

Laying the Cornerstone for a New Turkey: The June 24 Elections

FAHRETTİN ALTUN*

ABSTRACT *On June 24, 2018, with a participation rate of more than 85 percent, Turkey elected its President and parliamentarians. While determining Turkey's political fate, the elections were also of significant importance as they allowed for the final step of the transition to the new presidential governance system that was accepted with the April 16, 2017 referendum. This commentary aims to provide an analysis of the period from the referendum to the June 24, 2018 elections. After providing the main reasons that led to snap elections, the commentary analyses the electoral campaign strategies and the election results.*

Introduction

On June 24, 2018, with a participation rate of 86.24 percent in parliamentary and 86.22 percent in presidential elections – a level that has not been reached by many western democracies – Turkey elected its President and parliamentarians. The winners of this election were Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AK Party). Thus, by obtaining 52.5 percent of the vote, Erdoğan became the first President under the new system, while the AK Party received 42.6 percent of the vote and obtained 295 seats in the parliament. Under the

leadership of Erdoğan, apart from becoming the party that gained the most votes in the election, by forming the People's Alliance (*Cumhur İttifakı*) with the Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, MHP), the AK Party laid the way for a strong parliamentary coalition. As such, after the June 24 elections, the People's Alliance took its place in the legislature with a total of 344 Members of Parliament (MP) forming a substantial majority. Formed in opposition to the People's Alliance, the Nation Alliance (*Millet İttifakı*), composed of the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, CHP), İyi Party and Felicity Party (*Saadet Partisi*) failed to reach its

* Ibn Haldun University, Turkey

Insight Turkey
Vol. 20 / No. 3 /
2018, pp. 89-102

The domestic and international threats made against Turkey's stability, economic development and societal peace made early elections a "national obligation."

aims. Within this framework, as the participants of this alliance, the CHP received 22.6 percent of the vote and 146 MPs while the İyi Party received 9.96 percent of the vote and 43 MPs. The Felicity Party only received 1.4 percent of the vote and thus failed to elect any MPs, however, the party had put two of its candidates into CHP lists and they were therefore elected to parliament. Also, by supporting the Nation Alliance from out with, the political representatives of the PKK –the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) with the help of the CHP, received 11.7 percent of the vote and obtained 67 MPs.

While determining Turkey's political fate, the June 24 elections were also of significant importance as the election allowed for the final step of the transition to the new presidential system of governance that was accepted on April 16, 2017. Consequently Turkey, currently in a process of democratic transition, left behind the slow and disorganized parliamentary system and moved forward with the new presidential system. Within this period, the Turk-

ish electorate refreshed their trust in Erdoğan and with strong political support, displayed their belief in the new system. In opposition to this, candidates defending the old system experienced a clear defeat, in fact, the vote that Erdoğan received alone was more than the total vote for all other presidential candidates; CHP's presidential candidate Muharrem İnce received 30.6 percent, İyi Party candidate Meral Akşener received 7.3 percent, HDP's candidate Selahattin Demirtaş 8.4 percent and finally, Felicity Party candidate Temel Karamollaoğlu only received 0.9 percent of the total vote.

Within this framework, the June 24 elections have brought important dynamics into Turkish political life. Events that occurred between the referendum and the elections and the strategies of the alliances have left their mark on the election process. With the new system of governance showing how important it is in specifying the country's sociologic political position.

This commentary aims to provide an analysis of the period from the April 16 referendum to the June 24 elections. It initially discusses the importance of the presidential governance system and the different reasons why an early election was needed. This is followed by a discussion of the different stages of preparation undertaken by the political parties with regard to the June 24 elections, and by drawing on their strategies and rhetoric assesses the extent to which this has been reflected in the election results.



President Erdoğan greets the crowd from the balcony of the ruling AK Party's headquarters following his election success in presidential and parliamentary elections on June 25, 2018.

KAYHAN ÖZER /
AA Photo

Finally, this commentary briefly analyses the election results.

Why Snap Elections?

Since 2002, President Erdoğan has been in favor of holding elections on time and has not approached any offer of an early election warmly. The only exception to this was in 2007 when elements of the status quo created a crisis aiming to prevent the AK Party from having any say in the presidential appointment. In response to this, Erdoğan decided to hold early elections and took the country to elections three and a half months before the initial date.¹ While Erdoğan has strongly insisted on holding elections on time, he has at times acceded to holding snap elections in extraordinary situations. This

principle showed itself in the run-up to the June 24 elections, which were the result of extraordinary circumstances, which will be discussed under five subheadings.

Firstly, with the successful alliance that the AK Party and MHP formed after the failed July 15 coup attempt, both parties wanted to protect the alliance and wanted to eliminate any political instability that could be experienced while Turkey was witnessing its systematic transition. Therefore it was in fact the leader of the MHP, Devlet Bahçeli, who first called for snap elections and President Erdoğan responded positively.

Secondly, the domestic and international threats made against Turkey's stability, economic development and societal peace made early elections

a “national obligation.” In particular, the financial attacks at an international level on Turkey’s growing economy, and the attempt to manipulate the markets are crucial reasons as to why the elections had to be held immediately. It is possible to argue that had the elections taken place in 2019, there would have been unease in the markets, which could have increased the possibility of difficulties in investment moves, big development projects and in finding financial support. The threat Turkey is faced with is not only economic. Ankara is currently pursuing military operations in Northern Iraq against the PKK/PYD terrorist organization. In order to maintain these operations and to ensure political stability, Turkey needed the swift completion of the transition to a new system of governance; when taking into consideration that the fight against terrorism is a first-degree factor that affects Turkey’s political stability, it is possible to state that the decision to hold snap elections was rational and essential.

Thirdly, Turkey has been in an atmosphere of election expectation for 22 months. After the ruling AK Party and the MHP started to collaborate, whether intended or not, the assumption of snap elections amongst the public and within the state apparatus was evident. However, pointing to November 2019 as a possible date for the elections caused stagnation in both the public and private sector.

Fourthly, the opposition began to feel overwhelmed in the face of the AK Party-MHP alliance and attempted

to use non-democratic means including the organization of street protests similar to that of the “Gezi events” of 2013. The sole common point bringing the Nation Alliance together is that of being anti-Erdoğan. Among the opposition however, it was unclear how they would counter Erdoğan in the area of democratic political competition, and around which leader this position would be transformed into political gains.

Finally, Turkey chose the presidential system on April 16, 2017, and since then it has been in a transitional period. While the laws required for the adjustment to the new system of governance have been in the making since then, the points of response and resistance, especially in the government bureaucracy, made it difficult for political actors in decision making positions –which also delayed the enacting of long-term policies. In order to break the bureaucratic oligarchy and for the constitutional change agreed upon on April 16 to be implemented, it was necessary for Turkey to hold snap elections.

As a result, in order for Turkey to overcome her political uncertainties, and for the country to complete the transition to a presidential system on solid foundations, Erdoğan and Bahçeli agreed to hold the elections on June 24 and such a decision was also supported by the opposition parties. However, this support was not for the reasons that were mentioned above, i.e. threats that Turkey is facing within and out with of its borders, political instability or the successful transition

to a presidential system. The opposition did not perceive the snap elections as a solution to these problems, but rather as an opportunity to come in to power. This assessment can be supported by the opposition parties' stance during the electoral campaign when they turned the international financial attacks on Turkey into political tools. Moreover, they did not support the government's fight against terrorism, and rather than supporting the transition to a new system, which would speed up decision making processes, they preferred to remain with the existing one.

June 24 Electoral Campaigns

Agreed upon due to the reasons stated above, the AK Party and MHP announced that they would continue with their alliance, which they formed after the failed coup attempt on July 15 and continued up to the referendum period, during the June 24 elections. Both parties clearly stated that the reason for their alliance was not to strive for power, but rather was due to the survival of the country.² Within this framework, the AK Party and the MHP made it clear that they held joint visions in many areas, including most importantly, foreign policy and security issues. Moreover, these two parties were the ones that passed the legislation on the ability to form an alliance with different parties before elections through parliament. Under the law that was passed, the AK Party and MHP formed the People's Alliance and the opposition parties were able to form the Nation Alliance.

The most prominent weakness of this alliance was the fact that apart from being anti-Erdoğan, the political parties involved had no other common ground or ideological cohesiveness

The most important factor uniting the alliance formed by the opposition is that it was based around an anti-Erdoğan framework. As a matter of fact, after the June 24 election decision was made, the political strategies of the opposition parties was Erdoğan-centered and their whole strategy was formed on trying to ensure he was not re-elected. This includes the period from the selection of their presidential candidate to their actual election strategy. In this regard, representatives of left-wing Kemalist politics, CHP, and the secular nationalists who departed from the MHP, İyi Party, formed an alliance. The Felicity Party, which assumes itself as an Islamist party representing anti-European Union and anti-capitalist policies, also joined this alliance. The political representatives of the PKK/PYD, the HDP also gave de facto support and the Nation Alliance was formed.

The most prominent weakness of this alliance was the fact that apart from being anti-Erdoğan, the political parties involved had no other common ground or ideological cohesiveness.



President Erdoğan takes oath of office as the first head of the new executive presidency on July 9, 2018. KAYHAN ÖZER / AA Photo

Moreover, parties within the Nation Alliance failed to develop a common perspective with regards to the domestic and international problems that Turkey is facing and in reference to these issues, repeatedly made announcements that contradicted each other. Another weakness of the Nation Alliance is that they failed to select a joint presidential candidate.

In January 2018, when the date of the early elections had not yet been announced, the AK Party and MHP announced that they would form an alliance during the first upcoming election and announced that the name of the alliance they formed after the July 15 coup attempt would be the People's Alliance. From the very first day, the People's Alliance determined their presidential candidate to be Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. In opposition to

this unity, the opposition parties got to work and the CHP, İyi Party, and Felicity Party formed the Nation Alliance and the HDP supported this alliance even though it did not become officially involved.

As mentioned earlier, although the parties within the Nation Alliance have very different political ideologies from each other, they decided to work together within the election period. After the decision to go to early elections was announced, the first thing that the opposition did was try to decide on a joint presidential candidate. When the idea of a joint presidential candidate came on the agenda, the CHP tried to reach to an agreement with Abdullah Gül, who had been selected as president from the AK Party in 2007 but at that time was opposed by the CHP. Although

the CHP and HDP management merged around Gül, a group within the CHP and the İyi Party Leader Akşener did not approach the candidacy of Abdullah Gül warmly. In order to persuade Akşener, the CHP transferred 15 of its MPs to the İyi Party. However, this was not sufficient enough to persuade her. In the end, the attempt to show Gül as the joint candidate failed and all parties within the alliance put forward their own candidates.

In comparison to other parties, the CHP was the party that struggled the most in determining its presidential candidate. The reason for this was because the CHP could not approach the presidential elections free from the on-going intra-party rivalry. This situation, more than anything, is about the design of the new system. This is because the new system prevents a presidential candidate from being simultaneously elected to parliament so that if they lose the elections, they are left outside parliament. Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, CHP's leader, could not bear this risk and for this reason proposed his biggest rival, Muharrem İnce, as CHP's presidential candidate. While Kılıçdaroğlu saw this as an opportunity to guarantee his own seat in the party, İnce viewed the presidential elections as an opportunity to protect and promote his position within the CHP. In this respect, it is clear that the biggest partner of the Nation Alliance, the CHP, viewed the presidential elections not as a matter of national importance but more of an issue for its own party administration.

On the road to the June 24 elections, the People's Alliance developed a discourse that defended the concrete steps taken to satisfy national security concerns and directed to the more active fight against terrorism that they intended to pursue in the future in order to solve terrorism for once and for all

Having made this clear, the next section of this commentary will outline the election strategies of the People's Alliance and the Nation Alliance. It will especially analyze the political vision put forward by the People's Alliance –the victors of the election.

The People's Alliance's Election Strategy

The People's Alliance formed its June 24 election strategy on three levels: (i) the country's security problems and the survival of the state, (ii) carrying into effect the new judicial system and (iii) concrete promises and projects offered to the electorate.

In recent times the fight against terrorism and the issue of security has been the leading factors on the Turkish political agenda. Especially with the increase of street protests, terrorist attacks and the military coup attempt since 2013, political actors

The Nation Alliance's criticism of the state of emergency lost its ground as President Erdoğan announced immediately after the elections, that the state of emergency would be abolished

brought the survival of the state forward as a centralized discourse. Following the failed coup attempt on July 15 and the increase of terrorist attacks, a large section of society feared that the country was under the threat of secession and occupation. With this therefore, the PKK, ISIS and the Fetullah Terrorist Organization (FETÖ) led by Fetullah Gülen, were all identified as terrorist groups that had to be eliminated.

Especially after the July 15 coup attempt, in an attempt to counter the worries of the Turkish public, Erdoğan and Bahçeli met in the middle in order to satisfy the expectations of society. By placing unity and brother/sisterhood at the forefront, Erdoğan and Bahçeli developed a political discourse emphasizing national unity. In this direction, they underlined native and national politics. Both leaders argued that Turkey needed to move onto a different level in terms of its fight against terrorism, especially after July 15. With this, the Erdoğan Administration developed a new security concept. According to this security concept, the main factor in the fight against terrorism is to elim-

inate the main source of terrorism. In this framework, Turkey started military operations outside its border first against ISIS and then against the PKK. With this new concept, the Turkish government also intervened in FETÖ's international operations and began operations on FETÖ fugitives who had fled abroad. MHP stated that it was also alongside the AK Party in its fight against FETÖ and claimed that defeating this terrorist organization was something akin to a war of liberation.³ However, this support was not only limited to FETÖ. The border operations conducted by the AK Party against PKK/PYD terror in Iraq and Syria have also been welcomed by the MHP and a common principle was found in the fight against all types of terror. President Erdoğan repeatedly emphasizes how important it is to eliminate terrorism in order to secure the country's national security.

On the road to the June 24 elections, the People's Alliance developed a discourse that defended the concrete steps taken to satisfy national security concerns and directed to the more active fight against terrorism that they intended to pursue in the future in order to solve terrorism for once and for all. For example, in its election manifesto, the AK Party emphasized preventive intervention and put at its center a security provision that reached out to all citizens. Thus, a pro-active encounter against all terrorist organizations, especially FETÖ, the PKK and ISIS, was envisaged. In addition to this, other plans had also been developed with regard

to the fight against terrorism. These include the more productive use of mass media in order to prevent the propaganda of terrorist organizations and the increase of public diplomacy in order to prevent their activities abroad.⁴

The second main agenda item for the People's Alliance was the defense of the presidential governance system. Both leaders and deputies of the AK Party and the MHP listed one-by-one the advantages and benefits they believed that the presidential system will bring for Turkey. They emphasized that this government system will create a true balance-control mechanism between the legislature, executive and judiciary. At the same time, it was emphasized that this system will prevent the legislature, executive and the judiciary from overlapping with each other's roles and that each will operate within their own field.

Another point made was that the new government system will break the bureaucratic oligarchy and that this will speed up the decision making processes. In addition to this, it was also emphasized that with the presidential system, the idea of strong political leadership and political stability will become institutionalized. It was also underlined that with the new system, long-term plans and strategies can be established in the country and that the new system will play an important role in overcoming the middle income trap in the economy. Because the presidential system foresees accelerated decision making

and bureaucratic rationality, these deep-rooted problems will be solved with the help of strong leadership and line ministries. The newly established state structure will enlarge the capacity for responsiveness of state institutions and thus bureaucratic inertia will be prevented from decreasing the efficiency in state bodies.

The third level of the election strategy of the People's Alliance is composed of the concrete promises that were made. In this context, the AK Party, which is the main partner of the People's Alliance, made reference to its major projects that it conducted in the past and assured the electorate that in the upcoming period, not only will they be pursuing major projects such as the Eurasia Tunnel, Osman-gazi Bridge, Yavuz Selim Bridge and Ovit Tunnel, but that they will also be pursuing micro projects that will affect the daily lives of the people.

The Nation Alliance's Election Strategy

The Nation Alliance, made up of the CHP, İyi Party, Democrat Party and Felicity Party, and covertly supported by the HDP, was made up of political parties that have very different ideological roots. The main foundation of this alliance was being anti-Erdoğan. Before anything, the Nation Alliance pursued an election strategy on the basis of putting an end to Erdoğan's rule and going back to a parliamentary system.

Within this framework, the parties that formed the Nation Alliance placed themselves literally opposite to the foundation thesis of the Peo-

While these actors, prior to the April 16 referendum, stated that the parliament would lose its importance under the new presidential system, and although they tried to consolidate their electorate around this belief, these very same actors raced for a parliamentary majority during the June 24 elections

ple's Alliance, and pursued propaganda activities in response to the announcements made by the People's Alliance. Within this aspect, the Nation Alliance tried to eliminate the national security discourse pursued by the People's Alliance. In fact, the opposition parties went so far as to claim that after July 15, 2016, Erdoğan himself has been implementing a military coup. The partners within the Nation Alliance severely criticized the state of emergency, which was declared for security reasons and military operations conducted in the fight against terrorism.⁵ However, the Nation Alliance's criticism of the state of emergency lost its ground as President Erdoğan announced immediately after the elections, that the state of emergency would be abolished.⁶

The partners within the Nation Alliance not only problematized the

fight against FETÖ, but also the fight against the PKK. Whilst the Turkish government was conducting operations against PKK/PYD headquarters in Qandil, the CHP deputies made announcements claiming that there were no PKK camps left in the area and that the government was using the Qandil operations as an election tool.⁷ This approach displayed by the Nation Alliance failed to find any room within a large segment of society, and gave the image that the Nation Alliance remained quiet with regards to Turkey's most important issue; the fight against terrorism.

In addition to the fight against terrorism, another issue on the Nation Alliance's agenda during the election process was the new presidential system. However, rather than sharing with the electorate what kind of administration they were going to put in place under the new system, the Nation Alliance gave the message that if they were to be successful, they will turn back to the old system. The issue that's ironic here is the very fact that the parties within the Nation Alliance were actually participating in elections under a system that they opposed. Without a doubt, this caused sincere discrepancy within the Nation Alliance. Although the Nation Alliance instructed a "No" camp prior to the April 16 referendum it failed to keep this bloc together with regard to the June 24 elections. The reason for this failure was the lack of ideological cohesiveness amongst members of this alliance and their inability to find a common ground except uniting against President Erdoğan.



Prior to the June 24 elections, the most important discrepancy within the Nation Alliance was the fact that it was more difficult to use their anti-Erdoğan capital in comparison to July 15, 2016. This is because after the failed July 15 coup attempt, anti-Erdoğanism drew intense reactions within society. This nevertheless expanded the sphere of Erdoğan's politics. For this reason, the Nation Alliance was not able to transform their anti-Erdoğanism –their real reason for existence– into a successful political rhetoric.

The political actors that form the Nation Alliance are also those that formed the “No” block prior to the April 16 referendum. While these actors, prior to the April 16 referendum, stated that the parliament would lose its importance under the new presidential system, and although they tried to consolidate their electorate around this belief, these very same

actors raced for a parliamentary majority during the June 24 elections. These actors appealed to their voters by stating that the only way of toppling Erdoğan was to obtain a majority in the Parliament. By doing so, parties within the Nation Alliance tacitly accepted that by keeping its legislative role, the Parliament can limit the executive and can act as a watchdog.

While all components of the Nation Alliance were getting ready for the June 24 elections, they were also at the same time experiencing serious struggles for power within their own parties. This can especially be related to the CHP as the struggle for power between the party's presidential candidate, Muharrem İnce, and the party's leader, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu affected the CHP's presidential and parliamentary election strategies and reflected the fact that currently intra-party politics is much more im-

President Erdoğan presents the members of his new cabinet at the presidential complex in Ankara on July 9, 2018.

RAŞİT AYDOĞAN / AA Photo

portant for the CHP than national politics. The post-election process shows that the long-lasting competition for the chairmanship of the CHP may cause a serious crisis for the future of the party.

In addition to these discrepancies, an important tool utilized by the Nation Alliance was the populist promises that it made. In this regard, the alliance tried to reach out to the electorate by promising things such as the return of Syrian refugees to their own country, the increase of the minimum wage, the abolition of health fees and an extra cash bonus to be given to public workers. Besides, while the election promises made by the People's Alliance were at a total of 30 billion Turkish Liras, those made by the Nation Alliance came to 400 billion Turkish Liras –yet no information or data was given to the electorate as to the source of this funding.

Analyzing June 24 Elections Results

When the ballot boxes were opened and the results were being announced on the night of June 24, the situation in Turkish politics was telling us this fact: The AK Party, under the leadership of Erdoğan and the People's Alliance had won the elections, and that Erdoğan showed us once again that he was a significant component of the socio-political truth in Turkey. It can also be stated that with these elections, the electorate perceived the People's Alliance as a successful and viable alliance, and that in the up-

coming future this collaboration is going to be an inseparable aspect of Turkish politics.

In these elections, as a whole and individually, all political parties that formed the Nation Alliance experienced a failure and were unsuccessful. The CHP's vote decreased and the HDP lost around 15 percent of its traditional vote in the eastern region of Turkey. The İyi Party failed to obtain the votes that it hoped it would from the MHP and the Felicity Party, by only receiving 1.4 percent of the votes, failed to display any prominence.

Although CHP's presidential candidate Muharrem İnce received 8 percent more of the votes than his party, he still remained far behind Erdoğan and therefore was defeated. It can be foreseen that in a political atmosphere where the CHP only obtained 22.6 percent while its presidential candidate İnce received 30.6 percent of the vote, the party will experience an intense intra-party rivalry. Hence, immediately after the elections, Kılıçdaroğlu stated that "İnce failed to obtain the success expected" and that "there is no room for seat-lovers in this party." İnce on the other hand underlined how he broke the 30 percent threshold, one which his party had failed to reach in 41 years. Soon after this statement, İnce asked Kılıçdaroğlu to name him the new CHP chairman but his demand was rejected. This made it clear that he was going to make a challenge for the party leadership. There is no doubt that this party leadership ri-

valry within the CHP is going to become the most important dynamics of Turkish politics in the post-June 24 period.

When analyzing the election results, another important issue that ought to be underlined is the de facto CHP-HDP alliance. In order to ensure that the HDP did not stay below the 10 percent threshold, which would have prevented it from entering Parliament, the CHP supported the HDP in its strong areas. While in public surveys the HDP's vote was hovering around 8 percent, the party received 11.7 percent of the vote and entered Parliament. While this alliance was hidden from the traditionalist Kemalist wing of the CHP, the given result has led to controversy within the party. This situation will mean a natural rise of conflict within the CHP.

One other political reality the June 24 election results put forward is this: even if anti-Erdoğanism creates a synergetic and emotional atmosphere, it is not enough to obtain any concrete political achievements. The opposition parties have continued to display a hard attitude within the last 5 years, which perceives Erdoğan not as an opponent or competitor, but as an enemy, and this has inevitably consolidated the electorate that supports Erdoğan. The opposition in Turkey does nothing but concentrate on anti-Erdoğan policies and this guarantees their defeat. The June 24 elections reflected that rather than putting forward an essentialist anti-Erdoğan view, the opposition needs to display micro policies that address

Turkey needs a strong political leadership, political stability and an assertive political vision to make successful reforms

all segments of society and pursue a more selective understanding of opposition. Another reality that the June 24 elections reflected is that the negative and reactionary politics pursued by the opposition parties, which eventually led to them reaching an agreement with terrorist groups on the basis of anti-Erdoğanism, did not find a positive response in society.

The AK Party continues to be the most important actor in Turkish politics, a message given by the electorate in the June 24 elections. Nonetheless, the AK Party failed to reach its objective of an absolute majority in Parliament and it received 10 percent less votes than President Erdoğan and its own vote in comparison to the November 1, 2015, elections, decreased by 7 percent. This result reflects the fact that approximately 20 percent of the AK Party electorate differentiate between the AK Party and Erdoğan and that the AK Party and its parliamentary candidates do not represent Erdoğan's vision enough. In this respect, we can assume that there will be a serious change in the AK Party administration under Erdoğan's coordination and that this will be another development in the post-election period. The most important issue that needs to be

highlighted here is the fact that even when in power, the most important feature of Erdoğan's politics is that it can successfully renew itself.

Conclusion

The June 24 elections can be seen as a cornerstone in Turkish politics. Leaving behind the political instability that has characterized Turkey over many decades, Turkey has moved forward towards a better and more secure future. It is important to underline the fact that the transition from a parliamentary system to a presidential one is very complicated, however, the Turkish people once more showed their democratic culture and with their votes a smooth process and transition occurred.

Moreover, during the June 24 elections, the Turkish electorate refreshed its trust in Erdoğan and committed Turkey's future into the hands of the Erdoğan-led People's Alliance. In order to be able to successfully predict the future of Turkish politics, it is vital to correctly analyze Erdoğan's vision. For Erdoğan, Turkey's most important issue is to remain on its own feet in a region where there is increasing instability, and to grow and develop by taking advantage of opportunities that arise. Additionally, locality and nationality will be the core values in the future of Turkey's democracy.

In the post-election period, Turkish bureaucratic structure is witnessing a major transformation in accordance with the requirements of the new

system. The government announced new emergency decree laws to regulate state institutions and increase the efficiency of state bodies. All regulations up until now are compatible with the essential characteristics of the presidential system and it is certain that they will accelerate the transformation in Turkish bureaucracy. For this reason, before anything, Turkey needs a strong political leadership, political stability and an assertive political vision to make successful reforms. ■

Endnotes

1. "Turkey's Ruling Party Claims Win," *CNN*, (July 22, 2018), retrieved from <http://edition.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/europe/07/22/turkey.elections/index.html>.
2. Aynur Ekiz, Mumin Altas and Sinan Uslu, "Yildirim: People's Alliance Will Take Turkey to Future," *Anadolu Agency*, (May 12, 2018), retrieved from <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/politics/yildirim-peoples-alliance-will-take-turkey-to-future/1143242>.
3. Mehmet Zahid Sobacı, "The AK Party-MHP Alliance and Turkey's Presidential System," *The New Turkey*, (February 16, 2018), retrieved from <https://thenewturkey.org/the-ak-party-mhp-alliance-and-turkeys-presidential-system/>.
4. Yunus Paksoy, "AK Party's Election Declaration Pledges Greener, Eco-friendly Turkey," *Daily Sabah*, (May 24, 2018), retrieved from <https://www.dailysabah.com/elections/2018/05/24/ak-partys-election-declaration-pledges-greener-eco-friendly-turkey>.
5. "Turkey Opposition Chief Accuses Erdogan of 'Second Coup' with Purge," *Arab News*, (June 16, 2018), retrieved from <http://www.arabnews.com/node/1116096/world>.
6. After the elections, it was publicly announced that the state of emergency would be lifted on July 18, 2018.
7. "Afrin'e Girmeyin Diyen Kılıçdaroğlu Kandil Operasyonuna Karşı Çıktı," *Star*, (June 21, 2018), retrieved from <http://www.star.com.tr/politika/afrine-girmeyin-diyen-kilicdaroglu-kandil-operasyonuna-karsi-cikti-haber-1356086/>.

THIS IS OUR WORLD



Turkuvaz Media Group is the leading group of companies which deals with broadcasting, publishing and distribution activities in Turkey. Most reputable national and international magazines, best selling local and national newspapers and prestigious tv channels create the most powerful synergy in Turkish media.

The opportunity to utilize this power for your advertisements is in your hands. Why not use it?

