



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on April 4, 2023

## Türkiye's Erdoğan Wants to Teach U.S. a "Lesson" in Upcoming Elections, Following U.S. Ambassador's Snub

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said his country's impending elections should be a "lesson" to the United States, his most outright denunciation in his electoral campaign thus far as he attempts to rally nationalist support ahead of May's vote.

"We need to teach America a lesson in these elections. Joe Biden is speaking over there, but look what his ambassador is doing here. He goes and visits Kılıçdaroğlu. It's a shame," state-run *Anadolu Agency* cited Erdoğan as stating in Istanbul.

The incumbent president had slammed a visit by U.S. Ambassador Jeff Flake, formerly a U.S. senator from Arizona, to his main electoral rival, Social Democrat Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, in a visit that Erdoğan perceived to be a snub to his authority.

"You are an ambassador. Your interlocutor here is the president," Erdoğan stated during a visit to a nationalist youth group. "How will you ask for a meeting with the president from now on?" Erdoğan's door "has been closed to him," he added.

On March 29, Flake had visited Kılıçdaroğlu in Ankara "as part of continuing conversations with Turkish political parties on issues of mutual interest," according to a tweet by the U.S. Embassy.

Previously, Turkish Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu also blamed Flake for attempting to overthrow the government by fomenting "strife," instructing Flake to "take his dirty hands off of Türkiye."

Addressing Flake, Soylu said, "I know which journalists wrote what you told them to say. I know what you've done, what steps you have taken and how you want to destroy the peace in Türkiye."

The Nationalist Movement Party (MHP)'s deputy chairman Kamil Aydın also described Flake as a politician who had betrayed his cause, alluding to when Flake, a senator representing Arizona at the time, insisted that Donald Trump back out of the 2016 presidential elections following remarks he made about women in an Access Hollywood tape. Aydın asserted that Flake betrayed his fellow Republicans, allied with the Democrats instead, and was given an embassy in return.

Erdoğan is slated to face Kılıçdaroğlu during the country's general elections along with two other contenders, based on a final [list](#) of four presidential candidates previously published. Earlier, the country's Supreme Election Commission authorized May 14 as the date for the 2023 presidential election. A second round of voting, if necessary, was set for May 28.

May's vote would be a huge litmus test to Erdoğan's two decades in power. While Kılıçdaroğlu, 74, has



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Recep Tayyip Erdogan



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unsuccessfully contested Erdoğan before, this year's elections will see a united opposition coalition as well as the country's largest non-aligned political group backing his candidacy.

A former Kılıçdaroğlu ally, Muharrem İnce, who quit Kılıçdaroğlu's party in 2021, is also contesting in the presidential elections after setting up his Homeland Party, the candidate list revealed. İnce, 59, would likely divert support away from Kılıçdaroğlu and make it challenging for the latter to win in the first round of elections, many opinion polls disclosed.

56-year-old Sinan Oğan, who heads Ata Alliance, a group of nationalist parties led by the Victory Party, is also a contender in the presidential elections. As Oğan's main electoral pledge is to return millions of Syrian refugees back to their country, observers contend that Oğan's candidacy may reduce support for Erdoğan's main ally, the Nationalist Movement Party.

On March 31, Erdoğan had urged the Turkish people to "defend their future," while also placing his confidence that they would "make the right decision" during the upcoming elections. "I urge you to defend your future on May 14. I believe you will make the right decision," Erdoğan addressed his audience in the Turkish city of Kilis.

Referring to the six opposition parties that only managed to finalize their single presidential candidate in early March this year, Erdoğan declared that those "who cannot rule seven or eight people gathered at one table, should not be expected to be able to rule Türkiye with its 85 million citizens."

That being said, analysts have pointed out that Erdoğan would face an uphill battle in May's elections owing partially to the country's dire economic situation and recent destructive earthquakes that claimed the lives of more than 50,000 people. Notably, as previously reported by *The New American*, Romanian Senator Diana Iovanovici Șoșoacă, as well as other skeptics of globalist news narratives, went so far as to claim that Western powers such as the United States [used technology to trigger the recent destructive quakes to penalize Erdoğan](#) for not aligning with globalist interests.

While the United States and Türkiye are allies and strategic partners in name, the countries have had a rocky relationship since 2014, when Washington allied with armed Kurdish groups, viewed by Ankara as terrorists, against the Islamic State in Syria.

Since then, bilateral ties have deteriorated over various matters, ranging from Turkey's purchase of Russian-made S-400 air-defense systems to Ankara's decision to delay Sweden's NATO bid.

In further opposition to globalist U.S. President Joe Biden, Erdoğan had said he hoped to boost Ankara's defense ties with Russia. He has insisted regularly that he would not refrain from purchasing more Russian weapons or S-400s.

Also, the Turkish president blasted Washington for backing what he called "terrorists," alluding to U.S. support for Syria-based Kurdish forces.

In light of his stances, it is no wonder that Erdoğan has not been popular among Western and globalist powers.

"In the United States, there is a strong bipartisan sentiment that as long as Erdoğan holds the reins of power, there is limited opportunity to put bilateral relations back on track and bring Türkiye back into the NATO fold," admitted Aykan Erdemir, senior director of the Washington-based Turkey Program at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD) and a former member of the Turkish parliament, in comments to *Al Arabiya*.

"If Türkiye's big-tent opposition bloc succeeds in winning the 2023 parliamentary and presidential



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elections, there will be significant opportunities to welcome Türkiye back into the Western alliance through economic, diplomatic, and defense incentives,” the former Turkish lawmaker added.

“The short-term goal of Türkiye’s NATO allies is to prevent Türkiye’s further drift away from transatlantic values into Russia’s sphere of influence.”

Besides, U.S. diplomats and officials have privately predicted there would be a post-Erdoğan era in Türkiye. “We need to keep that in the back of our minds, while also remembering that Türkiye is a very important geostrategic ally,” one official, speaking on condition of anonymity, acknowledged.

On the other hand, Erdoğan’s spokesman, Fahrettin Altun, tweeted that “It is sad to see the US Congress members and administration officials perpetuate one-sided views of Türkiye’s policies.... Deeply flawed descriptions of our government’s policies and approaches have, unfortunately, become a staple of the US Congressional hearings.”

Cagri Erhan, a member of the Turkish Presidency’s Security and Foreign Policies Council, remarked in an interview with *Sputnik News* that the United States and the U.K. did not want Erdoğan to coordinate a meeting between Putin and Zelensky, as both Western nations hope to prolong the Ukraine conflict for as long as possible.

“They [the US and the UK] don’t want Zelensky and Putin to come together with Erdoğan. They don’t want these three to take a photo. And they want to make the war as long as possible. They don’t think about the future of Ukrainian people. They don’t think about peace,” Erhan said.

However, Erhan opined that Erdoğan will persist in efforts to gather both presidents.

“He [Erdoğan] is the only man who can access both Putin and Zelensky. And I think that he can find some kind of ways to bring them together. And it is not important to take a photo, it is important to reach concrete results. And the first concrete result will be a ceasefire of course and afterwards maybe there will be a compromise after diplomatic bargaining,” he stated.

When the Russo-Ukraine crisis first erupted last year, Türkiye hosted brief talks between Russia and Ukraine. Nevertheless, the peace talks did not see much progress.

In late September, Putin had declared that Moscow welcomed talks with Kyiv and asked Ukraine to cease fighting. Zelensky, for his part, stated that Kyiv was ready for a dialog with Moscow only if another president came to power in Russia, a condition he later dropped.

On March 25, Erdoğan spoke to Putin in a telephone conversation, during which both leaders discussed the situation in Ukraine and bilateral ties, Erdoğan’s office reported.

“President [Erdoğan] spoke by phone with President Vladimir Putin of Russia. The call addressed the steps to strengthen Türkiye -Russia relations, as well as the latest developments in the Russia-Ukraine war,” the statement read.

During the call, Erdoğan also “thanked President Putin for his positive stance regarding the extension of the Black Sea Grain Initiative” and highlighted the importance Ankara placed on an instant ceasefire in Ukraine via peaceful talks, the office added.

Arguably, Erdoğan will not be facing either an outright coup or U.S.-backed color revolution, but a combination of the two: a color revolution spearheaded by the Turkish political opposition backed by militant proxies, as well as foreign neoconservative groups.

If Erdoğan emerges victorious, his domestic opponents could tap on their neoconservative links,



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pressuring Western powers such the United States and EU to sanction Türkiye and add financial pressure to the government. Widespread protests against another Erdoğan-led government could erupt, facilitated by misinformation and media manipulation via information warfare capabilities from tech companies such as Wikistrat, Cybereason, and NSO Group.

If Erdoğan loses to Kılıçdaroğlu, Türkiye could adopt a more open stance toward pro-Kurdish groups. Additionally, Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) countries could be pressured to adopt a more pro-Western stance, as Türkiye would presumably tone down its opposition to the West under Kılıçdaroğlu.

Regardless of the outcome of May's elections, Erdoğan certainly has much to be concerned about.



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