

Regional stability and security is a priority for Türkiye

Türkiye is often caught between a rock and a hard place when major developments unfold in its borders. The recent Israel-Iran war presented both short and long-term security and economic threats for Türkiye. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that Ankara has actively doubled down on diplomatic efforts to end the war, including attempts to persuade Tehran to return to nuclear negotiations. While Ankara has maintained Iran's right to pursue peaceful research on and use of nuclear energy, it has also consistently promoted nuclear non-proliferation.

Turkish President Recep Erdoğan has spoken about it frequently with world and regional leaders, hosted an Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Summit to discuss the issue and offered to facilitate and host efforts for peace. Within the first 48 hours of the war, Erdogan spoke to US President Donald Trump at least three times, along with numerous European and regional leaders. He also attempted to mediate between Trump and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian in Türkiye. While expressing concern about the US strikes on Iran's nuclear sites, Turkish officials have avoided any personal criticism or condemnation of Trump. Ankara clearly does not want to sabotage its recent diplomatic reset with Washington. Yet, while Türkiye has tried to position itself as a mediator, its efforts have been hamstrung by the fact that neither the Israeli nor Iranian leadership see Ankara as neutral or credible enough to be effective. Relations with Israel have grown increasingly acrimonious since Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's blockade of Gaza, which [Erdogan has described](#) as the most severe humanitarian disaster of modern times.

A rapid end to the conflict is a strategic priority for Ankara. Surging global oil prices and high inflation will hit Turkey's already fragile economy, which would be exacerbated if Iran had made good on periodic threats to block the Strait of Hormuz. Further Iranian attacks on US bases or assets in the region could put Türkiye in the cross-hairs. Efforts to topple the Iranian regime also pose a potential headache. With no viable opposition waiting in the wings, the risk is that Iran could become a failed state, leaving Türkiye with yet another unstable neighbour on its already precarious southern border. That could potentially lead to more waves of refugees, further undermine regional security, and potentially disrupting the recent decision by the [outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party \(PKK\)](#) to disarm and disband. Erdogan's announcement that Türkiye plans to strengthen its deterrence capabilities, including boosting medium and long-range missile production, is a direct consequence of the war and potentially increased regional instability amid an unravelling world order.

With no viable opposition waiting in the wings, the risk is that Iran could become a failed state, leaving Türkiye with yet another unstable neighbour on its already precarious southern border.
