the European Union for a project on preventing violence against women—one that would have catered for up to 8,000 women in 92 villages over a three-year period. Instead, the organization was closed down.

[Here's why Turkey's snap election won't solve all the lira's problems](#)

It will take more than a snap election to fix Turkey's fundamental economic problems or provide more than a temporary lift to the long-suffering lira. Turkey's currency got a boost last week from President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's surprise decision to call an early election for June 24 that he's expected to win. The poll pre-empts a scheduled November 2019 election and victory would grant Erdogan another five years in office. It would also allow him to take on expanded presidential powers that voters approved narrowly in a referendum last year and become effective after the election.

[Fallout from the Turkey-Iran-Russia meeting](#)

Iranian regime media is boasting after a successful summit in Turkey with the Turkish, Russian and Iranian presidents. But Iran was not the only winner at the meeting designed to discuss the future of Syria. Russia and Turkey both feel that they are achieving their goals in Syria at the expense of the US. While the three leaders met, Washington was still undecided on what to do in Syria where it has soldiers and bases and is working to defeat Islamic State.

TURKEY MONITOR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER
April 25, 2018

Turkey: 14 Cumhuriyet staff sentenced on 'terror' charges

A Turkish court has handed prison sentences to 14 staff of the Cumhuriyet opposition newspaper on "terrorism" charges, and acquitted three others, according to state media. The sentences for those convicted on Wednesday by the Istanbul-based court ranged from two-and-a-half years to seven-and-a-half years.

Turkey: Government crackdown suffocating civil society through deliberate climate of fear

A sustained and escalating crackdown curtailed the vital work of human rights defenders in Turkey and left swathes of society in a state of constant fear, a new report from Amnesty International has revealed. The report, *Weathering the storm: Defending human rights in Turkey's climate of fear*, reveals how few areas of Turkey's once vibrant independent civil society have been left untouched by the ongoing state of emergency. A nationwide crackdown has resulted in mass arrests and dismissals, the hollowing out of the legal system and the silencing of human rights defenders through threats, harassment and imprisonment.

How President Erdogan Is Turning Turkey Into Putin's Russia

As Turkey gears up for snap elections on June 24, the country's president Recep Tayyip Erdogan faces a problem: Turkish society is profoundly polarized. Despite his efforts to build a stable majority as the foundation of his right-wing regime, his policies of demonizing centrist and leftist groups mean that half of Turkey opposes him vehemently and seems determined not to accept him as leader.

Turkey rejects Trump's description of 1915 events

Turkey on April 25 rejected United States President Donald Trump's "inaccurate expressions and the subjective interpretation of history" regarding the 1915 events, according to a statement by the Foreign Ministry. President Donald Trump issued an annual commemoration of the 1915 events using the Armenian term "Meds Yeghern" ("Great calamity" in Armenian) in a statement on April 24.

Turkey-Greece tensions: What comes next ?

Ankara and Athens are passing through a delicate period as their warplanes and boats face off in disputed airspace and maritime zones. Here is the historical background of the tensions and Ankara's approach to its neighbour.

[Erdogan's Motley Opponents Have United to Take Him Down](#)

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the dominant figure of Turkish political life for the last 15 years, stunned his country last week by moving up crucial presidential and parliamentary elections from November 2019 to June 24. Erdogan hopes to complete his transformation of the government from a parliamentary to a presidential system, and he succeeded at catching the opposition off guard.

[Erdogan's Revenge and the Kurdish Dilemma](#) **(Recommended - Priority)**

Arriving in Baghdad, it is clear who has won the Iraq War. The Shia are in charge. Tower-sized, luminous green posters of Husseyn and Ali define the landscape, draped from Brezhnevite tower blocks, augmented by portraits of martyred fighters in identical uniforms, with a prominent place for Nimr Baqir al-Nimr, the Shia cleric executed by the Saudis. These are reproduced in miniature on every soldier's hut at checkpoints throughout the city.

RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF EUROPEAN & AMERICAN STUDIES (RIEAS)

Athens, Greece

TURKEY MONITOR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

April 18, 2018

[Erdogan's Shadow Army](#) **(RED FLAG)**

In the collapsed and fragmented space that comprises much of today's Middle East, the key to success increasingly lies in the ability to combine political strategy with military muscle, under a single banner and in a single structure. Examples abound.... Turkey is the latest country to enter this crucial, if shadowy, field. The SADAT Defense Consultancy, founded on February 28, 2012 by former Brigadier General Adnan Tanriverdi, is Ankara's instrument in this area. Its activities are testimony both to the changing nature of the Turkish state, and to the process by which power and influence are currently built and held in the Middle East.

[Commission says Turkey made 'big steps away' from EU: Report](#)

Turkey is doing worse than before in its efforts to join the EU, according to the European Commission's forthcoming accession progress report, German paper Die Welt reported. "Turkey has made big steps away from the EU," the Commission concludes in a draft report on Turkey's efforts, according to the paper. The assessment finds that Turkey has taken significant steps

backward “in the areas of justice, public administrative reform, fundamental rights and freedom of expression.”

NATO chief calls for more support to Turkey ahead of his visit

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has called on all allies to provide more support to Turkey, ahead of his official visit to the country scheduled for April 16 with the purpose of preparing the upcoming NATO summit in Brussels in July.

With Islamization, Erdogan Is Reshaping Atatürk's Turkey

Turkey has been a bastion of secularism in the Middle East for much of the 20th century. However, after 16 years under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's Justice and Development Party (AKP), accusations of Islamization are widespread.... Under Erdogan, Ankara has done much to encourage a more pious and conservative society. Taxes on alcohol and cigarettes are among the highest in the world, driving some to brew their own booze, compulsory religious teaching is more widespread in schools and official rhetoric is laden with messages extolling 'national morals'.

Arab league is expected to condemn Turkey

Turkey is expected to be condemned for its military operation in Syria and incursions in Iraq during the Arab League summit today in the eastern Saudi city of Dhahran, the UK based news site Asharq Al-Awsat [reported](#) on Saturday.

Turkish court rules US pastor will remain in custody amid coup trial

A court in Turkey has ruled to keep an American pastor in custody, saying that he was a potential flight risk as he went on trial in a case that has compounded strains in US-Turkish relations.

Cracks in Turkey-Russia-Iran alliance

Turkey, Iran, and Russia showed varying reactions to the U.S., Britain and France launched joint airstrikes in Syria on Saturday in response to a suspected chemical attack on civilians by Syrian President Bashar Assad's government.

A 'secret war' between Turkey and Greece just turned deadly after a long history of dogfights over the Aegean Sea

A Greek fighter jet crashed and the pilot was killed after intercepting two Turkish F-16 fighters that had intruded into Greek airspace. The pilot, identified by the HAF as 33-year-old Capt. Giorgos Baltadoros, was returning from an aerial policing mission where he intercepted two Turkish Air Force F-16s.

Turkey Suffers for Erdogan's Insecurity

On July 31st, 1959, 28 months after the original six signatories, Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands, had signed the Treaty of Rome, Turkey applied for associate membership in the European Economic Community (EEC). Since that time, Turkey's goal was to achieve full membership in the EEC, then, it became to obtain membership in the European Union (EU). The benefits that Turkish citizens would gain have been coveted for many years. Understanding that membership would threaten his leadership, Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has sought to dash that hope. Erdogan's domestic and foreign policies have followed a line to deny that end.

Erdogan Says Those Attempting to Wage 'Economic Terror' Will Pay

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said his government will punish anyone attempting to exploit developments in neighboring Syria in order to wage "economic terrorism" on Turkey.... Erdogan's remarks came after the lira weakened to new records against the dollar and euro this week, and the stock market slumped, triggered in part by the threat of U.S. military action against Syria. The lira is the second worst-performing emerging-market currency against peers over the past three months, trailing only the sanctions-afflicted Russian ruble.

Erdogan: Turkey to keep pushing Kurds out of Syria's north

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Wednesday that his military "won't stop" trying to oust Syrian Kurdish fighters from northern Syria, as he met with the leaders of Russia and Iran for talks on trying to resolve the conflict.

Erdogan rebuffs Moscow's call to hand Afrin to Syrian government

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Tuesday rejected a call by Moscow to hand control of Afrin province to the Syrian government, saying Ankara would withdraw its forces when it felt the time was right.

RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF EUROPEAN & AMERICAN STUDIES (RIEAS)

Athens, Greece

TURKEY MONITOR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

April 9, 2018

- **Israel to Erdogan after Jerusalem tirade: Days of Ottoman Empire are over**

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan called on Muslims worldwide to "defend al-Aksa," as the government's decision late Monday night to remove controversial metal

detectors at the site did not have an immediate calming effect. Erdogan issued a blistering attack on Israel at a meeting in Turkey's parliament of his AKP Party. "Israel has taken a dangerous path. By occupying the al-Aksa Mosque, Israel has exceeded the boundaries," the Turkish president said, adding that Ankara recognizes "Palestine" with a capital in east Jerusalem and Israel with its capital in Tel Aviv.

- [Here's how we can make Turkey's president pay a price for his crackdown on journalists](#)

Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkey's ruler for 15 years, has established himself as Turkey's most consequential leader since Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the republic's founder. But while Ataturk's legacy was to orient Turkey toward the West and lay a foundation upon which successors could cultivate democracy, religious tolerance and a reasonably free press, Erdogan seeks the opposite: He has placed Turkey firmly in the Islamic bloc and increasingly prefers Russia over NATO. He fans the flames of religious incitement not only against Jews and Christians, but also against Muslims who reject his more conservative views.

- [Turkey's NATO Exit & the New Turkey-Russia Alliance: A Turning Point in the Global Power Structure](#)

Newsbud Roundtable presents Sibel Edmonds, James Corbett and Spiro Skouras. In this in-depth discussion Sibel and James peel back the layers and dive deep into the current events surrounding Turkey, Russia, the United States and NATO. We elaborate and provide analysis of the escalation of U.S.-Turkey relations, the new Turkey-Russia alliance, and Turkey's bold move to exit NATO. Our discussion includes the Balkans and Russia wild card, Syria, the Kurdish question, and much more.

- [Putin, Erdogan launch Turkey's first nuclear power plant](#)

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin launch the construction of Turkey's first nuclear power plant in the Mediterranean Mersin region.

- [Record number of Afghan migrants reaching Eastern Turkey without papers \(RED FLAG FOR GREECE\)](#)

Nearly 20,000 undocumented Afghan migrants have arrived in Turkey over the past three months, an unprecedented number according to the latest figures from the General Directorate of Security. A total of 17,847 undocumented Afghan migrants have been captured by security forces from the beginning of 2018 until March 29. The same period has seen 9,426 Syrian migrants, 5,311 Pakistani migrants and 4,270 Iraqi migrants.

- [Turkey: Erdogan lashes out at France warning of 'more terror attacks'](#)

Recep Tayyip Erdogan has hit out at the French government for "providing support to terrorism", and appeared to refer to Saturday's vehicle attack in Germany by warning "the same will happen in France". Speaking on Saturday afternoon as the drama was still unfolding in Muenster, Turkey's President appeared to assume the attack was an act of political extremism. "You are seeing what is happening in Germany, right? The same will happen in France," he told a meeting of supporters during a visit to the southwestern province of Denizli. "The West will not be able to free itself from terror. The West will sink as it feeds these terrorists."

- [Erdoğan phones Turkish citizen in Germany](#)
President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on April 8 phoned a Turkish citizen residing in Germany who had been ill-treated by police and extended get-well wishes. Yusuf Ünsal was forced to the ground and arrested by a group of German police officers while he was protesting against a demonstration on April 8 by Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) supporters in the city of Stuttgart.
- [Turkish Lira again plunges to over 4 against US dollar](#)
The Turkish Lira has once again weakened against the U.S. dollar and the euro amid worries over a trade war and a series of geopolitical and economic risks. The lira touched over 4.01 against the dollar and 4.93 against the euro early on April 4.
- [Cyprus to protest Turkey's planned nuclear power plant](#)
Cyprus says it will lodge protests over the construction of Turkey's first nuclear power plant a few dozen kilometers from the east Mediterranean island nation. Cyprus government spokesman Prodromos Prodromou said Thursday that the country's foreign ministry will spearhead protests over the plant's future operation on Turkey's Mediterranean coast.
- [Four people killed in university shooting in Turkey's Eskişehir](#)
Four people were killed by a research assistant at a university in the central Anatolian province of Eskişehir on April 5.
- [EU Minister Çelik rebukes Greek minister for his remarks over military move in Aegean Sea](#)
Turkish EU Affairs Minister Ömer Çelik has lashed out at Greek Defense Minister Panos Kammenos over his remarks regarding recent military moves in the Aegean Sea and northeast Greece. Speaking in Paris on April 5 following a meeting with France's EU Minister Nathalie Loiseau, Çelik called the Greek minister "mindless."

RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF EUROPEAN & AMERICAN STUDIES (RIEAS)

Athens, Greece

TURKEY MONITOR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

April 3, 2018

The newsletter offers a collection of online news and resources on Turkey's rapidly expanding combative politics of challenging the West, threatening Greece and Cyprus, cozying up to Russia, invading Syria, threatening Iraq, demonizing Israel, befriending Iran, and giving open support to radical Islamism.

The newsletter also offers published insights on Turkey's domestic politics, the rapid expansion of authoritarian government, human rights violations, suppressing the press, and continuing repression of all those deemed supporters of Gulenism.

- **[Putin says Russia, Turkey agreed to speed up delivery of S-400s](#)**

Vladimir Putin has announced an agreement to shorten the duration of the delivery of S-400 missile systems purchased by Turkey from Russia. The Russian president made the remarks at a press conference on Tuesday with his Turkish counterpart, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in the Turkish capital, Ankara.

- **[Turkey may hit targets outside its borders at any time: Erdoğan](#)**

Turkey is capable of carrying out operations against groups it deems terrorists without any "approval" from foreign countries, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has vowed. "These days Turkey is finding terrorist organizations outside its borders and is entering their dens. They try to escape but we pursue them," Erdoğan said at an event to mark the opening of new schools in Istanbul on April 2.

- **[Erdogan Accuses Kosovo PM of 'Protecting Terrorists'](#)**

President Erdogan of Turkey on Sunday again condemned Kosovo's Prime Minister for firing a minister and the head of the intelligence service over the controversial deportation of six Turks to Turkey, accusing him of shielding 'terrorists'.

- **[Erdogan's thugs still need to be brought to justice](#)**

THE DAY before then-Secretary of State Rex Tillerson met with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in February, federal prosecutors dropped criminal charges against seven members of Mr. Erdogan's security detail charged in last year's attack on peaceful protesters outside the Turkish ambassador's residence in Washington. Mr. Erdogan had long made clear he was furious about the cases, and they were one factor in tensions between the two countries. But officials said that the timing of the dismissals was purely coincidental and that there was no political pressure.

- **[Greece says Turkey may be holding two soldiers for political gain](#)**

Greece said on Monday that Turkey appeared to be seeking some political leverage by continuing to hold two of its soldiers without trial for a month since they crossed a land border between the two countries. The border guards were detained after crossing the frontier in a heavily forested area in north-eastern Greece in bad weather on March 1.

- **[Turkey Overheating Means Race Against Time for Erdogan](#)**

The Turkish economy is overheating. That could be a problem for President Recep Tayyip Erdogan as much as it is for the nation's creditors. The lira is buckling under the weight of a ballooning current-account deficit and double-digit inflation after its \$851-billion gross domestic product expanded 7.4 percent last year, faster than any other major economy. Erdogan, who's seeking to formalize effective one-man rule at an election next year, needs to make sure any turbulence doesn't thwart his chances. But signs of trouble are growing.