

## Obama Gives Erdogan the 'Hug Treatment'

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An interesting bit from White House reporter Tangi Quéméner's latest pool report from the G-20 in Cannes, France:

[President Obama] entered the room at 1:15 and took to his left, heading to Angela Merkel and Nicolas Sarkozy. They chatted for a few seconds before British Prime minister David Cameron joined them. Hard to understand what they were saying amid the cameras noise. POTUS then took a stroll to Australian Premier Julia Gillard who got a hug as European president Herman van Rompuy, European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso and Turkish PM Recep Tayyip Erdogan were watching. Eventually the Europeans got a handshake but Erdogan got the hug treatment. POTUS then walked all the way around after noticing that "people are really far away around there". He stopped for quick handshakes and reached out to President Hu of China, telling him 'ni hao' (hello). They cordially shook hands and posed for photographers...POTUS then greeted his Argentinian counterpart Cristina Kirchner who just got reelected without runoff. Angela Merkel was just congratulating her (in English). "So Nicolas, we all have to take lessons" of Kirchner's victory, joked POTUS, who's up for reelection in '12, as Sarkozy is (next May).

Isn't this whole scene pretty standard for President Obama? The Europeans get a handshake and the Islamist Turkish prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan gets a hug. And all the president seems to have in mind is campaign politics and his reelection effort.



As Stephen Schwartz noted about Erdogan:

The soft-Islamist Turkish government of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Justice and Development party (known by its Turkish initials as the AKP) has expansive foreign-policy ambitions. In addition to its embrace of the Hamas regime in Gaza and accompanying criticism of Israel, Ankara has sent naval and air units into the eastern Mediterranean in a bid to intimidate Cyprus from exploiting, with U.S. economic partners, the divided island's offshore energy assets. Turkish military maneuvers near Cyprus parallel threats of a similar seaborne campaign to shield another Gaza flotilla operation against Israel's maritime security patrols. Turkey has acted ambiguously toward the NATO missile-defense system intended for protection from Russian or Iranian attack, after indicating cooperation with the plan developed by the Western alliance.

And as Lee Smith has noted, Turkey has made its hostility to Israel abundantly clear.

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