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To Save Turkey's Democracy, the Country's Opposition Must Offer Erdogan a Grand Bargain

by [Soner Cagaptay](#)

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Articles & Testimony

If Erdogan does not compromise with Turkey's forty-million-strong opposition, Kurdish nationalists and other factions could spark widespread unrest.

Turkish democracy is dying. Of the three parties in the country's legislature that oppose President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's ruling Justice and Development Party, the leader of the first—the Peoples Democracy Party—has been jailed by Erdogan. The leader of the second—the Nationalist Action Party—has said he wants to join forces with Erdogan. And the leader of the third, and main opposition faction—the Republican People's Party—has been labeled a "national security issue" by Erdogan's deputy prime minister. Erdogan's crackdown is not irrational. Since coming to power in 2003, he has demonized so many opposition groups—a number of people Erdogan arrested have died in jail while waiting to appear in court—that he faces certain prosecution if he loses elections. To avoid being ousted democratically, Erdogan has decided to end democracy in Turkey...

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