

# Threatening Russia and Iran? US and NATO deploy missile defense system in Turkey

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*-[M]any military and political experts in Russia come to the conclusion that by building such a system the United States seeks to offset the missile potential of Russia by deploying missile defense bases along the entire length of the Russian territory. Washington is aiming for a global missile defense shield, elements of which are already being built in the Far East, in the Indian Ocean and in the northern seas.*

Turkey's decision to allow the United States and NATO to deploy elements of the European missile defense system on its territory has triggered a negative response across the region and in the rest of the world.

The negative response from Iran and Israel is easy to explain. Turkey, Iran's regional rival in many areas, is also a US ally and Washington's main target, as it says, is to use the future missile defense system to protect Europe and America against a nuclear threat from Iran. As for Israel, it is regarded as one of Turkey's "foes".

Should Turkey join the US and NATO missile defense plans, few will harbor doubts about Washington building a large-scale, far-reaching multi-echelon missile defense system. Poland, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Romania have already voiced readiness to become part of it. Undoubtedly, a powerful "anti-missile umbrella" of this kind is unwarranted for repulsing an imaginary threat from Iran. As it happens, Iran has not come into possession of any ballistic missiles yet.

Given the situation, many military and political experts in Russia come to the conclusion that by building such a system the United States seeks to offset the missile potential of Russia by deploying missile defense bases along the entire length of the Russian territory. Washington is aiming for a global missile defense shield, elements of which are already being built in the Far East, in the Indian Ocean and in the northern seas. Reports of the so-called "Turkish factor" have become particularly frequent ahead of NATO and Russia-NATO summits in Lisbon on November 19th and 20th.

The NATO summit is to approve a new strategy for a missile defense system in Europe, and the Russia-NATO summit is to focus on the possibility of Moscow's participation in the missile defense project on a parity basis. NATO representatives claim that they welcome Russia to join in. However, there are fears that the so-called "Turkish factor" is being used to pressure Moscow on the missile defense issue, by demonstrating that the US and NATO will pursue the plans all the same, with or without Russia. Hopefully, these fears will prove groundless.

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