



Head of Israeli institute for national security studies: Turkish-Israeli relations are close to breaking

05.07.2010 19:37

Azerbaijan, Baku, July 5 /Trend, U.Sadikhova/



The probability of rupture in diplomatic relations between Turkey and Israel is high at this stage, said Oded Eran, head of the Israeli Institute for National Security Studies.

"I think it is quite possible, we have already witnessed a serious decline in the volume of the relations," Eran, former Israeli ambassador to the EU and NATO, told Trend by telephone.

On Monday, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu threatened Israel with a complete break in diplomatic relations if Israel does not apologize for the attack upon a humanitarian convoy "freedom of flotilla", Turkish Hurriyet newspaper reported.

Israeli commandos attack upon the ships with humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip on May 31 seriously damaged military and diplomatic alliance between Israel and Turkey - the only Muslim ally of the Jewish state in the Middle East. Six ships were stopped by Israeli commandos in the neutral waters of the Mediterranean Sea. Nine Turkish activists were killed as a result of clashes with Israeli soldiers on the Turkish ship "Mavi Marmara".

Ankara demands Israel to pay compensation to the families of the victims and recognize the international investigation on the incident.

Davutoglu also confirmed that the Turkish authorities imposed a ban on the use of its airspace by Israeli military aircraft. "Decision to impose a ban on the use of airspace by civilian aircraft has not yet been made. It may be reviewed depending on development of events," said the foreign minister of Turkey.

"We know what we want and are fundamentally right. We will monitor the implementation of our requirements," Davutoglu added.

Davutoglu's statement was followed by immediate reaction of his Israeli colleague Avigdor Lieberman, who being on an official visit to Latvia, categorically refused to accept the conditions of Turkey and apologize.

On the backdrop of recent statements and abolition of military-air and naval exercises between Israel and Turkey, the adviser to the Knesset sub-committee on foreign affairs Eran considers most likely the rupture of diplomatic relations.

"The Israeli and Turkish forces which are training together stopped it and now Israeli air forces train in Greece. We saw the removal of Turkish ambassador in Tel- Aviv, so there is already a deterioration and unfortunately," said Eran.

None of the parties, according to Israeli diplomat, benefit from the situation.

"The both sides stand to lose from the downgrading of the relations, but there is mostly decision of Turkey. It should be put in the wider perspective, the question is where Turkey is turning in the recent years not only month," Eran said.

The deterioration of relations also caused concerns in Washington, where Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. President Barack Obama will meet on Tuesday.

The latter called on Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan during a meeting in Toronto to take steps to restore relations with Israel.

Eran assumes that the subject will come out in the talks between Netanyahu and president Obama during the meeting.

"The USA will make an afford the deterioration, although it is not the central issue both in Jerusalem and in Washington there is concern about the situation," Eran said.

<http://en.trend.az/print/1715936.html>