

Expert Survey Report

Turkey's Role in Israel's Geopolitical Environment

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Context

The survey was conducted in May 2026. Eleven experts — ranging from secular leftists to religious conservatives — independently answered a written, fifteen-question instrument on Turkey's role in the regional architecture that has taken shape since October 2023. The survey focused on the concrete mechanisms by which Ankara projects influence across Israel's immediate geopolitical perimeter: Turkic solidarity and the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), the Greek-Turkish knot in the Eastern Mediterranean, Turkey's posture within NATO, and Ankara's role in post-crisis stabilization in Gaza.

The survey's framing rested on a set of concrete developments: Kazakhstan's accession to the expanded Abrahamic framework (late 2025) and Israel's blocking of a Turkish contingent in the International Stabilization Force (ISF) in Gaza at the February 2026 Peace Council summit. It also took in the institutional nature of the OTS, the Shusha Declaration, and the Turkey-Azerbaijan alliance; the Greek-Turkish disputes and the Israel-Greece-Cyprus format; and Turkey's NATO membership. Rounding out the picture were the 2024 Turkish trade embargo against Israel, Ankara's contacts with the Hamas leadership, and the competition between the networked "Hexagon" format (Israel, Greece, Cyprus, UAE, India) and the inclusive Peace Council model.

Expert Panel

#	Specialization	Political orientation	Religious profile
1	Political scientist	Left	Secular
2	Political scientist	Right-conservative, traditionalist	Traditional
3	Historian of international relations	Centrist	Secular
4	International-relations specialist	Right-conservative, sovereigntist	Religious
5	International economist	Centrist-pragmatic	Secular
6	National-security expert	Right-conservative, national-religious	Religious
7	National-security expert	Centrist	Secular
8	Sociologist	Left	Secular
9	Jurist (international law)	Center-left	Secular
10	Columnist	Right, traditionalist	Traditional
11	Scholar of religion	Centrist	Religious

Responses were aggregated anonymously; quotations are rendered close to the original formulations.

Block I. Turkic Solidarity in the Regional Coordinate System

Q1. Kazakhstan's multi-vectorism: the OTS and the Abrahamic framework

Expert #1, political scientist: "The baseline is Scenario A (inertial) with drift toward B. Pragmatic separation of tracks will persist, but high-visibility multilateral positions will be muted. This is 'B-lite' — not a freeze, but a reduction in publicity. Kazakhstan's Israeli track is economic and technological in nature, and structurally decoupled from the Turkey-Israel political axis."

Expert #2, political scientist: Scenario A. "Kazakhstan will hold the economic and technological track with Israel and the UAE while developing political, cultural, and defense-industrial cooperation with Turkey within the OTS. This matches the Kazakh tradition of multi-vectorism: not picking a camp, but raising the price of its own geopolitical consent."

Expert #3, historian: Scenario A. "Kazakhstan will not sacrifice the real gains of the Abrahamic process for Ankara's ideological ambitions. The historical record shows that Central Asian elites have successfully resisted every attempt to turn the OTS into a hard supranational bloc."

Expert #7, national-security expert: "Scenario A with elements of B. Kazakhstan's participation in the Abrahamic framework was designed from the outset as economic and technological rather than political or values-based. That makes it relatively resistant to the pull of Turkic solidarity."

Expert #8, sociologist: "Scenario A, with discrete elements of B. Astana will compartmentalize: economy, technology, water solutions, and investment with Israel, the United States, and the UAE; identity diplomacy, security, and cultural integration with Turkey and the OTS."

Expert #11, scholar of religion: Scenario A. "I assess the durability of Kazakhstan's participation as moderately high but not unconditional: Israel, the UAE, and the Abrahamic framework for technology, investment, and logistics; Turkey and the OTS for identity politics and symbolic standing in the Turkic world."

Expert #4, IR specialist: Scenario B (preservation). "The most likely outcome is preservation: formal retention of membership with reduced operational visibility. The model of 'membership intact, activity scaled back' is the most realistic."

Expert #6, national-security expert: Scenario B. "Kazakhstan's integration into the expanded Abrahamic framework is instrumental, not values-based. The partnership is fragile at its foundation. The Kazakh elite will seek to minimize public affiliation with the platform without formally exiting it."

Expert #9, jurist: Scenario B. "The framework lacks a binding legal architecture. Kazakhstan's participation is largely signaling and is durable only to the extent that current pragmatic calculation sustains it."

Expert #10, columnist: "I rate the durability of participation as low in substance and high in form. At the first loud Turkey-Jerusalem clash, Kazakh activity in the Abrahamic framework will quietly zero out — no exit, no statements, just a downgrade and a pause."

Distribution of scenario choices: A (often with a caveat of drift toward B) — #1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 10, 11; B (preservation) — #4, 6, 9; C (exit) — none.

Q2. Azerbaijan in the Ankara–Baku–Jerusalem triangle

Expert #1, political scientist: "The Baku-Jerusalem link is the hardest constant in the region because it is existential and material. 'One nation, two states' is rhetoric; the relationship with Israel is capability that Turkey cannot replace. Only the Iranian variable could shift the priority."

Expert #10, columnist: "Baku's partnership with Jerusalem is an existential constant, not a contingency. It rests on the Iranian factor. Turkey cannot offer Baku what Israel does — the depth of its defense and intelligence cover against Iran."

Expert #3, historian: "The breaking point is very high, because Israeli arms supplies and security coordination have no adequate or rapid substitute for Baku. Under systemic pressure, the partnership will move into a 'gray zone' — becoming less public."

Expert #6, national-security expert: "A full rupture is highly unlikely: Israel is Baku's insurance vector against both the Iranian threat and a possible Russian revanchist logic in the Caucasus."

Expert #7, national-security expert: "Baku will choose a posture of 'interested neutrality' with tactical distancing. Full unwinding is unrealistic: Israeli air-defense and UAV systems are a critical component of Azerbaijani defense capability, and Ankara knows it."

Expert #4, IR specialist: "Azerbaijan is not a 'wavering link' but a dual strategic node. Pressure can change the form of cooperation but not necessarily its substance."

Expert #11, scholar of religion: "Baku will adopt rhetorical alignment toward Turkey but not strategic dismantlement of relations with Israel. The Shusha Declaration speaks simultaneously of alliance and of an independent foreign policy."

Q3. The institutional viability of the OTS

Expert #3, historian: "At this stage the OTS remains primarily a platform of symbolic capital and soft power rather than a supranational regulator. Real influence lies in logistics and corridors; security and a common defense policy are declaratory."

Expert #1, political scientist: "The OTS is roughly 70 percent ceremonial and 30 percent real, and the real part is narrowly logistical. It is a summit platform with a thin secretariat."

Expert #9, jurist: "The OTS sits in an intermediate category between a 'club' and a 'soft regime.' There is no mechanism for binding decisions and no dispute-resolution mechanism."

Expert #6, national-security expert: "The OTS is above all a platform for asserting a shared Turkic identity, with a limited operational mandate."

Expert #10, columnist: "The OTS is a ceremonial platform with an ambition to become a mechanism, but it is not one. Eighty percent symbolic capital, twenty percent real regulatory substance."

Ranking of Turkey's instruments of influence (the ordering held for most respondents): direct bilateral diplomacy and defense contracts → educational and sociocultural networks (Maarif, Yunus Emre) → the multilateral OTS platform → Diyanet and religious diplomacy.

Expert #7, national-security expert: "The most effective instrument is direct bilateral diplomacy and defense contracts: the Azerbaijani precedent with Bayraktar UAVs is precisely this kind of influence, not soft power."

Expert #10, columnist (a separate position on the ranking): "The institutions of religious diplomacy (Diyamet) work over the long run, through the religious field; their influence on societies is greater than on elites" — placing Diyanet above the educational networks.

Q4. Structural limits on Turkish influence

Selected factors (two or three):

Factor	Selected by
Sovereign pragmatism of Astana and Baku	#1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
Asymmetry of Turkey's economic resources	#2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
Multi-vector balancing and external dependence	#1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 11
The specific nature of the Baku-Jerusalem partnership	#1, 2, 6, 7, 10 (as secondary — #8, #11)

Expert #1, political scientist: "Sovereign pragmatism is the master constraint. Post-Soviet elites built statehood precisely to avoid delegating sovereignty. Turkey lacks the capital base to convert cultural affinity into dependence."

Expert #4, IR specialist: "Turkey is strong as a political and symbolic leader and as a supplier of specific defense solutions, but far weaker as a universal compensator for the losses Astana or Baku would incur from a sharp revision of relations with Israel, the EU, or other actors."

Expert #6, national-security expert: "In offering a 'Turkic home,' Ankara runs into the fact that its prospective partners identify first as Kazakhs and Azerbaijanis, not as Turks. Azerbaijani-Israeli cooperation exists in spite of Turkic preferences. Turkey is physically unable to offer an equivalent: it has no technology at the level of Rafael or Elbit, no intelligence partnership, and none of the Iranian 'deterrent umbrella' that Israel de facto provides for Baku."

Block II. The Eastern Mediterranean Track

Q5. The effectiveness of EU mechanisms in restraining Ankara

Expert #6, national-security expert: "Low, judged by operational results. The EU has imposed no effective sanctions on Turkey for its violations in the Eastern Mediterranean. Turkey deftly exploits the migration lever, NATO membership, and the 'indispensable partner' narrative."

Expert #9, jurist: "Athens' démarches produce declaratory, not operational, results. The Article 29 TEU mechanism, applied to Turkey, is consistently blocked by the Council's consensus procedure. Real restrictions have been imposed only on specific individuals."

Expert #10, columnist: "Jerusalem should not bet on Brussels to 'deliver.' The EU is a source of partners (Greece, Cyprus), not a source of pressure on Turkey."

Expert #8, sociologist: "Israel must reckon with the fact that its own conduct in Gaza sharply reduces the willingness of segments of European publics to see it as a 'normative' partner against Turkey."

Windows of opportunity for Israel (the common line): energy (Eastern Mediterranean gas, the interconnector, IMEC), defense supplies to Greece and Cyprus, and intelligence cooperation — around Brussels, not through it.

Q6. The limits of the Israel-Greece partnership

Expert #3, historian: "The notion of a single 'anti-Turkish axis' is overstated. This is not a mutual-defense pact but a convergence of tactical interests."

Expert #10, columnist: "The concept of a 'common anti-Turkish strategy' is overrated. Greece will not go to war for Israel, nor Israel for Greece. This is an axis of convenience, not an alliance of blood."

Expert #6, national-security expert: "Israel has no interest in publicly positioning itself as an 'anti-Turkish' power — that narrows its diplomatic room. Greece does not want Israel to 'privatize' its dispute with Ankara."

Expert #1, political scientist: "The interests run parallel, not complementary in the strong sense. Israel will not subordinate its own Turkey calculus to Athens' interests; it keeps its channels to Ankara open."

Expert #11, scholar of religion: "It is more accurate to speak of a deep sectoral strategic partnership. Its ceiling is the point at which Israel is expected to be automatically drawn into every Greek-Turkish dispute."

Q7. The viability of anti-Turkish coalitions in Europe

Expert #1, political scientist: "Low as an institutionalized bloc. Absent a trigger, it is a coalition of the aggrieved, not a coalition of the willing."

Expert #2, political scientist: "Viable only as an issue coalition, not as a durable bloc. Germany and Italy do not think about Turkey the way Greece and Cyprus do."

Expert #4, IR specialist: "Unlikely over the medium term. Turkey is too troublesome to trust and too important to isolate."

Expert #7, national-security expert: "Durability is set by the French factor: Macron or his successor could at any moment bet on normalization with Ankara for the sake of European strategic autonomy."

Triggers that would make it inevitable (the common line): a direct Turkish military incident with Greece or Cyprus; the collapse of a major EU infrastructure project; Turkey's blocking of a critical NATO decision.

Block III. Turkey's Positioning within NATO

Q8. Ankara's foreign-policy deviations from the Atlantic course

Selected directions (two or three):

Direction	Selected by
Instrumentalization of the NATO veto	#1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 11
Institutional patronage of Islamists (Hamas, the Brotherhood)	#3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
The special character of relations with Russia (S-400, F-35, CAATSA)	#1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11
Regional revisionism in the Middle East	#2, 6, 7, 8
Sovereign force projection (Syria/Libya)	#1
Escalation of disputes with Greece/Cyprus	#2 (secondary), #11

The veto was selected most often (8), but institutional patronage of Islamists is most frequently flagged as the vector that matters most to Israel (ranked first by #6, #7, #10).

Expert #10, columnist: "Erdoğan's Turkey is a neo-Ottoman revisionist project under NATO cover. Ankara systematically sponsors the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas: political cover, logistics, media resources."

Expert #4, IR specialist: "The S-400 affair and Turkey's subsequent removal from the F-35 program became the clearest flashpoint between Turkish sovereigntism and Atlantic standardization."

Expert #3, historian: "Israel has limited direct leverage inside NATO, but it can effectively use these deviations in Washington, strengthening the pro-Israel lobby's position in the U.S. Congress."

Expert #11, scholar of religion: "It is not in Israel's interest to push for a final strategic break between Turkey and NATO, because that would increase Ankara's autonomy and reduce the external constraints on its behavior."

Q9. The U.S. administration's strategy toward Turkey

Expert #9, jurist: "In 2026 those limits are low. CAATSA is a binding statute, but its implementation remains a discretionary prerogative of the executive, and Trump has systematically declined to use the mechanism."

Expert #10, columnist: "The pendulum dynamic is itself a structural vulnerability. Jerusalem cannot rely on Washington to restrain Ankara. The only conclusion: build your own deterrent configuration."

Expert #1, political scientist: "The pendulum destabilizes precisely because Israel cannot count on Washington as a force that disciplines Ankara. Israel must hedge through its own bilateral ties rather than rely on American pressure."

Expert #8, sociologist: "Washington may trade away part of Israel's objections for Turkish cooperation on Gaza, Syria, or NATO."

Expert #5, economist: "Inflation above 30 percent, the policy rate at 37. Against that backdrop, foreign policy inevitably becomes an instrument of domestic economy: more symbolic confrontation, less willingness to pay dearly for an ideologically maximalist line."

Block IV. Turkey's Role in Post-Crisis Stabilization in Gaza

Q10. The durability of Israel's veto on a Turkish military presence

Expert #6, national-security expert: "High. This is one of the few positions on which there is a broad Israeli political consensus extending beyond the coalition. A Turkish military contingent in Gaza is perceived as an existential threat."

Expert #1, political scientist: "Moderately durable but eroding. Turkey stays out of the military component but entrenches itself in the civilian and logistical one. Israel wins the symbolic battle and loses the long game for influence."

Expert #10, columnist: "The veto on Turkish boots in Gaza is a red line, and it holds today. But Turkey enters through the back door — humanitarian, logistical, and religious functions. The soft entry, not the tanks, is the real threat."

Expert #4, IR specialist: "No to a Turkish hard-security presence, but yes to an expanded soft-access role if external pressure demands it."

Conditions for revision (the common line): coordinated U.S. pressure; humanitarian collapse coupled with a shortage of alternative contingents; a repackaging of the mandate as a civilian policing mission.

Q11. Turning infrastructure roles into political capital

Expert #1, political scientist: "Counter-financing by the Gulf states, not Israeli vetoes, is the main constraint. Diyanet/TDV build patronage, not piety."

Expert #6, national-security expert: "High over a three-to-five-year horizon. The sequence: humanitarian entry → educational infrastructure → religious institutions → political loyalty of the population → leverage over local elites."

Expert #8, sociologist: "If Israel acts only through prohibition, Turkey will be able to capitalize on the image of the 'blocked benefactor.' The more effective counter-strategy is to build an alternative, transparent, non-religious reconstruction infrastructure."

Expert #10, columnist: "The 'soft' functions — education, mosques, humanitarian guardianship via TDV and Diyanet — are not an auxiliary role but a Trojan horse. Ankara does not 'help'; it occupies the field."

Expert #11, scholar of religion: "From the standpoint of religious studies, this is precisely where one of the most underrated boundaries runs — between 'social assistance' and 'political presence.' Religious and humanitarian infrastructure must not be allowed to become a surrogate for a geopolitical protectorate."

Q12. Competing architectures: the "Hexagon" vs. the "Peace Council"

Expert #2, political scientist: "The most likely outcome is a pragmatic symbiosis. The Peace Council is the official, legitimate macro-frame; the 'Hexagon' is an informal interest club for defense and intelligence cooperation."

Expert #1, political scientist: "The Hexagon is closer to Israel's interests but has a lower feasibility index. The Peace Council is more feasible but includes actors Israel wants to exclude. The likely outcome is not displacement but parallel coexistence."

Expert #9, jurist: "The two-layer architecture reproduces an established pattern: informal 'clubs' (the G7, the Quad) operate inside formal institutions without destroying them."

Expert #10, columnist: "Coexistence will be competitive, not symbiotic. The practical imperative for Jerusalem is to prioritize the 'Hexagon' and push back hard against any expansion of the Turkish and Qatari role in the Peace Council."

Block V. Integral Assessments and Foresight to 2030

Q13. Hierarchy of threats from a Turkish presence

Rankings by expert (1 = maximum threat, 6 = minimum). Vectors: **IPP** — ideological and proxy patronage; **GM** — mandate in the Gaza architecture; **MT** — military-technical reach; **EJ** — East Jerusalem; **PT** — the pan-Turkic vector; **SC** — sociocultural influence on Arab citizens.

Expert	1	2	3	4	5	6
#1 political scientist	IPP	MT	GM	EJ	SC	PT
#2 political scientist	IPP	GM	MT	EJ	SC	PT
#3 historian	IPP	MT	GM	EJ	SC	PT
#4 IR specialist	IPP	EJ	GM	MT	PT	SC
#6 national security	IPP	GM	MT	EJ	SC	PT
#7 national security	IPP	GM	MT	EJ	PT	SC
#8 sociologist	IPP	GM	EJ	MT	SC	PT
#9 jurist	IPP	GM	MT	EJ	PT	SC
#10 columnist	IPP	EJ	GM	SC	MT	PT
#11 scholar of religion	IPP	GM	EJ	MT	PT	SC

Expert #10, columnist: "I build the hierarchy by how directly a threat strikes at the nerve of Jewish sovereignty. What touches Jerusalem, Hamas, and the Arab population inside the country matters more than Turkish frigates in the Aegean."

Expert #1, political scientist: "A realist discounts the neo-Ottomanist soft-power panic. The direct threat comes from capability, proxies, and the politics around Gaza. The pan-Turkic vector as a threat to Israel is overrated."

Expert #6, national-security expert: "Turkey is a key political cover and resource node for Hamas. That is a direct vector of violence against Israel."

Q14. Blind spots in Israeli analysis

Expert #3, historian: "The enormous influence of Turkish secular cultural exports (TV series, media products) on Israel's Arab population. This builds latent, long-term sympathy for the Turkish geopolitical model outside any religious context."

Expert #9, jurist: "Lawfare as an instrument of Ankara — the ICC, the UN General Assembly, the International Court of Justice. This vector is systematically underrated as 'decorative,' yet it has real long-term consequences."

Expert #1, political scientist: "Turkey's Syrian lever after Assad. This is where the risk of a direct military incident actually lives — not in Gaza, on which the analysis is fixated. The countermeasure: a dedicated deconfliction channel."

Expert #7, national-security expert: "Turkish naval positioning in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden — a base in Mogadishu, potentially in Libya — creates an infrastructure for force projection toward the Gulf of Eilat."

Expert #11, scholar of religion: "The first zone is religious and humanitarian infrastructure as accumulating, not one-off, political capital: charity networks, education, the restoration of holy sites, cadres of preachers. The second is Turkey's capacity to operate not through dominance but

through the right to obstruct — to delay, to raise costs, to block, to bargain for concessions. The third is the survivability of pragmatic economic ties even amid sharp political hostility, which makes part of the relationship more durable than the rhetoric suggests."

Expert #10, columnist: "The 'soft' Trojan horse — religious-charitable infiltration (Diyaret, TIKA, TDV) in East Jerusalem. This is not a terror attack; it is networks, waqfs, schools, scholarships, mosques."

Expert #8, sociologist: "Legitimacy as a security resource. Turkey can gain ground precisely where Israel is perceived not as a state with policies but as a structure of control and humiliation."

Q15. Foresight: trajectories of the relationship to 2030

Expert #1, political scientist: "Most likely — cold functionality, with the Syrian file as the main rupture risk."

Expert #2, political scientist: "A full break is unlikely, and so is strategic trust. Trade will persist where it is economically advantageous and politically maskable."

Expert #3, historian: "A state of 'cold peace 2.0' or controlled functionalism. Embassies will operate at the level of *chargés d'affaires*. Trade turnover will recover through workaround schemes."

Expert #5, economist: "A regime of compartmentalizing the tracks: political-ideological hostility will persist, but economic channels will fragment — part will move into indirect routes through third countries."

Expert #6, national-security expert: "Diplomatic relations at the *chargé* level, curtailed direct trade flows, active informal channels. Both sides reap political dividends from demonstrative hostility while genuinely avoiding a rupture."

Expert #9, jurist: "'Managed hostility' is conceptually precise: it captures both real rivalry and a structural interest in preventing direct confrontation."

Expert #11, scholar of religion: "Formal diplomatic relations will persist, but the level of political trust will remain low; informal back-channels and technical deconfliction will not disappear."

Triggers of normalization (the common line): a change of power in Ankara; the removal or normalization of the Iranian threat; a major U.S.-brokered deal; the removal of Hamas from the central agenda.

Triggers of confrontation (the common line): a Turkish military foothold in Gaza; a naval or air incident in the Eastern Mediterranean; demonstrable assistance to Hamas; a crisis over East Jerusalem and al-Aqsa; a military incident in Syria.