



ROSA & ROUBINI
ASSOCIATES

POLICY COMPASS
Turkey and Iran in a Recalibrated
Middle East

By
Gulf State Analytics



3 December 2025

Gulf State Analytics

Turkey and Iran in a Recalibrated Middle East

3 December 2025

Table of Contents

	Page	Page 2
Executive Summary	3	
Turkey - Iran Strategic Reset.....	4	
Shared Perceptions of Israel as a Regional Threat.....	4	
Geopolitical Pressures Reshape Ties.....	5	
Conclusion	5	
NOTES	5	



Rosa & Roubini Associates Ltd is a private limited company registered in England and Wales (Registration number: 10975116) with registered office at 118 Pall Mall, St. James's, London SW1Y 5ED, United Kingdom.

For information about Rosa&Roubini Associates, please send an email to info@rosa-roubini-associates.com or call +44 (0)20 7101 0718.

Analyst Certification: We, Brunello Rosa and GSA, hereby certify that all the views expressed in this report reflect our personal opinion, which has not been influenced by considerations of Rosa & Roubini Associates' business, nor by personal or client relationships. We also certify that no part of our compensation was, is or will be, directly or indirectly, related to the views expressed in this report.

Disclaimer: All material presented in this report is provided by Rosa & Roubini Associates-Limited for informational purposes only and is not to be used or considered as an offer or a solicitation to sell or to buy, or subscribe for securities, investment products or other financial instruments. Rosa & Roubini Associates Limited does not conduct "investment research" as defined in the FCA Conduct of Business Sourcebook (COBS) section 12 nor does it provide "advice about securities" as defined in the Regulation of Investment Advisors by the US SEC. Rosa & Roubini Associates Limited is not regulated by the FCA, SEC or by any other regulatory body. Nothing in this report shall be deemed to constitute financial or other professional advice in any way, and under no circumstances shall we be liable for any direct or indirect losses, costs or expenses nor for any loss of profit that results from the content of this report or any material in it or website links or references embedded within it. The price and value of financial instruments, securities and investment products referred to in this research and the income from them may fluctuate. Past performance and forecasts should not be treated as a reliable guide of future performance or results; future returns are not guaranteed; and a loss of original capital may occur. This research is based on current public information that Rosa & Roubini Associates considers reliable, but we do not represent it is accurate or complete, and it should not be relied on as such. Rosa & Roubini Associates, its contributors, partners and employees make no representation about the completeness or accuracy of the data, calculations, information or opinions contained in this report. Rosa & Roubini Associates has an internal policy designed to minimize the risk of receiving or misusing confidential or potentially material non-public information. We seek to update our research as appropriate, but the large majority of reports are published at irregular intervals as appropriate in the author's judgment. The information, opinions, estimates and forecasts contained herein are as of the date hereof and may be changed without prior notification. This research is for our clients only and is disseminated and available to all clients simultaneously through electronic publication. Rosa & Roubini Associates is not responsible for the redistribution of our research by third party aggregators. This report is not directed to you if Rosa & Roubini Associates is barred from doing so in your jurisdiction. This report and its content cannot be copied, redistributed or reproduced in part or whole without Rosa & Roubini Associates' written permission.

www.rosa-roubini.com

Brunello Rosa and Gulf State Analytics

Turkey and Iran in a Recalibrated Middle East

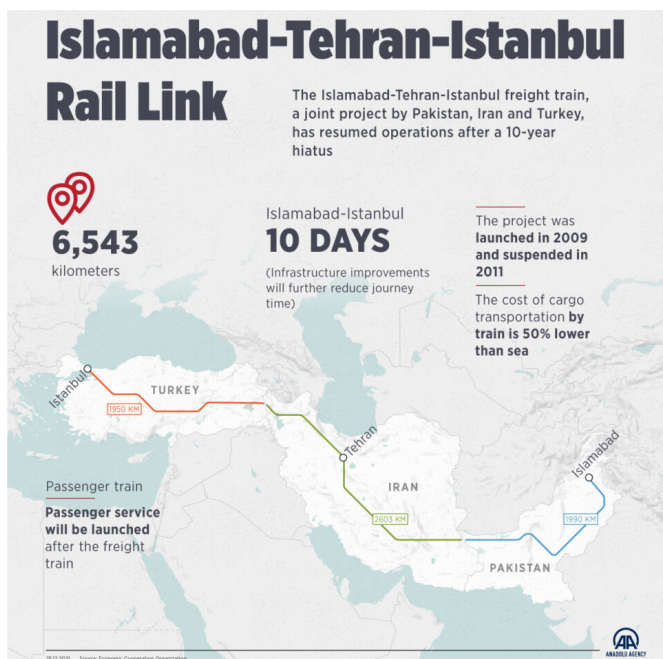
3 December 2025

Executive Summary

Page | 3

- ✧ Despite various tensions in Turkey and Iran's bilateral affairs, rapidly shifting regional dynamics are pushing the two countries toward greater cooperation.
- ✧ Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan's fourth visit to Tehran since 2023, which took place on 30 November 2025, reflected an accelerating strategic dialogue between Turkey and Iran.
- ✧ Ankara and Tehran align on countering Israel's regional actions and advancing diplomatic efforts on Iran's nuclear file.
- ✧ Turkey and Iran both see Israel as the primary destabilising force in the Middle East.
- ✧ Ankara views the risk of a renewed Israel–Iran war as a direct national security concern to Turkey.
- ✧ Turkey's fears of becoming a future target of Israeli military action brings Ankara and Tehran into closer strategic convergence.
- ✧ Both governments aim to deepen functional cooperation on issues such as irregular Afghan migration and expanded bilateral trade.
- ✧ Tehran sees engagement with Turkey as a means to alleviate isolation and manage external pressures while preserving a complex "cooperative rivalry."
- ✧ Iran values Turkey's rejection of Western sanctions and views Ankara as a pragmatic partner despite its NATO membership.
- ✧ Turkey and Iran recognise that lingering structural tensions will continue to limit trust even amid growing cooperation.

Key Picture: Pakistan, Iran, and Türkiye Plan to Resume Regular Operations By Late 2025



Turkey - Iran Strategic Reset

On 30 November, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan traveled to Tehran for high-level talks with his Iranian counterpart, Abbas Araghchi, marking his fourth visit to Iran since assuming office in June 2023.¹ During this latest round of meetings, the two sides tackled a wide spectrum of issues of relevance to bilateral affairs—ranging from regional security and energy cooperation to trade, tourism, health, and emerging technologies—highlighting the breadth and complexity of the Turkish-Iranian relations at a moment of heightened geopolitical flux.

Page | 4

There is no denying that tensions between Ankara and Tehran have been significant in recent years. The 2020 Karabakh War and the fall of Syria's former government in December 2024 were major developments that highlighted their opposing stakes. Moreover, Tehran sees Turkey's growing presence in Iraq, the South Caucasus, and Central Asia as constituting a threat of geopolitical encroachment and encirclement. Nonetheless, Ankara and Tehran also retain areas of strategic alignment. Both share an interest in pushing back against what they view as Israel's extraterritorial aggression and in advancing diplomatic pathways on the Iranian nuclear file.

Fidan underscored that Ankara and Tehran share the view that Israel constitutes the “biggest threat to stability in the Middle East,” pointing to developments in Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, Syria, and elsewhere.² He urged the international community to respond more decisively to Tel Aviv's actions and reiterated Turkey's longstanding position that Western sanctions on Iran are “unrighteous” and should be lifted.³ Araghchi, for his part, used the occasion to express support for Ankara's efforts to secure the full disarmament of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).⁴

At a joint press conference, Fidan and Araghchi highlighted the need for deeper cooperation in managing irregular migration from Afghanistan—an issue that has long placed significant pressure on both Turkey and Iran.⁵ They also underscored the importance of expanding and streamlining bilateral trade through new logistics and transportation initiatives, including the opening of additional border crossings. Yet beyond these functional areas of cooperation, the strategic environment surrounding both states is rapidly evolving.

Shared Perceptions of Israel as a Regional Threat

The post-7 October security environment in the Middle East, which is now increasingly shaped by Israel's borderless aggression, draws Ankara and Tehran into closer alignment. For Turkish officials, a central worry is the prospect of renewed hostilities between Israel and Iran following their 12-Day War in June 2025. A second round, particularly one more destructive than the clashes six months ago, would carry significant implications for Turkey's national security. The instability such a conflict could generate across Turkey's immediate neighbourhood leaves Ankara deeply uneasy about the possibility of the war reigniting.

This heightened risk of a renewed Israel-Iran confrontation carries direct implications for Turkey itself. At the end of the day, Ankara cannot dismiss the possibility of finding itself in Israel's crosshairs. Tel Aviv justified its 9 September strike on Qatar by citing the presence of Hamas officials in Doha—a rationale with clear implications for Turkey, where the group has long maintained a presence for many years.⁶ In this sense, Turkey—much like Pakistan—perceives a convergence of interests with Iran, grounded in the shared risk of being, or becoming, a target of Israeli military action.

Taken together, Fidan's latest visit to Tehran illustrates how the geopolitical recalibrations are reshaping the strategic landscape for Turkish-Iranian relations. While the two powers have long navigated a complex “cooperative rivalry”, the current regional environment is pushing them toward more cooperation, at least as far as Israeli conduct in the Middle East is concerned.⁷ Their shared apprehension over Tel Aviv's aggression is creating a convergence of interests that is multidimensional.

Geopolitical Pressures Reshape Ties

This shift is not occurring in a vacuum. Both governments are confronting heightened geopolitical pressures, whether from the uncertainties surrounding Iran's nuclear trajectory, the possibility of renewed Israel–Iran conflict, or the ongoing fragmentation of regional security orders. For Ankara, the risk calculus is becoming more acute. Its proximity to several potential flashpoints, including Syria, Iraq, and the eastern Mediterranean, means that the fallout from escalatory dynamics involving Iran or Israel would be felt almost immediately along Turkey's borders. With Turkey wanting the Middle East to be increasingly shaped by economic opportunity and cooperation, more armed conflict involving Israel and Iran threatens to make it a region defined by worsening security threats and instability, which all serve to significantly strain Turkish markets. As a result, Turkish policymakers are re-examining not only their security posture but also the diplomatic channels available for mitigating regional volatility.

For Tehran, engagement with Turkey offers an avenue to reduce isolation at a moment when sanctions pressure remains high and the threat environment is expanding. Despite Turkey's NATO membership, Ankara's continued rejection of Western sanctions on Iran, along with its willingness to coordinate on security, trade, and regional diplomacy, provides the Islamic Republic with a pragmatic partner capable of buffering external constraints. This mutually beneficial dynamic does not erase the structural differences between the two countries, nor does it paper over their conflicts of interest. But it does situate Ankara and Tehran within a shared strategic space from which both stand to gain. Within this context, it will be particularly important to monitor the extent to which Turkey can serve as a bridge between the Islamic Republic and Syria's post-Ba'athist government.

Conclusion

Ultimately, Fidan's trip underscores a larger reality in which regardless of lingering tensions or divergent ideological orientations, the sheer force of regional events is driving Turkey and Iran closer together. As the region continues to absorb the aftershocks of shifting power balances, Ankara and Tehran appear increasingly committed to managing instability not as adversaries or reluctant neighbours, but as two states whose strategic fates are intertwined despite continued conflicts of interest that will limit trust in bilateral relations and ensure that the cooperative rivalry between Turkey and Iran remains complicated.

NOTES

¹ <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/turkish-fm-in-iran-says-israel-biggest-threat-to-region>

² <https://www.trtworld.com/article/7476979eea19>

³ <https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-iranian-fms-vow-to-ramp-up-trade-security-ties-216301>

⁴ <https://www.turkiyetoday.com/region/iran-endorses-pkk-disarmament-as-turkiye-expands-tehran-cooperation-on-trade-security-3210609>

⁵ <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/turkish-fm-in-iran-says-israel-biggest-threat-to-region/amp>

⁶ <https://apnews.com/article/hamas-turkey-israel-threat-b9207ce3ca90e2364c68d1eedb20175f>

⁷ <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/why-post-assad-syria-complicates-the-iran-turkey-rivalry/>