



PROJECT *on* Middle East Democracy

The Project on Middle East Democracy presents:

TURKEY'S POLITICAL CRISIS: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

In Turkey, the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) stands accused of undermining Turkish secularism and is currently embroiled in a legal case that could see the party closed down and its leading figures, including Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and President Abdullah Gül, banned from party politics for five years. In what some are calling a “judicial coup d’état,” the legal case against the party is widely expected to succeed. Such an outcome would likely have far-reaching consequences not only for Turkey’s fragile democracy, but also for a variety of other countries and political actors across the Middle East.

Just how likely is it that the AKP will be shut down? What might the domestic consequences be for Turkey to see its ruling party closed down and the country’s democratically elected leaders removed from office? What impact could this have on the ongoing Israel-Syria negotiations facilitated by the AKP-led Turkish government? How might Turkey’s bid to join the European Union be affected? How would the banning of the AKP be viewed by other political actors across the region? How has the United States reacted to the closure case, and what effects could this issue have on both U.S.-Turkish relations and on the credibility of American efforts to promote democracy in the Middle East?

Please join us for a panel discussion with:

Abdullah Akyuz, President of TUSIAD-US, the United States office of the Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association. He was previously the Executive Vice-Chairman of the Istanbul Stock Exchange.

Bulent Aliriza, Senior Associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and Director of CSIS’s Turkey project. He was previously a Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and also served as a diplomat in New York and Washington.

Ömer Taşpınar, Professor of National Security Strategy at the U.S. National War College and Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, where he directs Brookings’ Turkey Project. He is also the author of the 2005 book, *Political Islam and Kurdish Nationalism in Turkey*.

Moderated by **Stephen McInerney**, Director of Advocacy, Project on Middle East Democracy

Thursday, July 24, 2008
2:00 – 3:30 pm
Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2212

Metro: Capitol South (Blue and Orange Line)
Please RSVP by contacting: rsvp@pomed.org