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Erdoğan pushes urgent talks to avert regional blaze

The Turkish leader warned that continued escalation in the Middle East could deepen regional instability while urging negotiations over military confrontation

Smoke rises from the site of an Israeli airstrike that targeted an area in Beirut's southern suburbs, Lebanon, March 11, 2026. (AFP Photo)

ISTANBUL - DAILY SABAH

PRESIDENT Recep Tayyip Erdoğan yesterday called for an urgent return to diplomacy to halt the escalating conflict involving Iran and the U.S., warning that the war risks causing widespread damage across the region and the global economy.

Speaking at a parliamentary group meeting of the ruling Justice and Development Party (AK Party) at the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye (TBMM), Erdoğan said Ankara has intensified diplomatic contacts with countries involved in the conflict as well as regional actors.

"We have established contacts with Iran, the U.S. and other relevant countries in the region. I have held more than 20 phone calls," Erdoğan said. "This war must be stopped before it escalates further. If diplomacy is given a chance, it is possible to achieve this."

He added that Türkiye is continuing diplomatic initiatives to help revive negotiations and prevent further escalation in the Middle East. "We speak very carefully, choose our words with great care and act cautiously. We are taking the necessary precautions against bloody scenarios," he said.

Erdoğan stressed that the Middle East has been facing a series of crises and conflicts for years, warning that the latest escalation has further destabilized the region.

"For a long time, crises and conflicts in our region have not ceased. Before existing conflicts end, new ones are added every day," he said. "Most recently, the war launched against our neighbor Iran, following Israel's provocations, has caused serious destruction." PAGE 7

PARLIAMENT DISCUSSES REGIONAL WAR IN CLOSED-DOOR SESSION PAGE 6

Iran vows to keep fighting in face of war's most intensive strikes

IRAN'S military command warned yesterday that the world should brace for oil prices to hit $200 a barrel as three more ships were attacked in the blockaded Gulf and Tehran fired on Israel and other targets across the Middle East.

The strikes signaled that Iran can still fight back and disrupt energy supplies despite what the Pentagon calls the most intense U.S.-Israeli strikes so far.

Oil prices that shot up earlier this week have eased and stock markets have rebounded, with investors betting for now that U.S. President Donald Trump will find a quick way to end the war he began alongside Israel nearly two weeks ago.

But so far, there has been no let-up on the ground, or any sign that ships can safely sail through the Strait of Hormuz, where a fifth of the world's oil has been blockaded behind a narrow channel along the Iranian coast in the worst disruption to energy supplies since the oil shocks of the 1970s.

"Get ready for oil to be $200 a barrel, because the oil price depends on regional security which you have destabilized," Ebrahim Zolfaqari, spokesperson for Iran's military command, said in comments addressed to the United States.

After offices of a bank in Tehran were hit overnight, Zolfaqari also said Iran would respond with attacks on banks that do business with the United States or Israel. People across the Middle East should stay 1,000 meters (3280.84 feet) away from banks, he added. A senior Israeli official told Reuters that Israeli leaders now privately accept that Iran's ruling system could survive the war. Two other Israeli officials said there was no sign Washington was close to ending the campaign.

Mojtaba Khamenei lightly injured in the latest public display of defiance, huge crowds of Iranians took to the streets yesterday for funerals for top commanders killed in airstrikes. They carried caskets and brandished flags and portraits of slain Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and his son and successor, Mojtaba.

An Iranian official told Reuters that Mojtaba Khamenei had been lightly injured early in the war, when airstrikes killed his father, mother, wife and a son. PAGE 10

OPINION - MUSTAFA YETİM

CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE: LEBANON BETWEEN ISRAEL AND HEZBOLLAH PAGE 8

Energy prices roil global bonds as traders tear up rate cut bets

GLOBAL bond markets faced renewed selling pressure yesterday as rising oil prices linked to the U.S.-Iran war led traders to bet that central banks may have to scrap planned rate cuts and instead consider tightening policy.

Short-dated bond yields – which are sensitive to interest-rate expectations – shot higher as bond prices tumbled in the eurozone and Britain. Yields also rose in the United States.

"What the rates markets are saying is that this war leads to a prolonged rise in oil, and the path that central banks are on will have to shift to a more hawkish one," said Seema Shah, chief global strategist at Principal Asset Management.

Energy prices have risen dramatically this week as flows through the vital Strait of Hormuz have slowed to a halt, and Iran has hit its neighbors' exporting infrastructure.

U.S. President Donald Trump's statement that the war was "very complete" helped cool prices Tuesday, but they were volatile yesterday and last up around 2% following reports that vessels were struck by projectiles in the key Strait of Hormuz. PAGE 4

Ankara sees no immediate risk to energy supply amid Mideast conflict

TÜRKİYE currently faces no shortages of natural gas or fuel and does not anticipate any supply problems, Energy and Natural Resources Minister Alparslan Bayraktar said yesterday, amid concerns that disruptions are driving prices higher.

"We do not foresee any issues at the moment in either fuel or natural gas, but we are closely following developments," Bayraktar told reporters after being asked whether the situation in Iran could threaten Türkiye's gas supply. Energy prices have soared since the U.S. and Israel launched strikes on Iran on Feb. 28, with some major producers cutting supplies and fears growing of prolonged shipping disruptions as the critical Strait of Hormuz remains all but shut.

"No need for concern on natural gas," Bayraktar said, stressing that there is no issue with supply security in oil, fuel or gas.

Bayraktar said the recent surge in crude oil prices reflects global concerns over potential supply disruptions amid the conflict. "There is serious concern globally about supply interruptions, and that is why prices have risen," he said, adding that markets reacted to fears that regional tensions could affect production and shipping routes. PAGE 5

OPINION - MAKBULE YALIN

When Türkiye's monetary policy meets global geopolitics

TO MAINTAIN a sense of intellectual continuity, I would like to begin by revisiting some reflections from my article dated Dec. 25, 2025, titled "Why Economic Forecasts Will Fail More Often in 2026." At that time, I drew attention to the fact that we were entering a year when economics would evolve from a technical discipline into a field of psychological equilibrium, causing forecasts to falter more frequently. The global economy is no longer primarily shaped by market cycles. Instead, it is driven by geopolitical decisions, policy interventions, and sudden shocks. Models designed for a predictable world are now being asked to explain an economy governed by uncertainty. As trust in global trade and monetary policy deepens, or rather, as the crisis of confidence deepens, and the economic costs of security-driven preferences rise, forecasting errors become inevitable.

My observations regarding Türkiye were particularly significant. Scarcely three months ago, I noted that 2026 would serve as a "threshold to test whether hard-earned trust can be preserved," emphasizing the vital importance of managing expectations and "policy confidence." PAGE 9

Istanbul's Laleli Mosque marks the final sultan-built complex

LALELİ Mosque, which bears traces of the transition from classical Ottoman architecture to the baroque style on Istanbul's historic peninsula, is regarded as the last imperial mosque complex commissioned by Ottoman sultans in the city.

Laleli Mosque is examined as an example reflecting the architectural transition from the classical Ottoman style to the baroque influence.

Commissioned by Sultan Mustafa III, the mosque was built between 1760 and 1764. Constructed by palace architect Mehmed Tahir Ağa, the structure is considered one of the notable works in Ottoman architecture where baroque influences became visible.

Laleli Mosque was designed not only as a place of worship but also as the center of a large külliye (complex). In addition to the mosque, the complex included structures such as a public soup kitchen, bazaar, shops, a madrassa, a sebil (public fountain), additional fountains, a tomb and a caravanserai.

Architecturally, the structure is regarded as one of the examples where the traditional Ottoman mosque plan was interpreted through a baroque style. PAGE 3

Steps planned to ban single-use plastics to reduce pollution

TÜRKİYE'S Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change aims to implement a comprehensive regulation by the end of 2026 to prohibit the market supply of single-use plastic products, including forks, knives, plates, straws and cotton swabs, in a major step to reduce plastic pollution across the country. The initiative forms part of the Zero Waste Project, which has already promoted recycling of beverage packaging through a deposit management system. With this new measure, the ministry is taking another significant step toward environmental protection and sustainable resource management.

Last year, the ministry published the 2025-2028 National Circular Economy Strategy and Action Plan, alongside the Roadmap for Single-Use Plastics, Marine Litter and Microplastics. The regulation under preparation seeks to minimize the environmental impacts of single-use plastics, marine litter, and microplastics, while aligning Türkiye's policies with the EU Single-Use Plastics Directive.

The draft regulation, which is expected to be submitted to relevant institutions for review in the coming days, outlines the phase-out of plastic items that cause environmental damage and contribute to pollution. PAGE 3

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