



Turkey Builds Up Troops In Northern Cyprus, Rages At “Inexplicable” US Decision

Description

TURKEY: Two weeks ago the US took the historic step of **lifting defense trade restrictions on Cyprus**. This will take effect for the fiscal year 2023, and the policy will be amended October 1st, according to prior statements of Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

Like with the recent upgraded US F-16 transfer to Greece, Turkey isn't happy, also as military tensions continue to build over Ankara's charge that the Greek army is militarizing islands off the Turkish coast. Turkey now says it will **send more troops and weapons to the Turkish-occupied territory of northern Cyprus**.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan on Wednesday lashed out at the US-Cyprus partnership, warning that Washington's opening of weapons transfers will trigger an arms race on the divided island.



Getty Images: only Turkey recognizes the “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus”

“The United States, which overlooks and even encourages the steps by the Cypriot-Greek duo that threaten peace and stability in the eastern Mediterranean, will lead to an armament race on the island with this step,” Erdogan said. The Turkish leader said further in the comments to CNN Turk:

“Will we stand by? We cannot,” he said, adding that Turkey ***already has 40,000 troops on the island and will reinforce them*** with land, naval and aerial weapons, ammunition and vehicles, Erdogan said.

“Everyone must know that this last step will not go unresponded and that every precaution will be taken for the security of the Turkish Cypriots,” Erdogan said.

He additionally called the US administration’s decision **“inexplicable in terms of content and timing.”**

State Department spokesman Ned Price recently reaffirmed that “Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken determined and certified to Congress that the Republic of Cyprus has met the necessary conditions under relevant legislation to allow the approval of exports, re-exports, and transfers of defense articles.”

This followed Cyprus successfully fulfilling its obligations under the Eastern Mediterranean Security and Energy Partnership Act of 2019, which had been sponsored by Senators Bob Menendez and Marco Rubio.

As for Turkey’s occupation of northern Cyprus, no one else in the world recognizes its legitimacy except for Ankara. Cyprus receives backing from its EU partners, but this doesn’t go much beyond verbal censure of Turkey.

by Tyler Durden

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