



Tensions between Israel and Turkey escalate over Syria: 'It's time to pay attention'

'Relations between Israel and Turkey are now at their lowest point in decades,' expert warns

By Efrat Lachter Fox News / Published December 18, 2024

Israel rejected Turkish accusations on Tuesday following Ankara's condemnation of Israeli military actions in Syria, as Turkey escalates its own operations in the war-torn country. The rising tensions have deepened the rift between the two nations and sparked concerns over regional stability and the fate of U.S.-backed Kurdish forces fighting ISIS.

[...]

The unusually sharp exchange reflects a new low in bilateral relations, according to **Gallia Lindenstrauss, a senior research fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies**. "Relations between Israel and Turkey are now at their lowest point in decades," she told Fox News Digital. "In May, Turkey imposed a complete trade ban on Israel, severing all direct links. This is unprecedented for countries that maintain diplomatic relations."

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's rhetoric has worsened ties further. His support for Hamas, which carried out the Oct. 7 attack on Israel, and his accusations of "genocide" in Gaza have drawn Israeli ire. "We must be very strong so that Israel can't do these ridiculous things to Palestine," Erdoğan said in July. "Just like we entered Karabakh, just like we entered Libya, we might do similar to them."

Erdoğan has also urged Islamic nations to unite against Israel, calling it "the most concrete threat to regional and global peace." Lindenstrauss emphasized Turkey's support for Hamas as a major source of tension. "Turkey backs Hamas and wants to see Hamas remain in charge in Gaza after the war," she explained.

Israel remains increasingly concerned about Turkey's military buildup in northern Syria. Lindenstrauss said Ankara's ambitions are growing. "Turkey has been in control of northern areas and supported rebels against Assad," she said. "The question now is whether Turkey's influence will spread further south, positioning Ankara as a patron of the emerging regime."

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