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Erdoğan, Pope Leo XIV unite in call for worldwide peace

President Erdoğan praised Pope Leo XIV's calls for peace and said they would work together for the sacred status of East Jerusalem as he welcomed the pontiff yesterday



President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan welcomes Pope Leo XIV in a ceremony at the Presidential Complex, Ankara, Türkiye, Nov. 27, 2025. (AA Photo)

ISTANBUL - DAILY SABAH

» **SPEAKING** at a news conference at the Presidential Complex yesterday, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said global peace and stability were discussed with the visiting Pope Leo XIV. "The pope's calls for peace and diplomacy regarding the Russia-Ukraine conflict are meaningful," Erdoğan stated. "We will work together (with the Vatican)

against any violation of the sacred status of East Jerusalem," he added. For his part, Pope Leo XIV said he hopes Türkiye remains a source of lasting stability and peace. The pontiff said the world was witnessing a heightened level of conflict. "The future of humanity is at stake," he warned. Pope Leo XIV also praised Turkish culture in part of his speech when he underlined the importance of family.

Erdoğan welcomed the pontiff's "astute stance" on the Palestinian issue and hoped the visit would be beneficial for humanity at a time of tension and uncertainty. The visit marks the pontiff's first official trip abroad since ascending to the head of the Catholic Church. Erdoğan held a one-on-one meeting with the pope at the Presidential Complex that lasted for approximately half an hour. During the meeting, the two leaders discussed Tür-

kiye-Vatican relations as well as current regional and global developments, with a particular focus on the situation in Palestine. The meeting agenda was also set to discuss Israel's ongoing genocide in Palestine, efforts to build peace in the Middle East and broader international issues. Following their bilateral talks, Erdoğan and the pontiff addressed a press conference at the Cihannüma Hall of the Presidential Nation's Library. **PAGE 7**

Hamas slams killing, torture of Palestinians in Israeli prisons

» **HAMAS** condemned yesterday what it called the systematic killing and torture of Palestinian detainees in Israeli custody and urged the international community to intervene to halt the abuses. Citing human rights data, Hamas said that 94 Palestinians were killed in Israeli prisons since the start of Tel Aviv's genocidal war in the Gaza Strip in October 2023. "This reflects an organized criminal approach that has turned these prisons into direct killing grounds to eliminate our people," it added in a statement on its official Telegram channel. Palestinian prisoners are subjected to inhumane violations, "including severe beatings, scalding with boiling water, attacks by dogs, and sexual assaults," which are proven by firsthand testimonies and credible human rights reports, Hamas said. It decried the Israeli practices as "full-fledged war crimes under international humanitarian law that expose the brutal nature of the (Israeli) occupation's regime." **PAGE 10**

Hong Kong high-rise blaze death toll hits 65 with 250 still missing

» **HONG** Kong firefighters scoured yesterday charred high-rises for more than 250 missing people after a blaze that killed at least 65 in an apartment complex, the city's deadliest fire in decades. Over 24 hours after the fire broke out in the eight-building housing estate with 2,000 units, flames were still visible in some windows as crews sprayed water on the blackened exteriors. Authorities have begun investigating what sparked the disastrous blaze, including the presence of bamboo scaffolding and plastic mesh wrapped around the structures as part of construction work. Hong Kong's anti-corruption body said it has launched a probe into renovation work at a housing complex, hours after police said they arrested three men on suspicion of negligently leaving foam packaging at the fire site. The intense flames in four of the eight apartment blocks were finally extinguished, and the fires in three others were under control, officials said yesterday afternoon. One building was not affected. **PAGE 10**

Taxes, fees to be set below revaluation rate in 2026: Şimşek

» **TAX** and fee increases in the new year will be set in line with the inflation target, below the revaluation rate, Treasury and Finance Minister Mehmet Şimşek said yesterday. "In 2026, we will set tax and fee increases in a manner consistent with the inflation target, below the revaluation rate. We continue to support the disinflation process with fiscal policy," the minister wrote in a post on X. With the general communique on the Tax Procedure Law prepared by the Revenue Administration of the Ministry of Treasury and Finance, the revaluation rate for this year

was set at 25.49%, according to the decision published in the country's Official Gazette yesterday. The revaluation rate is the average price increase in the Turkish Statistical Institute's (TurkStat's) Domestic Producer Price Index (PPI) in October (including October) of the year to be revalued, compared to the same period of the previous year. Last year, this rate was announced as 43.93%. Şimşek, in remarks to Anadolu Agency (AA), also stated that they are working to hike taxes and fees in the new year at a rate lower than the revaluation rate set at 25.49%, taking inflation targets into account. **PAGE 5**

CBRT chief describes inflation as 'virus' but hails progress so far

» **THE TURKISH** central bank pledged to "do everything" it can to bring inflation down in line with its targets, despite a recent slowdown in disinflation, its governor said Wednesday. In a live interview broadcast by the bank, Central Bank of the Republic of Türkiye (CBRT) Governor Fatih Karahan likened inflation to a virus, but said the correct policy steps are being taken and that they have "achieved a lot of results so far." "There has been a recent slowdown in disinflation, but even so, we will do our

best to reduce inflation in line with our targets by recalibrating the monetary policy tightness and taking the necessary measures," he said. "Demand conditions are currently consistent with disinflation," he added. Inflation eased a bit more than expected in October to 32.87% annually and to 2.55% monthly, after remaining more elevated than expected in September. The central bank responded to the price pressure by slowing its easing cycle with a 100-point interest-rate cut last month to 39.5%. **PAGE 5**

World energy outlook 2025 and geopolitical balances

GÖKÇE NUR ATAMAN - OPINION

» **THE WORLD** Energy Outlook 2025 (WEO 2025), published by the International Energy Agency (IEA), examines the current state and future trajectory of the global energy system while attributing a far more decisive role to energy geopolitics than in previous years. In recent times, the convergence of pandemics, energy crises, rapid technological transformations, and climate change has amplified the fragility and uncertainty of energy markets to an unprecedented degree. In assessing the future development of energy systems, WEO 2025 focuses not only on historical trends but also on the potential impacts of geopolitical powers and unforeseen events. There is no single narrative for the future of energy; therefore, the World Energy Outlook presents multiple scenarios, none of which should be interpreted as forecasts. The framework provided in this outlook relies on the most recent and comprehensive data regarding policies, technologies and markets, supported by rigorous modeling. **PAGE 8**

Türkiye ready to send troops to Ukraine in case of truce

» **TURKISH** sources reiterated Ankara's commitment to peace between Russia and Ukraine and said the country may contribute troops to a peacekeeping force planned to be deployed in Ukraine. "The Turkish Armed Forces are prepared to contribute to any initiative aimed at ensuring security and stability in our region," the sources said. "First and foremost, a cease-fire must be established between Russia and Ukraine. Then, a mission framework, with a clear definition of objectives, as well as the contribution of each country, must be determined," they added.

French President Emmanuel Macron on Tuesday announced a new joint task force, intended to map out the multinational "re-assurance force" that will be offered as a "second line of defense" after a cease-fire. It will be "led by France and Great Britain, with close involvement from Türkiye, which plays a key role in maritime affairs, and for the first time with the participation of the United States of America," he added. Türkiye, with the second-largest army in NATO, had previously said it was prepared to deploy troops to Ukraine as part of a peacekeeping mission "if deemed necessary." **PAGE 6**

Turkish, TRNC officials criticize Lebanon-Greek Cyprus maritime deal

» **TURKISH** ministries and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) yesterday criticized a newly re-signed maritime boundary agreement between Lebanon and the Greek Cypriot administration, saying the deal ignores the rights of Turkish Cypriots and exceeds the authority of the Greek Cypriot side. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Öncü Keçeli published a statement on his social media account noting that the Greek Cypriot administration has been striking bilateral agreements with regional coastal states on maritime delimitation since 2003 without the

consent of Turkish Cypriots, whom he described as the "co-equal and sovereign" partners of the island. Keçeli said the Exclusive Economic Zone agreement originally signed between Lebanon and the Greek Cypriot administration in 2007, but never put into force, was re-signed on Nov. 26. The area covered by the deal lies outside Türkiye's continental shelf in the Eastern Mediterranean, which Ankara registered with the United Nations in March 2020. However, Keçeli stressed that Türkiye views the issue through the broader Cyprus dispute. **PAGE 7**