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A Ceasefire Was Announced. The Strait Is Still Closed.

Hormuz · Bab al-Mandeb · Ceasefire · The Reordering of Business Geography

Kickoff Consulting

April 10, 2026

Strategic Intelligence Brief

SITUATION

A Ceasefire That Has Not Reopened the Strait

On April 7–8, the United States and Iran announced a two-week ceasefire mediated by Pakistan. Markets rallied: oil fell below \$100, Turkish equities surged 4.3%, and airline stocks climbed globally. The ceasefire included a commitment by Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz.

Within 24 hours, the agreement began to fracture. Israel launched its strongest wave of strikes on Lebanon since the war began — 160 bombs in one minute in an operation dubbed 'Eternal Darkness.' Iran paused Hormuz reopening in response. By April 9, ships were again being turned away. The Strait remains effectively closed — only four dry cargo vessels transited on the first day of the truce. Iran continues to charge tolls exceeding \$1M per ship and requires all vessels to coordinate passage with its armed forces.

On April 10, ceasefire talks collapsed entirely. Iran refused to meet US officials in Islamabad, calling American demands 'unacceptable.' Pakistan's mediation effort has stalled. Türkiye and Egypt are now exploring alternative venues — Doha or Istanbul — and fresh proposals to break the deadlock. Iran's stated conditions remain: US reparations, full withdrawal from Middle East bases, and guaranteed non-aggression.

KEY DATA

This Week's Developments (April 7–10, 2026)

Development	Detail	Date
Ceasefire announced	US-Iran two-week truce, mediated by Pakistan	April 7–8
Hormuz reopening commitment	Iran agreed to open Strait 'immediately'	April 7
Actual Hormuz transits (day 1)	4 dry cargo ships only — no oil/LNG tankers	April 8
Iran transit conditions	\$1M+ tolls; coordination with IRGC required	Ongoing
Israel-Lebanon strikes	Strongest wave since war began; 160 bombs in one minute	April 8–9
Iran response	Paused Hormuz reopening; IRGC warned of 'regretful response'	April 9
Ceasefire talks collapsed	Iran refused Islamabad meeting; demands 'unacceptable'	April 10
New diplomatic track	Türkiye & Egypt exploring Doha or Istanbul as venues	April 10
Oil price (post-ceasefire)	~\$95/barrel — still 30%+ above pre-war	April 9
Turkish equities (BIST 100)	+4.3%; banking +8.8%; THY & Pegasus +6%	April 8
IATA warning	Months for jet fuel recovery even if Hormuz reopens	April 8

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Development	Detail	Date
World Bank Kuwait forecast	GDP per capita -7.7% for 2026	April 2026
World Bank Qatar forecast	GDP per capita -7.4% for 2026	April 2026

Structural Damage (Unchanged by Ceasefire)

Indicator	Data
Hormuz traffic vs. normal	>90% decline persists
Brent crude vs. pre-war	Still +30% despite ceasefire selloff
Jet fuel prices	More than doubled; IATA says months to normalise
Container shipping costs	+240% vs. 2024
Fertiliser (urea) prices	+50% since war began
Gulf refining capacity	Damaged; cannot restart quickly
Maritime insurance	War-risk coverage still withdrawn
Strategic reserves released	400M barrels (IEA); ~20 days of Hormuz-equivalent
Dallas Fed GDP estimate	-1.3pp global Q4 growth from 3 months disruption
Gulf oil production cut	10M+ barrels/day shut in
Confirmed attacks on shipping	21 total; 10 seafarer fatalities
Seafarers stranded	20,000+ in Persian Gulf
ME tourism industry	\$367B sector; months to recover (Oxford Economics)
Iran sovereignty demand	Seeking permanent tolls & UNCLOS rewrite

Türkiye's Position (Strengthening)

Indicator	Data
Turkish equities (ceasefire rally)	BIST 100 +4.3%; banking +8.8%
Turkish Airlines & Pegasus	+6% on ceasefire news
Diplomatic role	FM Fidan coordinating with Tehran, Cairo, Washington
Ceasefire venue	Istanbul being discussed for next round of talks
Erdogan diplomacy (this week)	Hosted Zelenskiy (Apr 4); called Putin (Apr 3)
Regional quartet	Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Pakistan (Mar 29)
IFC relocation pipeline	40+ company meetings in 30 days
FDI (H1 2025)	\$6.3B (+27% YoY)
Turkish Airlines (2025)	\$24.1B revenue; 92.6M passengers

Indicator	Data
World Bank Turkey growth	2.8% (positive vs. Gulf contractions)
iShares MSCI Turkey ETF	Outperforming S&P 500 in 2026

ANALYSIS

1. The Ceasefire Proved the Structural Case, Not the Temporary One

The ceasefire was supposed to reopen Hormuz. It hasn't. Iran is using the Strait as leverage for permanent concessions: sovereignty recognition, transit fees collected in Chinese yuan, and a rewrite of UNCLOS transit passage rules. As the Blavatnik School of Government at Oxford observes, Hormuz functions as a 'reflexive chokepoint' — any attempt to exploit it results in proportionate self-harm, since Iran's own revenues depend on the Strait. But partial disruption remains rational for a state fighting for survival.

IATA's director general warned that it would take months for jet fuel supply to recover even if Hormuz reopened fully — which it has not. The Dallas Federal Reserve estimates that three quarters of sustained disruption could reduce Q4 global GDP growth by 1.3 percentage points. The World Bank projects GDP per capita contractions of 7.7% in Kuwait and 7.4% in Qatar for 2026.

2. Türkiye Is Now at the Centre of the Diplomacy

Türkiye's role has expanded from commercial beneficiary to diplomatic actor. The regional quartet (Türkiye, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Pakistan) convened in Islamabad on March 29. With Pakistan's mediation stalled, Türkiye and Egypt are exploring Istanbul or Doha as the next venue. FM Fidan has been in direct contact with Iranian, Egyptian, and American counterparts. President Erdogan hosted Ukrainian President Zelenskiy on April 4 and spoke with Putin on April 3 — positioning Ankara at the intersection of two simultaneous conflicts.

The Middle East Council on Global Affairs notes that if Türkiye's diplomatic efforts yield a ceasefire, it would validate Ankara's model of regional security ownership — the proposition that Middle Eastern states should manage their own security architecture.

3. The Market Signal: Investors Are Pricing In Türkiye

Turkish equities surged on the ceasefire announcement — not because Türkiye is directly affected, but because markets see it as the primary beneficiary of any scenario that keeps the Gulf commercially impaired. The iShares MSCI Turkey ETF has outperformed the S&P 500 in 2026. Banking stocks led the rally (+8.8%), reflecting expectations of increased capital flows into Turkish financial infrastructure.

IMPLICATIONS

What This Means for Companies

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Even the best-case scenario is bad for the Gulf and good for Istanbul. If the ceasefire holds and Hormuz partially reopens, recovery takes months. If it collapses — which it appears to be doing — the disruption extends. In either scenario, companies need an operational alternative.

Iran's toll model creates permanent uncertainty. Even if the Strait reopens, the precedent of Iranian-controlled access — with fees, coordination requirements, and the demonstrated ability to close at will — permanently elevates the risk premium for Gulf-dependent supply chains.

Türkiye's diplomatic role adds a new dimension. Istanbul is no longer just a commercial alternative. It is becoming a diplomatic hub for the crisis itself. This compounds the network effects already visible in financial services, aviation, and corporate mobility.

RECOMMENDATION

The ceasefire has not resolved the crisis — it has clarified it. Companies should accelerate, not pause, their Gulf exposure audit:

1. Map your Gulf-dependent supply chains against the assumption that Hormuz access remains conditional, costly, and revocable for at least 6–12 months.
2. Evaluate Istanbul as a parallel operational node — the window for advantaged positioning is narrowing as pipeline activity at IFC and in aviation partnerships accelerates.
3. Monitor the diplomatic track — if Istanbul becomes the venue for the next round of talks, it will further accelerate the city's positioning as the region's centre of gravity.

ABOUT KICKOFF CONSULTING

Kickoff Consulting is an Istanbul-based strategic advisory practice specialising in geopolitical risk, market intelligence, and business relocation strategy. We help firms navigate regional disruption and position for opportunity in Türkiye and adjacent markets.

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