

# Ankara's Middle East Policy Post Arab Spring

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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**W**hen Turkey's Justice and Development Party (AKP) entered office in 2002, it launched an ambitious plan to become a regional power. Aided by phenomenal economic growth, Turkey ultimately became the Middle East's largest economy with a foreign policy based on wielding soft power to gain influence. To this end, the new elites in Ankara pursued deep economic and political ties with the region's governments, including Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and Syria.

Nevertheless, the events of the Arab Spring and the subsequent emergence of the Muslim Brotherhood as a hardline political force in the region have shifted the trajectory of Turkey's rise to regional preeminence. Turkey realized that its soft power is not readily transferable to hard power, a realization that has prompted a pivot in Ankara's foreign policy over the past two years.

In *Ankara's Middle East Policies Post Arab Spring*, Soner Cagaptay outlines these various factors, examining the evolution and effect of the shifting regional alliances on Turkey's ambitions.

## THE AUTHOR

**S**oner Cagaptay is the Beyer Family Fellow and director of the Turkish Research Program at The Washington Institute. A historian by training, he wrote his dissertation at Yale University and has taught courses there as well as at Princeton University, Georgetown University, and Smith College, covering the Middle East, Mediterranean, and Eastern Europe. In 2006-2007, he was Ertegun Professor at Princeton's Department of Near Eastern Studies. His next book, *The Rise of Turkey: The Twenty-First Century's First Muslim Power* (<http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-rise-of-turkey-the-twenty-first-centurys-first-muslim-power>), will be released in early 2014. Follow him on [Twitter \(https://twitter.com/SonerCagaptay\)](https://twitter.com/SonerCagaptay) or visit his [website \(http://www.cagaptay.com/\)](http://www.cagaptay.com/). ❖

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