The Third Age of Erdogan’s Foreign Policy

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Turkey has been forced to adopt a new approach abroad, presenting a valuable opportunity that the United States and Europe need to seize quickly.

Turkish foreign policy under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has gone through a number of sharp turns since 2003, with Erdogan taking stock of global and domestic dynamics and changing the country’s direction back and forth between Europe, the US, and the Middle East. The country now seems at the precipice of yet another foreign policy turn, informed by Erdogan’s frustrated Middle Eastern pivot since 2011—more specifically his failure to cash in the Arab uprisings—and the slowing Turkish economy, which is peeling away Erdogan’s base and forcing him to turn Turkey’s face to Europe and the West, with which it is economically integrated. His goal: reset ties with rich Gulf countries and Israel, and build a narrative of good relations with the West in order to attract investment, return to economic growth, and re-build his base to win the 2023 elections...

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