



## Erdogan Slams Door On Approving Sweden, Finland NATO Bids: ‘Nesting Ground For Terrorist Orgs’

### Description

TURKEY/SWEDEN/FINLAND: In fresh Monday comments, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan issued his **firmest words of rejection yet concerning Finland and Sweden’s announced bids to join NATO**. Over the weekend after Erdogan first stated Turkey is “not favorable” toward the Scandinavian countries entering the alliance, there was widespread speculation among officials quoted in Western media reports that Turkish reluctance **could be easily resolved**.

When asked about Turkey’s reservations on Sunday, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken [said](#) “I’m **very confident** that we will reach consensus on that” – somewhat dodging the severity of Ankara’s recent [unambiguous statements](#) as nothing at all to worry about in terms of a NATO unified front. But now Erdogan has defiantly poured cold water on the collective Western enthusiasm for achieving the consensus needed among the 30 NATO member states to admit new countries. There was even talk of ‘fast-tracking’ them, which now seems like a fantasy in light of Turkey’s stance.

*Bloomberg* too notes following Erdogan’s Monday speech that “**he intends to block membership for the two countries, or at least extract concessions for it**” – following their separate weekend announcements which came hours apart, affirming they will apply.



Getty Images

**“These two countries lack a clear stance against terrorism” and “Sweden is a nesting ground for terrorist organizations,”** Erdogan [said](#). He pointed out that both countries have joined other European allies in imposing “sanctions” on Turkey, specifically recent restrictions on arms sales to Ankara going back to 2019 in context of the running war with Kurdish groups along its southern border. Turkey’s military has also continued to intervene against the Syrian Kurdish YPG which has US and Western backing.

**“First of all, we cannot say ‘yes’ to those who impose sanctions on Turkey, on joining NATO which is a security organization,”** Erdogan stressed while standing alongside his Algerian counterpart Abdelmadjid Tebboune at the press conference in Ankara. “How can we trust them?” he posed in reference to Sweden and Finland.

Amid the blistering comments, Erdogan addressed earlier Monday statements by the Swedish foreign office indicating top officials would be dispatched from Helsinki and Stockholm to Turkey in order to address the objections. Stunningly, (or perhaps no surprise at all) Erdogan dismissed the diplomatic attempts before they even begin. The diplomats **“should not bother”** coming, he said, if they hope to change Turkey’s mind on the matter.

According to Turkey’s *Daily Sabah*, in addressing the overture he again took the opportunity to apply the [‘terror supporters’ label](#)...

*“They say they will come to Turkey on Monday. Are they coming to convince us? Excuse*

*me but they should not tire themselves,” he noted.*

*Erdogan said NATO would become “**a place where representatives of terrorist organizations are concentrated**” if the two countries join.*

Starting Friday, Erdogan said that “**Sweden has become a home for PKK and other terror groups**” – which was echoed again the following day by Turkey’s foreign minister to a gathering of NATO ministers in Berlin. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the same time expressed optimism that this would be worked through, suggesting it’s but a “last-minute wrinkle” as described in *Bloomberg*.

Erdogan: Sweden and Finland are breeding ground for terrorism.

Reality check: Hamas has a HQ in Istanbul, ISIS has free passage throughout Turkey, Ankara supports al Qaeda, AKP and Muslim Brotherhood are besties, Taliban visits Turkey.

Turkey is breeding ground for terrorism.

— Diliman Abdulkader (@D\_abdulkader) [May 16, 2022](#)

Turkish commentary on the topic has grown more and more unbending by the day (on Saturday FM [Cavusoglu said](#) the idea was “outrageous”), clearly demonstrating this is no small wrinkle at all, but is instead the Western military alliance’s **second largest military in effect slamming the door** on the prospect – or at least *until it gets significant concessions*.

As we described earlier the Turkish “demands” have [already begun](#)...

*Turkey laid out demands on Sunday on the sidelines of a meeting of NATO foreign ministers in Berlin, saying it wanted the two Nordic countries to **end support for Kurdish militant groups** present on their territory, and to **lift the ban on sales of some arms to Turkey**.*

With the West desperate to keep up the pressure on Moscow amid the grinding Ukraine war (increasingly looking much more like a Russia vs. NATO proxy war), circumstances certainly now put Turkey in the driver’s seat. Like with the recent years’ S-400 saga which put Ankara at the center of a tug-of-war with Moscow and Washington, Turkey’s leadership can now use its considerable leverage on the NATO membership question to get what it wants out of NATO allies. Brussels must of course achieve full consensus in order to admit Sweden and Finland – the latter which shares an 810-mile border with Russia. Moscow has in turn threatened possible “military and technical” actions.

by Tyler Durden

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