

Will Turkey Withdraw From NATO? Shift in Military Alliances. Ankara Realigns with Moscow?

Analyst Explains Why Turkey 'Can Calmly Withdraw From NATO' After Putin's Speech

By [Sputnik](#)

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Commenting on President Putin recently touting advanced Russian weapons and lawmaker Alexander Sherin signaling Moscow's readiness to stand up for its partners, including Ankara, Turkish military expert Beyazit Karatas told Sputnik that these statements indicate that Ankara does not need NATO's deterrence systems.

Retired Turkish Air Force major-general Beyazit Karatas said that the latest statements by senior Russian officials show that Ankara should not rely on NATO when it comes to maintaining its national security.

"Moscow underscores that Turkey can calmly withdraw from [NATO](#), and after doing so Ankara will have guarantees that it will not face any threat in terms of ensuring its own security," Karatas pointed out.

Karatas recalled what he had already said about the likelihood of a situation in which the US could add to Turkey becoming a nuclear target.

"By saying so, I meant that if any [NATO country](#), mainly America, stages a nuclear attack on a third country from Turkish territory, it may turn Turkey into a nuclear target. However, Russia's recent statements, on the one hand, offered Turkey a protection system which is alternative to NATO's nuclear deterrence, and, on the other - the statements sent a certain message to NATO and the US via Turkey,"

he added.

Karatas emphasized that "the US is not a superpower in terms of its resources in the field of conventional weapons, and they themselves realize this."

"The US is a country which is forced to create coalitions in order to carry out military interventions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, or elsewhere in the world. We are talking about America, which created an alliance with 70 different forces. This is part of the main evidence that the US is no longer a world superpower,"

he noted.

He recalled that Putin's statements on sophisticated Russian weapons came after US President Donald Trump's statements about Washington's intent to develop US tactical nuclear weapons.

"It can be seen as an attempt to compensate for [the US's] weakness in conventional armament by building up nuclear capabilities. In this connection, Putin's statements can be regarded as a response to the US rhetoric, which is full of threats,"

Karatas said.

'Message to Turkey'

He was echoed by Turkish political analyst Ozdemir Akbal, who said that "the words by Russian President reflect his desire to form a new union."

According to Akbal, one of the goals was "to send a certain message to Turkey, which is going through problems in relations with its allies over the Syrian issue."

"By making statements on the development of the newest Russian nuclear weapons, Putin, on the one hand, stressed the status of Russia as a global player, achieved after the beginning of the operation in Syria in 2015, and on the other - he expressed an intention to create new allied relations,"

Akbal noted.

He recalled that despite a spate of problems in relations, Turkey remains [a NATO member](#), which prevents Ankara from joining other alliances.

"If [this] system's structure is not hit by a crisis that would fundamentally change the existing balance of power (like the Second World War did in its time), it will be very difficult for Turkey to take action aimed at changing the existing allied structure,"

Akbal concluded.

Earlier this week, Alexander Sherin, first deputy head of the Russian Lower House's Defense Committee, said that CSTO [Collective Security Treaty Organization] countries, [Syria](#), Iran, North Korea, [China](#) and Turkey, remain Russia's partners, and that Moscow will be ready to "stand up" for them in case of a possible nuclear attack.

The statement was followed by President Vladimir Putin's [state-of-the-nation address](#) to the country's Federal Assembly, in which he specifically touted the most advanced Russian weapons, including the Sarmat ballistic missile, the Kinzhal high-precision hypersonic aircraft missile system and the Avangard strategic hypersonic missile system.

The views and opinions expressed by Beyazit Karatas and Ozdemir Akbal are those of the speakers and do not necessarily reflect those of Sputnik.

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