

RELEASE IN FULL

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**From:** Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 20, 2011 6:54 PM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** Fw: Erdogan vows to quit party post if he loses vote (Reuters)

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**From:** OpsNewsTicker@state.gov <OpsNewsTicker@state.gov>  
**To:** NEWS-Mahogany  
**Cc:** SES-O\_OS; SES-O\_SWO  
**Sent:** Sun Feb 20 15:00:07 2011  
**Subject:** Erdogan vows to quit party post if he loses vote (Reuters)

ISTANBUL (Reuters) - Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan pledged on Sunday to step down as chairman of the AK Party to prove he is not a "dictator" if it finishes second in a June general election.

Most opinion polls have shown that AK, which first came to power in 2002, is well ahead of its rivals in a campaign to win its third term. See.

"If my party finishes second, I will leave my post as chairman. I will take to the road in Anatolia and join my people and work from there," Erdogan said in a speech broadcast live by the news channel NTV.

"Will those who accuse me of having dictatorial aspirations step aside if their party finishes second?" he said.

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