Turkish parliament approves Mecca defense pact amid Middle East war

Bar?? Demir, Ula? Sevinç
6 November 2026

The Turkish parliament on Thursday evening ratified the Mecca Joint Defense Agreement signed by Türkiye, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan on August 7.

Of the 279 votes in favour, 222 came from President Recep Tayyip Erdo?an's Islamist Justice and Development Party (AKP), 24 from its fascist ally the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), and 25 from the Kemalist Republican People's Party (CHP) led by Kemal K?l?çdaro?lu.

Of the 119 votes against, 60 came from the New Party, a split from the CHP, 22 from the Kurdish nationalist Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party), 15 from Islamist New Path and 13 from the far-right Good Party. The Workers Party of Turkey (T?P) and the Labor Party (EMEP) each cast one vote against.

Two T?P deputies and one EMEP deputy did not take part. According to reports, 34 of the DEM Party's 56 deputies, 30 of the New Party's 90 and 19 of the CHP's 44 were absent from the vote.

Speaking for the AKP, former Defense Minister Hulusi Akar said, "This agreement is in no way an alternative to NATO or anything of the sort." According to the Associated Press (AP), Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Fuat Oktay said that Türkiye would "not be drawn into an uncontrolled process against its will." Declaring his party's support, the MHP's Kamil Ayd?n said, "Türkiye's place in world politics is the center."

Speaking to the daily *Milliyet*, K?l?çdaro?lu said he had spoken with the foreign minister of Yemen's Saudi-backed government, adding, "I told them as well: We want to go there not to fight but, on the contrary, to bring peace and tranquillity to the region." He went on: "We are not supporting the [Erdo?an] government. We are supporting the state of the Republic of Türkiye."

Murat Emir, Deputy Parliamentary Group Chair of the New Party, a split from the CHP, told parliament, "They brought this agreement to send Turkish soldiers to the deserts of Yemen," while his party colleague Yunus Emre said, with this agreement "We will shoulder America's burden." The DEM Party's Gülcan Kaçmaz Sayyi?it said of the alliance, "It is not clear whether its target is Iran, Israel or Pakistan's rival India."

The New Party's objection is directed not at the alliance itself but at its timing and procedure. New Party deputy Utku Çak?rözer, who asked in the parliamentary committee, "What business do we have in the deserts of Yemen?" had, in September 2025, while then a member of the CHP, presented a report to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. This advocated a "maximum pressure" strategy against Tehran, repeated imperialist propaganda by declaring Iran the source of regional instability and proposed that NATO consider expanding toward the Middle East.

The Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi – Dördüncü Enternasyonal (Socialist Equality Party – Fourth International), the Turkish section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, declared its unconditional rejection of the agreement in a video statement before the vote.

The statement explained that what the agreement would "defend" is the Saudi regime, which has opened its bases to the US war on Iran and is slaughtering the people of Yemen through bombardment and starvation, along with the reactionary geopolitical interests that the Turkish bourgeoisie seeks to advance in collaboration with US imperialism. As military spending rises and the cost of war is imposed on workers through falling wages and social cuts, it is accompanied by growing political repression in Türkiye.

The Mecca Agreement is a product of the global imperialist war bound up with the genocide in Gaza, the US-Israeli war against Iran, the Saudi monarchy's war against the Houthi Ansar Allah movement in Yemen, NATO's war against Russia over Ukraine and US preparations for war against China. The pact ties workers to a chain of conflicts stretching from the Eastern Mediterranean to South Asia. Under the agreement, which is modelled on NATO's Article 5, an armed attack against one party is considered an attack on all three, and the parties may withdraw only after 10 years. Although the text contains no provision on nuclear weapons, Pakistan's nuclear umbrella is effectively being extended over its allies.

The parties' own statements refute claims that the pact represents an alternative to alliance with the US and NATO or a step toward independence from them. US President Donald Trump hailed the agreement as a "big, bold, and important first step," and Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister Levent Gümrükçü described it as "complementary" to NATO. The real issue

© World Socialist Web Site

driving Washington's three allies into such an alliance is the regional powers' pursuit of their own reactionary interests amid the violent US-led restructuring of the oil-rich and strategically vital Middle East.

Reuters reported that the ratification in the Turkish parliament was "clearing the way for Ankara to send military support to Riyadh." *Al-Monitor*, for its part, described it as a "boost to Saudi Arabia" and claimed that "any Turkish deployment is likely to be limited to training, advisory services and supplying military equipment."

According to an AKP deputy who spoke to Reuters in October, "the mandate would be sent to parliament once a bill ratifying the accord has been approved." Although Defense Minister Ya?ar Güler said, "We absolutely do not foresee entering into any conflict with the Houthis," the mandate will now be voted based on a collective defense commitment.

The agreement's target is not only the Houthis but also their principal ally, Iran, against which the US and Israel launched war on February 28. In March, Türkiye, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan signed the Riyadh declaration, which did not condemn the US war of aggression but rather Iran's retaliation.

On October 17, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian told *Al Jazeera* regarding the alliance, "This is a step forward. Muslims should unite. We are ready to participate in this process." This move by Tehran represents an attempt to ward off, from within, an alliance directed against it.

On October 26, Saudi Defense Minister Khalid bin Salman, Pakistani Army Chief Asim Munir and National Intelligence Organization (M?T) head ?brahim Kal?n travelled to Tehran. According to AP, the aim was "to try to avert renewed fighting in the Iran war"—that is, to prevent an escalation of the war and protect themselves by persuading Iran to submit to the demands of the US and Israel.

The bases in Saudi Arabia used in the US war on Iran became targets of Iranian retaliation in legitimate self-defence. The other Gulf regimes, too, do not want the conflict to escalate again, both because they have been targeted for collaborating with the US and Israel and because the war's devastating economic consequences are further intensifying social anger.

The expansion of the Mecca alliance is also on the agenda. Asaad al-Shaibani, foreign minister of Syria's new Al Qaeda-rooted regime, said in Manama on October 31, "Discussions are currently under way to evaluate Syria's entry into the Mecca alliance," adding, "Gulf security is an 'integral part of Syrian regional security.'"

According to *Al Jazeera*, Shaibani said they support Yemen's Saudi-backed government. Reuters reported that Damascus was considering assisting in the war against the Houthis. According to the *Jerusalem Post*, the Saudi and Syrian defense ministries signed a military cooperation agreement, the contents of which have not been disclosed, during a visit to Riyadh by Syria's new "president," Ahmed al-Sharaa, the day before the vote in Türkiye.

The agreement is sharpening the rivalry between two US allies, Türkiye and Israel. Three days after the signing in August, a senior Israeli official told *Ynet*, "This alliance is aimed against Israel," adding: "The Shiite axis has weakened, and for a long time we have seen the Sunni axis getting stronger. … Israel needs to build alternative alliances, especially with the Hellenic axis, Greece and Cyprus, together with India and the United Arab Emirates."

On August 18, Israel struck the Abu al-Duhur airbase, 70 kilometers from the Turkish border; Netanyahu's office claimed that by permitting a Turkish military deployment at the base, Damascus was threatening Israel's security. If Syria joins the Mecca alliance, every Israeli attack on the country could be considered an attack on all parties, bringing NATO member Türkiye and nuclear-armed Pakistan into direct confrontation with Israel. This underscores that the Mecca Agreement, for all its "defensive" claims, is a preparation for broader wars.

The war policy confronts overwhelming popular opposition in Türkiye: In an Areda Survey poll in March, 93.2 percent of respondents said they opposed the US and Israeli attack on Iran. The political establishment and the trade union confederations, however, are doing nothing to mobilize this opposition. Their real role is to keep this social opposition, which is merging with anger over the cost of living and growing political repression, under control.

The vote in parliament has confirmed that the struggle against war cannot be waged through the political establishment. The SEP advances a socialist programme based on mobilizing the working class in Türkiye and internationally as an independent social force against imperialist war and for a Socialist Federation of the Middle East.

We call on workers and young people to build independent rank-and-file committees in workplaces and schools and to demand the cancellation of the Mecca Agreement, Türkiye's withdrawal from NATO, the closure of US-NATO bases and a halt to oil shipments to Israel through Türkiye.

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact

© World Socialist Web Site