

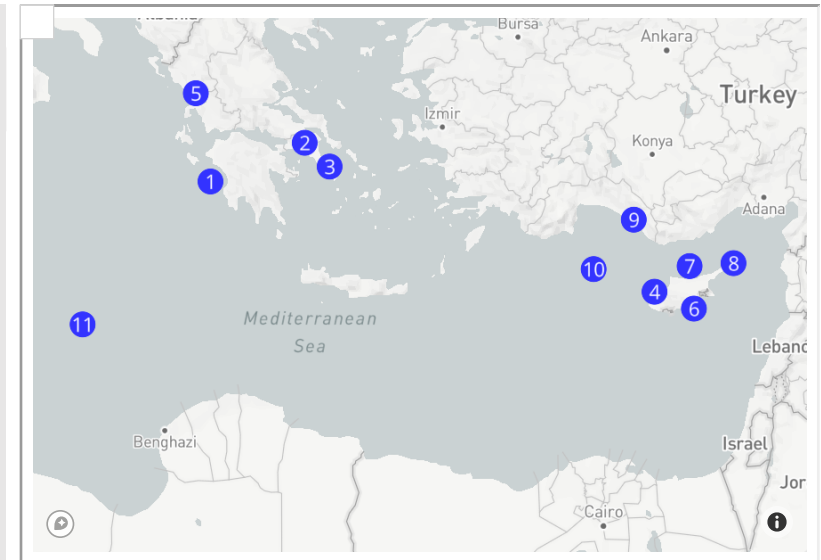
MEDITERRANEAN CRISIS HORIZON (03 - 18 Nov 2020)

KEY EVENTS

- 1 Dendias Urges Berlin To Halt Sale Of Submarines To Ankara | Kathimerini**
2020-11-09 Greek Foreign Minister Dendias urged Germany to halt the sale of Type 214 class submarines to Turkey, saying that the move would upset the existing power balance and enable Ankara to destabilize the Eastern Mediterranean. [EKATHIMERINI](#)
- 2 Greece, Egypt Seek Biden Role In East Mediterranean Dispute**
2020-11-11 "We have every reason to welcome, along with all our partners in the region, the return of the US to its central role as a leader of NATO," Greek PM Mitsotakis said after a meeting in Athens on Wednesday with Egyptian President Sisi. [AP](#)
- 3 Sisi Hails Egypt, Greece Demarcation Pact**
2020-11-12 "Two countries' bilateral relations are advancing, and signing of a maritime border demarcation agreement reflects a high level of mutual understanding," stated Egypt's President Al-Sisi. [MIDDLE EAST MONITOR](#)
- 4 Israel, Greece And Greek Cypriot Discuss East Mediterranean**
2020-11-12 An official meeting between the defence ministers of Cyprus, Greece and Israel took place in Nicosia. President Anastasiades and Gantz reaffirmed their excellent bilateral relations, especially in the fields of defence and security. [CNA](#)
- 5 Greece To Purchase Rafale Fighter Jets, F-35s Amid Soaring Turkey Tensions | | Ahval**
2020-11-16 Greece is looking to purchase French-made Rafale fighter jets and U.S. F-35s as part of efforts to ramp up its defence plans amid increasing tensions with neighbouring Turkey. [AHVAL](#)
- 6 Cyprus Leaders, In First Encounter, Back Five-Way U.N. Meeting**
2020-11-03 The leaders of Cyprus's estranged Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities on Tuesday agreed to support the possibility of a five-party meeting under the auspices of the United Nations to resolve the island's decades-old division. [REUTERS](#)
- 7 Friendly Nations Will Recognize North Cyprus**
2020-11-17 The newly elected President of Turkish Cypriots Tatar will start "recognition" visits. Azerbaijan prepares to recognize Turkish Cypriots after its capture of Nagorno-Karabagh. Bangladesh, Gambia, Libya, and Pakistan maybe the next countries. [TGRT](#)
- 8 Erdogan's Visit To Cyprus.**
2020-11-15 Erdogan reiterated his support for a two-state-solution during his visit to Cyprus. "There are two separate peoples, two separate democratic systems and two separate states in Cyprus today," he said [AHVAL](#)
- 9 Turkey To Build Port In Eastern Mediterranean**
2020-11-13 Turkey will build a transit-loan based main container port in the Eastern Med, which will operate as a gateway to the Middle East and Central Asia as part of the Belt and Road Initiative, the presidential office announced. [MIDDLE EAST MONITOR](#)
- 10 Turkey Extends Research Ship's Mission Again In Eastern Mediterranean**
2020-11-12 Turkey extended the gas exploration mission of Oruç Reis seismic research vessel and two other ships in the Eastern Mediterranean until 23 November. [MIDDLE EAST MONITOR](#)
- 11 More Tragedy On The Mediterranean As 74 Migrants Reportedly Drown Off Libya Coast**
2020-11-12 At least 74 migrants have drowned after a boat shipwrecked off the coast of Libya in the Mediterranean. [UN](#)

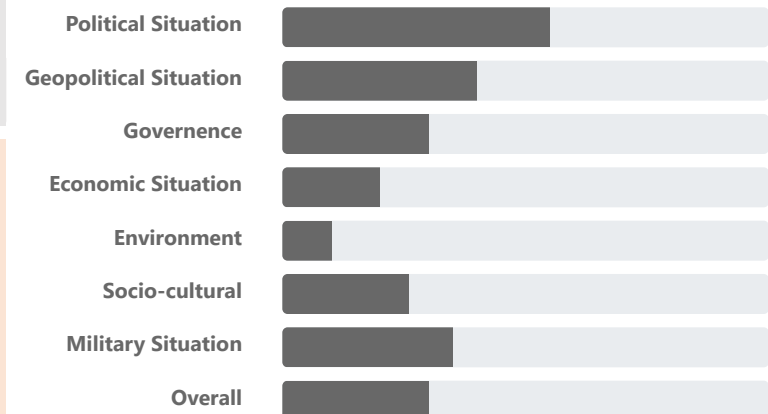
ASSESSMENT

- The EU is still divided over the response against Turkey. Germany presiding the EU Council, follows a more diplomatic/neutral position to bring parties together, and find common ground while France acts as a staunch supporter of Greece.
- Emerging anti-Turkey alliance comprised of Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, and Cyprus foster their political and military relationship with different initiatives, and statements. Hence, we probably see a more harsh anti-Turkey rhetoric and Turkey's exclusion in the region.
- Financial problems, and exclusion do not stop Turkey to pursue its agenda in the East Med. The (re)extension of Oruç Reis' mission escalated the tension between parties, and the election of President Tatar, an ally of Erdogan, provides a room for manoeuvre to Erdogan. Turkey also strives to solidify its position with diplomatic moves. If Erdogan succeeds in persuading his allies to recognize Turkish Cypriots, then Turkey's position on the table will be much stronger.
- Turkey's efforts to build a port as part of BRI may bring China to the East Med in favor of Turkey, make China a more powerful and active player in the region. Yet, there is a long way to go for constructing the port, and establishing it as part of BRI.
- President-elect Biden, who advocate for an active US Leadership may alter US Policy towards the region. Turkey's tectonic plates of domestic politics may be shaken to the extent that Erdogan has to reverse his policy as there's an abrupt change in his recent rhetoric. Thus, Mr. Biden could transform the scene in the East Med, that can't be changed by the divided EU, Greece, or sinking Turkish Lira.



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MEDITERRANEAN CRISIS HORIZON (19 - 29 Nov 2020)

KEY EVENTS

1 EU Parliament Calls For Urgent Sanctions On Turkey Over Cyprus

2020-11-27 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) yesterday voted in favour of a resolution calling on the European Council to impose sanctions against Turkey. [MIDDLE EAST MONITOR](#)

2 Multinational Exercise Medusa 2020 To Kick Off Monday

2020-11-28 Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, and United Arab Emirates will conduct a multinational exercise. [CYPRUS-MAIL](#)

3 Greece, UAE Commit To Mutual Defense Assistance, Vassilis Nedos | Kathimerini

2020-11-23 The mutual defense assistance clause, activated if one country's territorial integrity is threatened, is probably the most important part of the defense and foreign policy cooperation agreement signed by Greece and the UAE last week. [EKATHIMERINI](#)

4 Turkey To Repatriate Overseas Energy Firms Amid Sanction Threats

2020-11-20 Turkey will move some state-owned energy companies established in overseas jurisdictions home to shield the industry from the threat of sanctions. [BLOOMBERG BUSINESS](#)

5 Turkey's Erdogan, Saudi King Agree To Solve Issues Through Dialogue

2020-11-20 Erdogan and King Salman agreed to improve bilateral ties and solve disputes through dialogue. [REUTERS](#)

6 Turkey-Ukraine Defense Co-Operation Upsets Strategic Balance In Eastern Mediterranean

2020-11-26 Few things have been said about the defense co-operation agreement signed between Turkey and Ukraine in mid-October this year, which is shaping new ties in the region. [BALKANEU](#)

7 Havelsan Will Establish Maritime Traffic Surveillance Stations

2020-11-26 Havelsan will establish maritime traffic surveillance stations in North Cyprus and the Mediterranean. Turkey and North Cyprus Transportation ministries signed a protocol and the system will be completed by 2021. [HABER7](#)

8 A New NAVTEX Announced For The Extension Of Oruc Reis' Mission.

2020-11-21 ONHO published a new NAVTEX extending the mission of Oruc Reis until 29th of November. [ONHO \(SHODB\)](#)

9 Athens Calls Upon Turkey To Revoke 'Illegal' Navtex | Kathimerini

2020-11-21 Greek MFA has urged Turkey to revoke an "illegal" Navtex extending the activities of its Oruc Reis survey vessel in the Eastern Mediterranean. Greek MFA said that the Navtex reserves an area overlapping Greece's continental shelf. [EKATHIMERINI](#)

10 Germany Angers Turkey With Attempt To Police Libya Arms Embargo

2020-11-23 A German Foreign Ministry spokeswoman stated that after four hours had passed with no reply, it was standard practice to consider this as implicit permission and "All procedures were followed correctly." [REUTERS](#)

11 Turkey Protests 'Unauthorized' Search Of Turkish Ship By German Forces Of Operation Irini In East Med

2020-11-23 Operation Irini is a "biased" operation and does not control the arms support of the Khalifa Haftar and is used arbitrarily to punish the legitimate Libyan government, said the spokesperson. [HURRIYET DAILY NEWS](#)

12 Greece Blasts Berlin For Shunning Plea For Turkey Arms Embargo.

2020-11-28 "I really fail to understand Germany's reluctance to use the enormous power of its economy," Dendias said. Greece called on Germany not to deliver Type 214 submarines to Turkey, which may upset the balance of power in the region. [POLITICO](#)

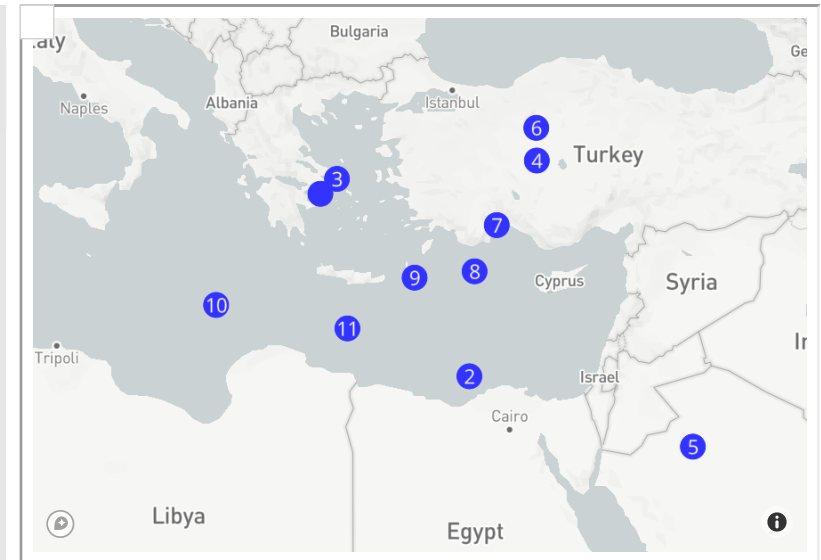
ASSESSMENT

- European Parliament has been the recent actor to push EuCO for sanctions in December summit. At the same week, the US Congress will decide for the CAATSA sanctions for Turkey's S-400 procurement. Thus, Turkish gov't will have to be following two critical meetings. In this period, if Turkey will probably ease tensions, the de-escalation will continue next year due to the new US administration.

- The search of the Turkish flagged merchant vessel escalates the tensions in the East Med. Both sides make contradictory statements by accusing each other. Concerning int'l law, since Irini operation is not mandated by the UN, it has no competence to inspect ships without authorization. Moreover, a German frigate involved in the operation in a day when Mr. Erdogan gives warm messages, and his advisor meets the EU diplomats. EU may have taken the risk due to unproductive meetings, or concrete doubts about arms transfer. Yet, the boarding failed to find an evidence during the inspection period, that hence shrinks the possibility of harsh sanctions.

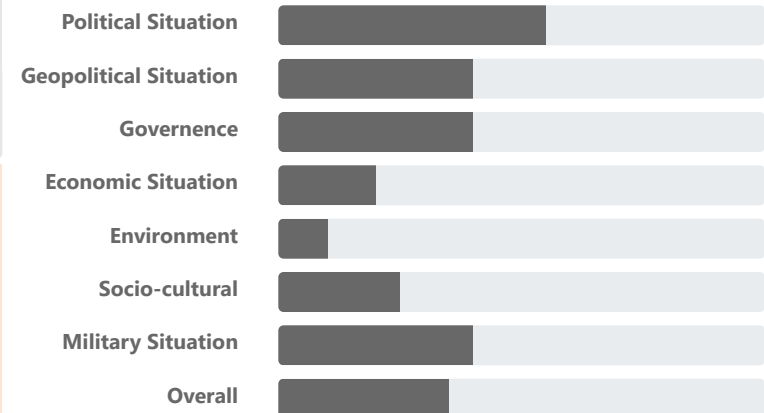
- Anti-Turkey alliance comprised of Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, and UAE continue to enhance their politico-military relationship. Medusa 2020 starting this Monday, and Greece-UAE agreement including a defence clause are the recent examples. Besides, Greece condemns the EU and Germany for not taking enough measures against Turkey. If Greece cannot receive the support it seeks from member states, the country will set sail for new regional alliances.

- Turkey strives to break its isolation and prepares for the worst possibilities. Politically, a rapprochement with Saudi Arabia against which Biden has showed his discontent along Turkey has come. Economically, the move of energy companies aims to shelter them against possible EU/US sanctions. Militarily, Turkey will seek new allies, particularly for its defence industry in case of EU/US arms embargo. Military cooperation with Ukraine may provide some critical parts as a partial compensation. In addition, Turkey will increase maritime situational awareness by constructing traffic surveillance stations.



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MEDITERRANEAN CRISIS HORIZON (30 Nov - 07 Dec 2020)

KEY EVENTS

- 1 EU Countries Feel 'Numb' About Turkey Ahead Of Critical EU Summit.**
2020-12-07 Led by Germany, a group of countries (Italy, Spain, Malta) invoke a number of arguments against imposing sanctions such as the return of Oruç Reis to Turkey or push for a "wait and see" approach. [EUROACTIV](#)
- 2 Sanctioning Turkey Over The S-400 Would Be Mandatory In New Defense Bill.**
2020-12-04 The last version of the annual defense bill mandates the U.S. president sanction Turkey. [DEFENCE NEWS](#)
- 3 Why Is Egypt Intensifying Its Military Drills?**
2020-12-01 The exercises show off Egypt's strategic deterrence capabilities and weapons systems. [DEFENCE NEWS](#)
- 4 Greece Wants Arms Embargo To Turkey In European Council.**
2020-12-07 Greece will insist in EuCO for an arms embargo to Turkey, particularly for German T-214 submarine. [EKATHIMERINI](#)
- 5 NATO Talks On East Med Called Off Due To Greece's Absence.**
2020-12-04 A technical meeting on the Eastern Mediterranean could not be held after the Greece pulled out last minute. [HDN](#)
- 6 Erdogan Confidant Sends Israel Another Message Of Reconciliation.**
2020-12-07 Former Turkish Admiral is proposing a bilateral agreement on the countries' shared exclusive economic zones, which would leave Israeli ally Cyprus in the lurch. [ISRAEL HAYOM](#)
- 7 Turkey Issues Navtex For Firing Exercise Between Rhodes And Kastellorizo.**
2020-12-04 Turkish Navy issued NAVTEX messages for firing exercises which will be conducted between the Greek islands of Rhodes and Kastellorizo on December 9 and 10 when sanctions will be discussed by EU member states. [EKATHIMERINI](#)
- 8 Turkey's Doors Wide Open For Diplomacy On East Med: Turkish Foreign Minister.**
2020-12-03 Turkish FM reiterated Turkey's call for dialogue, suggesting a regional conference to solve the disputes. [HDN](#)
- 9 Libya: Official Confirms Legality Of Deals With Turkey.**
2020-12-06 A senior Libyan official confirmed the country's position that its security and military cooperation with Turkey is "legitimate and in accordance with international law. [MIDDLE EAST MONITOR](#)
- 10 Cyprus Calls On Turkey To Engage In Maritime Zone Delimitation Talks.**
2020-12-03 Cypriot Defence minister called on Turkey to accept the Republic's invitation to engage in talks in view of reaching an agreement over the delimitation of the contested maritime zones, or go to the International Court of Justice. [EKATHIMERINI](#)
- 11 Lavrov Calls To Use UN As Platform To Resolve Disputes In Eastern Mediterranean.**
2020-12-04 There is a universal platform for efficient resolution of disputes. It is the United Nations," he said. [TASS](#)
- 12 Israeli Navy Welcomes New Generation Of German-Made Warships.**
2020-12-04 The Navy welcomed the warship that will be crucial to protect its coastline/natural gas industry. [DEFENCE NEWS](#)
- 13 Panagiotopoulos: The "Medusa" Exercise Is A Message Against Any Attempt To Destabilize The East. Med.**
2020-12-05 The Minister of Defense sent a strong message after the end of the "Medusa" exercise conducted in Alexandria. [EN24](#)
- 14 Italian Police Break Up Migrant Trafficking Ring, Arrest 19.**
2020-12-05 Italian police arrested 19 suspects, dismantling a criminal organization moving migrants to Italy. [STAR TRIBUNE](#)

ASSESSMENT

- European Council and US Congress will discuss sanctions against Turkey on December 10 and 11. Considering Turkey's callback of its survey ship, and warm messages, the EuCO probably won't probably approve harsher sanctions, and want to wait until the next US administration even though policy-makers and diplomats in Brussels and capitals know Turkey's moves are merely tactical. The most probable result is light sanctions similar or a bit harsher than the ones implemented now.

- Anti-Turkey alliance comprised of Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, and UAE continue to foster their politico-military relationship, e.g. Medusa 2020, other several visits/initiatives, and exercises. Greece insists on sanctions and arms embargo, which can directly affects balance of military power, considering the Greece's planned deliveries like F-35, and Rafale. Others also follow this trend. Egypt strives to increase its military footprint supported with military upgrade, and with the deliveries of new German warships, Israel boosts its capabilities. Hence, the region is militarizing more and more.

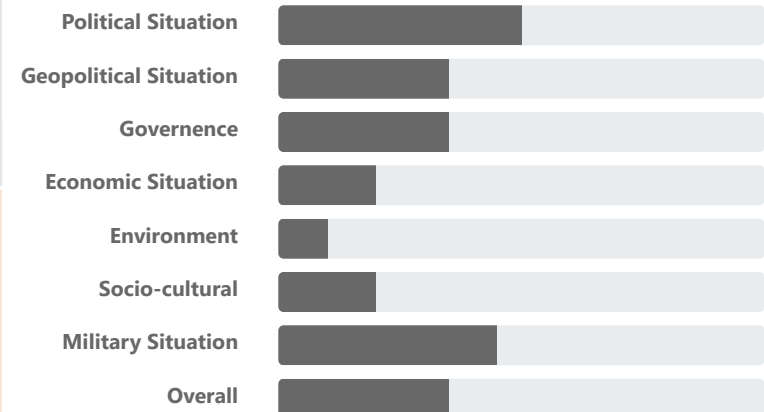
- Turkey is still striving to break its isolation in the region. Following the rapprochement with Saudi Arabia, secret talks held with Egypt, and Israel, and some even proposed a maritime delimitation agreement between Israel and Turkey. The call of Turkish FM for an East Med conference should be considered by other parties although it is a tactical move. Moreover, the disputes in the region are not new, and they are rooted in history, thus no sanctions will make Turkey give up its claims.

- The issues are very politized and militarized in the East Med. The urgent and best action is to discuss them through the lens of international law and dialogue. Neither Greece nor Turkey could achieve their goals through conflict and escalation. Yet, Greece will prefer to wait until EuCo summit to return the table since it can provide a more powerful position.



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MEDITERRANEAN CRISIS HORIZON (07 - 14 Dec 2020)

KEY EVENTS

- 1 EU Vows To Expand Sanctions List In Measured Warning To Turkey**
2020-12-11 The EU pledged to expand a list of Turks targeted with travel bans and asset freezes over the disputes in the East Med while stopping short of moving toward more economically painful sanctions. [BLOOMBERG BUSINESS](#)
- 2 Merkel And Borissov Blocked EU Sanctions Against Turkey At Summit**
2020-12-11 Spain, Italy, Malta&Hungary didn't openly state their objection.Austria&France toned down their rhetoric. [EUROACTIV](#)
- 3 NATO Calls On EU Summit To Adopt Positive Attitude Towards Turkey**
2020-12-11 NATO Chief Stoltenberg called on EU to take a positive stance during the leaders summit. [MIDDLE EAST MONITOR](#)
- 4 EU To Discuss Arms Exports To Turkey With NATO And U.S., Merkel Says.**
2020-12-11 EU leaders will discuss arm exports to Turkey with NATO&US, after Greece's push for an arms embargo. [REUTERS](#)
- 5 PM Notes Steps Taken Amid Macron Turn**
2020-12-12 Greece's position was further compromised by the reluctance of France to insist on tougher measures. [EKATHIMERINI](#)
- 6 Turkey Appoints Macron's Classmate As Paris Envoy.**
2020-12-11 Turkey appointed Ali Onaner as its envoy to Paris, who was one of the classmates of Mr. Macron. [HURRIYET](#)
- 7 Operation Sea Guardian Ends Action-Packed Patrol In Mediterranean Sea**
2020-12-10 Operation Sea Guardian finished its last focused security patrol for 2020. Started on 24 Nov, NATO maritime assets have been helping provide an accurate maritime picture to NATO commanders and enforcing counter-terrorism measures. [NATO](#)
- 8 Greek Men Face Charges Of Spying For Turkey.**
2020-12-13 Two Greek (one working at the Turkish Consulate, other working on a ferry) on Rhodes was arrested. [ALARABIYA](#)
- 9 Greek, UAE Naval Units Conduct 3-Day Exercise | Kathimerini**
2020-12-09 Greece and the UAE conducted a joint three-day naval drills in the East Med following Medusa-2020. [EKATHIMERINI](#)
- 10 Armed Forces Alarm: Fear Of "Hot" Episode In The Next 24 Hours**
2020-12-10 Greek "Pentagon" put Navy, Army and Air Force on alert in case of an escalation after EU summit. [NEWSBOMB](#)
- 11 Macron Vows To Keep Defence Ties To Egyptian Regime**
2020-12-07 France would maintain defence and commercial ties with Egypt despite the human rights record, said Macron. [FT](#)
- 12 Presidency Sends Libya Troops Motion To Parliament.**
2020-12-12 Turkey's presidency submitted a motion to parliament to extend troop deployment in Libya for 18 months. [HDN](#)
- 13 Libya's East-Based Forces Release Turkish Vessel**
2020-12-10 Forces loyal to Khalifa Haftar released a Turkish-owned vessel seized last week. [AL JAZEERA ENGLISH](#)
- 14 Shared Interests In Iran, Caucuses Push Turkey And Israel Closer.**
2020-12-11 Ankara's growing isolation and a combination of geopolitical factors drives a fresh bid to normalize ties. [AL-MONITOR](#)
- 15 Turkey Issues Fresh Navtex Warnings Demanding Demilitarization Of Greek Islands**
2020-12-14 Meanwhile, Oruc Reis research vessel left Antalya and is steering on a southwest course. [EKATHIMERINI](#)
- 16 Morocco Latest Country To Normalise Ties With Israel In US-Brokered Deal**
2020-12-11 As part of the deal, the US has agreed to recognise Morocco's claim over the disputed Western Sahara region. [BBC](#)

ASSESSMENT

- The EU expanded the mild sanctions against Turkey, and even the harshest countries like Austria and France calmed down during the summit, which dissatisfied Athens. Merkel's address to NATO for an arms embargo, and Stoltenberg's call to the EU are an indication of NATO's balancing attitude and that it is the right platform for discussion. As a result, until the summit in March, European leaders preferred to wait and see how the Biden administration will approach the issue.

After Medusa-2020, Greece conducted military drills with UAE. At the same time, Paris hosted al-Sisi, and President Macron depicted his willingness to work with Cairo for regional issues. Thus, France and Greece spend effort to forge their ties as a hedging measure. Yet, depending on the signals from US, Greece may return the table since the EU summit didn't meet its expectations.

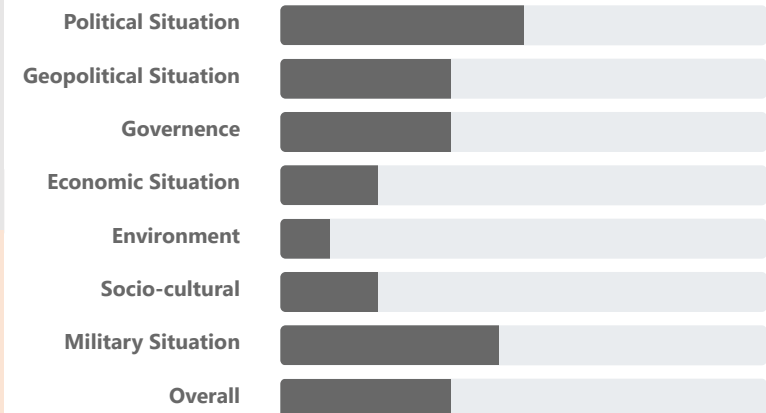
- Ankara is pursuing normalization with Tel Aviv. Following secret talks and proposal of a delimitation deal, Ankara named a new ambassador to Israel, and there have been some anti-Iranian moves, e.g. Erdogan's recent poetry and an espionage investigation against Iranians in Turkey. Moreover, Trump's last favor to Israel before his departure make Israel more prepared to post-Trump US foreign policy.

Turkey's recent NAVTEX broadcasts and departure of Oruc Reis from Antalya may flare up tensions despite the appeasement of the EU. Although this is not a useful policy to acquire anything, Turkish gov't can use it as a distraction to public, and please its nationalist partner. However, President Erdogan is well aware of the incoming US administration, he won't therefore push the limits to the extent that cause trouble for him. Biden and Erdogan will move forward cautiously.



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MEDITERRANEAN CRISIS HORIZON (15 - 21 Dec 2020)

KEY EVENTS

1 The United States Sanctions Turkey Under CAATSA 231.

2020-12-14 Today, the United States is imposing sanctions on the Republic of Turkey's Presidency of Defense Industries (SSB) pursuant to Section 231 of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA). [STATEDEF](#)

2 UK Extends Sanctions For East Med Drilling, Vassilis Nedos | Kathimerini

2020-12-18 The UK has announced the extension of sanctions on persons involved in illegal drilling in the Eastern Mediterranean, beyond December 31, when the transitional period for the UK's formal exit from the EU expires. [EKATHIMERINI](#)

3 Greece To Boost Military, Get French Rafale Jets In 2021

2020-12-16 Greece has increased its military budget to \$6.5 bn, accounting for 30% hike and planned to boost its military by getting Rafale fighters, hiring additional 15,000 staff, upgrading F-16s, and procuring new frigates. [EKATHIMERINI](#)

4 U.S. Throws Weight Behind Construction Of EastMed Gas Pipeline.

2020-12-17 US is backing the construction of a pipeline that would supply Europe with natural gas from the East Med, US Energy Secretary said. Greece, Cyprus and Israel approved the pipeline deal, which has been in planning for several years. [REUTERS](#)

5 LEAKED: EU's Trans-European Energy Infrastructure Plan Update.

2020-12-15 The planned update to the EU's regulation on trans-European networks for energy for the first time excludes oil and gas pipelines from receiving EU funding while opening the possibility to finance new hydrogen infrastructure. [EUROACTIV](#)

6 Israeli Minister Seeks To Delay East Med Gas Forum Citing Climate Concerns.

2020-12-20 Israel's environmental protection minister is seeking to delay government approval of the East Mediterranean Gas Forum due to the climate concerns. [HAREETZ](#)

7 UAE Joins East Mediterranean Gas Forum | Kathimerini

2020-12-17 Egypt said on Wednesday that the United Arab Emirates has joined the Cairo-based Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum as an observer. [EKATHIMERINI](#)

8 EU Allots More Than \$7 Billion To Turkey For Hosting Refugees

2020-12-17 Under a deal with the European Union, Turkey pledged to accept the return of migrants arriving in Greece and do more to stop the flow in exchange for \$7.20 billion. [TRT WORLD](#)

9 UN Calls For All Mercenaries To Leave Libya

2020-12-16 The UN Security Council on Tuesday called for all mercenaries and foreign fighters to leave Libya, in a unanimous statement that included Russia, which is accused of enabling a Russian contractor to send paramilitaries. [ARAB WEEKLY](#)

10 Turkey Launches Its First Armed Unmanned Marine Vehicle Prototype

2020-12-16 The prototype of Turkey's first armed unmanned maritime vehicle (SIDA), which is developed by Ares Shipyard and Meteksan Defense, is ready to sail later this month. Firing tests will be conducted in March, with guided missiles. [TRT WORLD](#)

11 Turkey Conducted Naval Firing Exercises.

2020-12-20 Turkish Warships conducted live firing exercises in the Eastern Mediterranean said Republic of Turkey Ministry of National Defence. [DEFENCE MIN](#)

12 Egypt, Italy Strike Major Military Deal Despite Regeni Case.

2020-12-16 Italy and Egypt are set to cut a major military deal, apparently disregarding tensions caused by the murder of Italian researcher Giulio Regeni in Cairo back in 2016. [AL-MONITOR](#)

ASSESSMENT

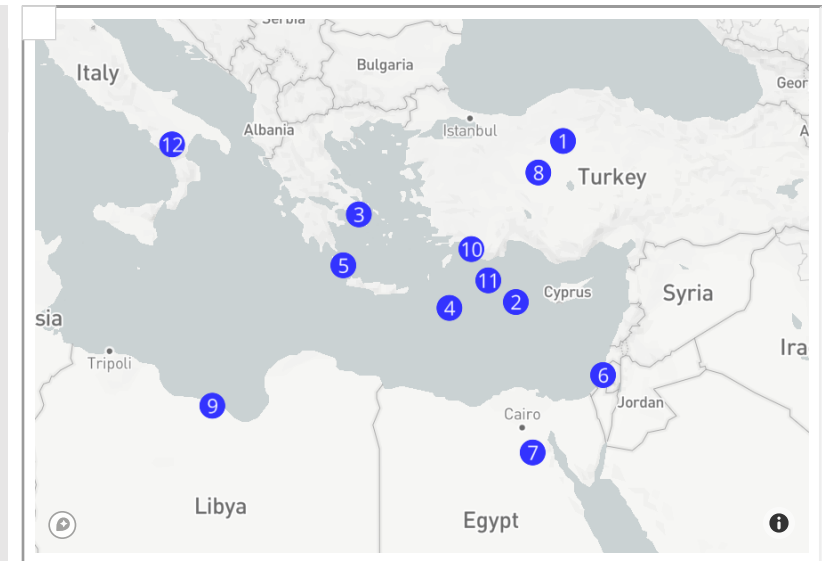
- The US implemented CAATSA sanctions targeting Turkish defence industry. Mr. Trump didn't prefer to hit Turkey's economic sector, and picked the mildest options as the EU did. While their impact on Turkish economy don't seem substantial, sanctions will complicate the ongoing defence projects, military exports, and more importantly acquisition of spare parts, and maintenance of current military systems. Yet, the timing enables the incoming President to make a fresh start with Turkey.

The UK also extended the sanctions decided by the EU due to the expiration of transition period. The UK has preferred to keep a strategic silence on issues about Turkey recently, which is a signal of increasing isolation of Ankara in international politics.

- While the US stated its support for EastMed pipeline, the new EU energy plan remove oil and natural gas projects from getting EU funds. Considering decreasing energy prices, shrinking demand in the pandemic, transition plans to Green energy, the recent decision of the EU Commission is another complication for the pipeline project.

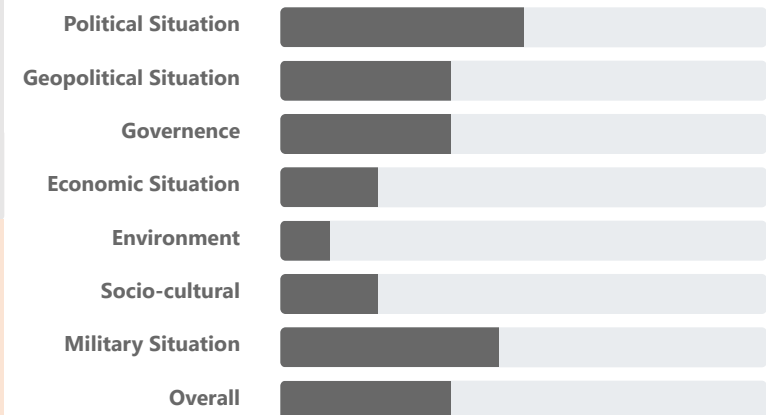
- Greece approved a military budget of \$6.5 bn to modernize its military, and change the balance of military power against Turkey in the middle of the pandemic. Greece was already expected to spend 2.58 of its GDP in 2020 according NATO estimations, but only 12.06 % of it -well below NATO average and goals- would be used for equipment expenditure. The recent bill in the parliament can close this gap in near future.

- While the participation of UAE to EastMed Gas Forum is another solidifying move for the anti-Turkey alliance, Israel's environment minister's statement coming after claims of secret talks and rapprochement efforts of Ankara may be a blow for the forum.



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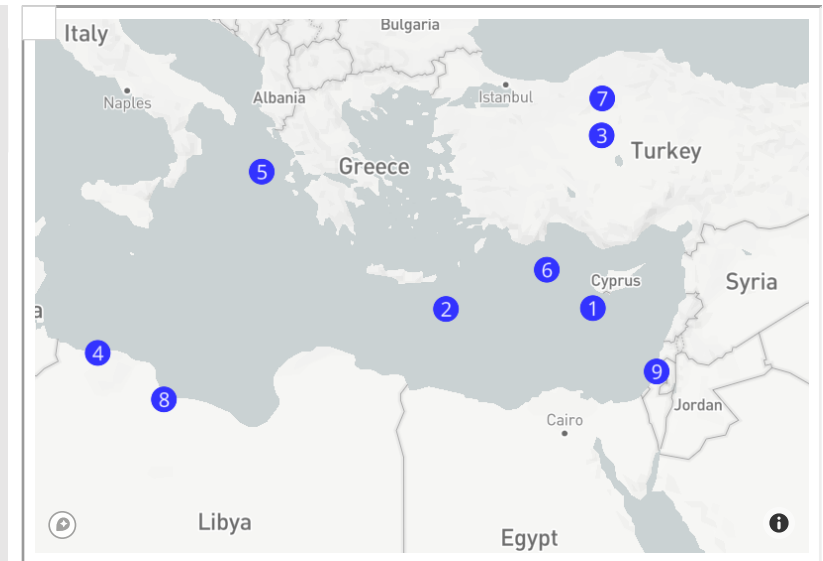
MEDITERRANEAN CRISIS HORIZON (21 - 28 Dec 2020)

KEY EVENTS

- 1 EU Hopes For East Med Conference Fritter Away.**
2020-12-21 The EU push for an East Med conference to ease tensions reached deadlock since Egypt has refused to sit on the same table with Turkey while Israel is so-and-so. It's not only about Turkey. There are conflicts, disputes and many overlapping challenges across the East Med, Michel said. [EUROACTIV](#)
- 2 Greece-Egypt Deal On Exclusive Economic Zone Posted By The UN**
2020-12-24 The deal signed for the partial demarcation of maritime boundaries between Greece and Egypt was posted on the United Nation's Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea on Thursday. [GREEKCITYTIMES](#)
- 3 Germany Opposes Imposition Of Arms Embargo On Turkey**
2020-12-23 Germany opposes a request submitted by Greece to impose an arms embargo on Turkey over tensions between the two countries in the Eastern Mediterranean region. [MIDDLE EAST MONITOR](#)
- 4 Egyptian Delegation Visits Libyan Capital For Talks With GNA**
2020-12-27 Senior Egyptian security officials have visited the Libyan capital Tripoli for the first time in years and held talks with officials from the internationally recognised Government of National Accord (GNA), the Libyan interior ministry said. [AL-JAZEERA](#)
- 5 Greece Doubling Territorial Waters.**
2020-12-27 The Ionian sea in Greece has been approved by the nation's supreme court from six to 12 nautical miles. The decree says the government reserves the right to exercise similar rights in other regions notably the Aegean. [GREEKCITYTIMES](#)
- 6 Turkish Navtex Seen As A Nod To Exploratory Talks**
2020-12-22 Turkey on Tuesday issued a Navtex, for seismic exploration within the contours of its continental shelf through June 21. The designated geographical area and the duration of the survey were seen by analysts as a good-will gesture from Turkey that could open the door to the resumption of exploratory talks with Greece. [EKATHIMERINI](#)
- 7 Turkey Hopes To Turn New Page With U.S. And EU In 2021, Erdogan Says**
2020-12-23 President Erdogan said on Wednesday that Turkey hopes to "turn a new page" in its ties with the US and EU, and that Ankara had been subjected to "double standards" by both its NATO ally Washington and the bloc. [REUTERS](#)
- 8 Turkish Parliament Approves Libya Troops Motion - Turkey News**
2020-12-23 While the ruling AKP, and the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) backed the motion, the main opposition CHP, Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), and Good (İYİ) Party voted against it. [HURRIYET DAILY NEWS](#)
- 9 Erdogan Says Turkey Would Like Better Ties With Israel, Palestinian Policy Still "Red Line"**
2020-12-25 Turkey would like better ties with Israel but Israeli policy towards the Palestinians remains "unacceptable", President Tayyip Erdogan said on Friday. [REUTERS](#)

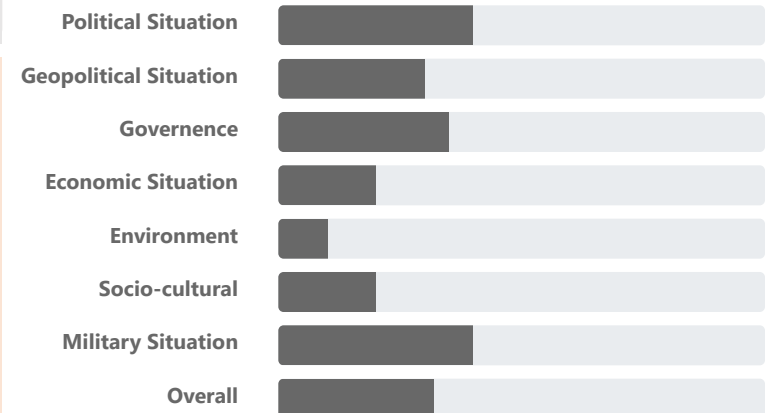
ASSESSMENT

- The EU's efforts for a regional conference to solve disputes has not been fruitful due to Egypt's objection. Yet, this situation may change in a near future. The visit of Egyptian officials to Libya coinciding with the meeting of Turkish delegate with their Libyan counterparts, and Egypt's decision to reopen its embassy in Tripoli could be signs of a changing foreign policy of Cairo. Also, it is known that Turkey has been conducting talks through secret channels with Egypt along Israel, that may ease tensions.
- Greece has doubled her territorial waters in the Ionian Sea, and explicitly imply that she has the same propensity for Aegean, where Turkey sees this move a casus belli. However, it is highly unlikely that Athens makes a decision as such in a near future. This decision along with the demarcation pact with Egypt are diplomatic moves by Greece to backlash against Turkey's maritime deal with Libya.
- Turkish government is setting the scene for Biden administration. Turkey's recent NAVTEX messages, President Erdogan's statements regarding a new page with both US and EU, and warm messages towards Tel Aviv are the recent moves. Israel will go another election next year, and Mr. Netanyahu's suspicion for Biden's foreign policy is not secret. Thus, 2021 can depict a very different picture. Much depends on the incoming US administration.



AI Powered Crisis Situation

This product is prepared by a group of subject matter experts using a number of open sources with a hybrid methodology that merges both traditional methods and AI-powered, data-driven approaches.



MEDITERRANEAN CRISIS HORIZON (28 Dec - 04 Jan 2020)

KEY EVENTS

1 Total, Partners Get Hold Of Offshore Block In Egypt.

2020-01-04 A Total-led international consortium of oil and gas companies has signed an exploration and production agreement for the North Ras Kanayis offshore block located in the Herodotus Basin, offshore Egypt in the Mediterranean Sea. [OFFSHORE ENGINEER](#)

2 New Diplomatic Campaign By Athens: From The Mediterranean To India

2020-01-04 One of the goals of Greek diplomacy for 2021 is the continuation and expansion of cooperation with countries that share the same views with Greece. [GREEKCITYTIMES](#)

3 What Would A Turkey-Israel Rapprochement Mean For Regional Geopolitics?

2021-01-01 While diplomatic relations remain tense, both countries are signalling at potential for improved ties. Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev recently stated that he was seeking to mend relations between Turkey and Israel, countries whose support played a critical role in Azerbaijan's victory over Arme... [TRT WORLD](#)

4 Turkey Takes Charge Of NATO High Readiness Force.

2020-12-30 The Turkish army will take the lead of NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) on Friday, placing thousands of soldiers on standby, ready to deploy within days. [NATO](#)

5 Turkish Navy Announced NAVTEX Messages For Naval Drills.

2020-01-02 Turkish Navy published NAVTEX messages regarding firing exercises which will be conducted in the East Med on 08 January. [SHODB](#)

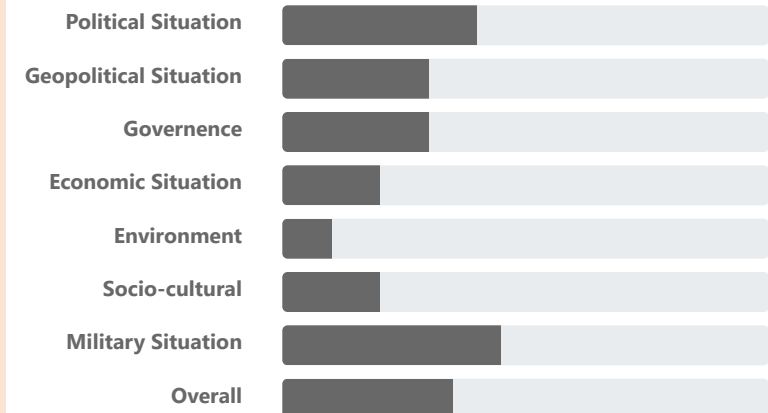
6 Top Stories 2020: International Naval Operations-Russia In The East Med

2020-12-30 2020 marked an active period for the Russian Navy, as it supported its presence in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea in particular. Russian submarines based in the Black Sea were conducting combat patrols in the Mediterranean, in apparent violation of the Montreux Convention. The improved Kilo-class boats are armed with Kalibr land-attack missiles that could support operations in Syria from the Eastern Mediterranean. [USNI](#)



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ASSESSMENT

- Greece has increased its cooperation with Ankara's rivals and enemies disturbed by its ambitions and assertiveness. Also, Athens could not achieve its objectives within the EU as much as it wants due to the divergence of member states' interests. Greece therefore aimed to strengthen its hand with diplomatic moves outside the EU, and the proposal to engage with India against Turkey is the recent example of this policy.

- Excluded from regional initiatives and isolated among its peers, the Turkish government sets the scene for Biden administration. High-figure Turkish officials, including President Erdogan, made statements about a new page with both the US and the EU and gave warm messages towards Tel Aviv. Israel will go another election next year, and Mr Netanyahu's suspicion for Biden's foreign policy approach is no secret. Thus, 2021 can depict a very different picture. On the other hand, many Israeli analysts and policy-makers are sceptical about Turkey's recent moves and see it as a mere tactical move. Much depends on the incoming US administration, and the outcome of Israeli elections in 2021.

- While Turkey has started to implement a softer approach, the Turkish Navy continues to carry out new drills in the Eastern Mediterranean. Although the methods, governments, and contexts change, the deep-rooted problems are still there.

- Among political debates about NATO-Turkey relations and its removal from NATO, Turkish Armed Forces took over the VJTF, the spearhead force of the Alliance. The political debates and military relations seem contradictory considering Turkey's challenge to NATO and its active participation in the operations and exercises. The transatlantic military relations are the most powerful link between Turkey and the West.

- Russia enhances its military capabilities in the Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean. The US, the EU, and NATO focused on Greco-Turkish dispute and overlooked Russia's military build-up. As happened in the High North, after Moscow solidified its position, responding and taking necessary precautions may be too late for the West.