

In this week's *Türkiye in Focus*;

- President Erdoğan attended the summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, to sign the ceasefire agreement reached for Gaza, marking a significant step in regional diplomacy.
- Following the latest progress in the Terror-Free Türkiye initiative, MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli made inclusive remarks toward the Alevi community, signalling a broader vision of national unity.
- The Terror-Free Türkiye process continues to move forward through constructive and confidence-building steps.

Türkiye Emerges as a Key Player in the Gaza Peace Agreement

Türkiye has emerged as one of the key players in the latest diplomatic push to end the war in Gaza. At the Sharm el-Sheikh Peace Summit, Ankara joined Qatar, Egypt, and the United States in signing a declaration aimed at halting hostilities and laying the groundwork for a longer-term political settlement. The agreement resulted in the release of captives held in Gaza, while nearly 2,000 Palestinian hostages were freed from Israeli jails.

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has underlined that Türkiye is closely monitoring the implementation of the deal, emphasising that his government remains a vigilant guarantor of the process. He also revealed that discussions with the United States and Gulf countries have already begun on the reconstruction of Gaza — a task that promises to test not only financial commitments but also diplomatic endurance. While

the ceasefire has provided a temporary halt to the bloodshed, Erdoğan's message has been clear: Türkiye sees its role not as a mediator on the sidelines, but as an active architect of regional stability.

Even with the guns falling silent, the challenges ahead are immense. The humanitarian crisis in Gaza remains acute, and the political path toward a lasting peace is fraught with uncertainty. Yet the ceasefire has allowed Türkiye to ramp up its humanitarian aid efforts while continuing its diplomatic campaign for the formal recognition of the State of Palestine. By standing at the forefront of this peace initiative, Türkiye not only underscores its growing influence in the Middle East but also signals its determination to anchor regional diplomacy in principles of justice and lasting stability.



(TCCB/Mustafa Kamacı - Anadolu Agency)

Bahçeli Signals an Alevi Outreach

Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) leader Devlet Bahçeli has once again placed a bold proposal at the centre of Türkiye's political agenda. Following last year's "Terror-Free Türkiye" initiative — a call that paved the way for a renewed dialogue on resolving the Kurdish question — Bahçeli this week introduced what many observers have dubbed an "Alevi opening." Speaking in parliament, he urged that cemevis, the Alevi houses of worship, be granted official status equal to mosques. He described Alevis as an integral part of the Islamic faith and framed his proposal as an effort "to prudently prevent ethnic and sectarian sensitivities from turning into deep crises."



(Doğukan Keskinılıç - Anadolu Agency)

The move did not come entirely out of the blue. In several of his earlier speeches on the "Terror-Free Türkiye" process, Bahçeli had already highlighted the importance of unity and had made specific references to the Alevi community. Tangible gestures have since followed his outreach: this week also saw the inauguration of the first stage of a new cemevi complex, built on land donated by Bahçeli to an Alevi association. Taken together, these steps reflect a broader attempt to consolidate national harmony through inclusion rather than confrontation.

Historically, the first century of the Republic was defined by three major axes of polarisation: the secular-conservative divide, the Turkish-Kurdish question, and the Sunni-Alevi rift. While the first of these fault lines has largely softened — restrictions on religious groups were lifted under the AK Party era, and the CHP has moderated its secularist tone — the other two remain key tests for Türkiye's social cohesion. If the "Terror-Free Türkiye" process succeeds in closing the Kurdish file peacefully, and Bahçeli's inclusive stance toward Alevis gains traction, the two efforts — though distinct in focus — could advance in parallel, serving the shared goal of strengthening Türkiye's internal reconciliation and social cohesion. In a regional sense, improved relations with Alevi and Kurdish communities beyond Türkiye's borders — particularly in Syria — could also enhance Ankara's influence and strengthen its hand in shaping the Middle East's evolving balance.

"Terror-Free Türkiye" Process Advances with Positive Steps

The "Terror-Free Türkiye" process continues to advance, reflecting a gradual yet determined effort toward domestic reconciliation and stability. In its 15th meeting, the Grand National Assembly's Commission on National Solidarity, Brotherhood, and Democracy heard from women's and youth organisations — the latest in a series of consultations that have brought together representatives from diverse segments of civil society. These hearings hold significance for two key reasons. First, they show that the commission is engaging with the multifaceted nature of the issue, working toward comprehensive and inclusive solutions. Second, they emphasise that public participation and societal ownership of the process are seen as essential for its legitimacy and long-term success.

Later this week, Speaker of Parliament and head of the commission, Numan Kurtulmuş, is scheduled to visit Diyarbakır — a city with a predominantly Kurdish population and symbolic centrality to the process. Kurtulmuş has invited commission members to accompany him, signalling an intent to reconnect the parliamentary discussions with public sentiment on the ground. This visit is expected to serve as a bridge between institutional deliberations in Ankara and the lived realities of citizens in the region, potentially revitalising public engagement with the peace agenda.

Yet, while the initiative is domestically anchored, its trajectory remains closely intertwined with developments in Syria.



(TBMM - Anadolu Agency)

Nationalist Movement Party leader Devlet Bahçeli's recent remarks suggesting that Abdullah Öcalan call on the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) to lay down arms underscored this linkage. Around the same time, tensions between the SDF and Damascus escalated into clashes before a ceasefire was reached, leading to talks between SDF representatives and Syrian President Ahmad al-Shara. Reports of a preliminary deal on the integration of SDF military personnel into the Syrian army marked a tentative step forward. However, the SDF's apparent strategy of stalling for time poses risks for both Türkiye's reconciliation process and regional stability. Ankara's firm resolve, however, continues to anchor efforts toward internal harmony and lasting peace across its southern border.

Highlights

- The Türkiye–Africa Business and Economic Forum kicked off in Istanbul on October 16, with the participation of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Angolan President Joao Lourenco, and African Union Commission Chairperson Mahmoud Ali Youssouf.
- Türkiye welcomed the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Parliament's decision endorsing a two-state framework for resolving the Cyprus issue, describing it as a constructive and realistic step toward lasting peace.
- The 17th "Goodness Ship" carrying nearly 900 tons of humanitarian aid departed from Mersin Port on Tuesday, on the way to Egypt's Al Arish Port to deliver essential supplies for civilians in Gaza.

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