

Diplomatic Fence-mending with Russia? Is Ankara Ready to Close Its Border with Syria, Blocking Supply Routes to US-NATO “Moderate Terrorists”

By [Al Manar](#)

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Turkey is already mulling the possibility of closing its border with Syria, amid the ongoing diplomatic fence-mending between Moscow and Ankara, according to the Russian newspaper Izvestia.

The Izvestia newspaper quoted the deputy head of the Russian Lower House’s Defense Committee as saying that during a recent session of the joint Russian-Turkish commission, Moscow specifically stressed the necessity of closing the Turkish-Syrian border.

✘ Viktor Vodolatsky said that the August 11 session was a continuation of Tuesday’s dialogue in St. Petersburg between Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

“The two, among other things, discussed the peace settlement in Syria, which is why we decided to urge Ankara to close the Syrian-Turkish border in order to stop the flow of terrorists and weapons,” Vodolatsky said.

He added that the issue is of paramount importance in ensuring Russia’s national security, and that Moscow pledged to provide the Turkish side with satellite images of those areas where it is shown that weapons and militants are being trafficked.

It is safe to say that Ankara will most likely give the green light to the closure of Syrian-Turkish border given the ongoing normalization of relations between Russia and Turkey, according to Izvestia, which cited relevant agreements clinched during the meeting between Putin and Erdogan.

In this context, Igor Morozov, member of the Russian Upper House’s International Affairs Committee, said that with Turkey’s relations with Europe and the US leaving much to be desired, Ankara will now be focusing on developing cooperation with Russia.

It gives Russia a chance to reach a compromise with Turkey on a spate of contentious issue, and under conditions that will be dictated by Moscow, Morozov was quoted by the Izvestia as saying.

“The Turkish negotiators actually have no room to maneuver, and they are poised and ready to arrive at a consensus on difficult issues. This is why they will most likely say “yes” to our proposal to close Turkey’s border with Syria,” he said.

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