

# War against Iran threatens to engulf Türkiye and NATO

Bar?? Demir, Ula? Sevinç  
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NATO member Türkiye is being drawn ever deeper into the imperialist war waged by the US and Israel against Iran. On Monday, the Ministry of National Defence announced: “A ballistic munition launched from Iran and entering Turkish airspace was neutralized by NATO air and missile defence assets deployed in the Eastern Mediterranean.”

Fragments of the missile were reported to have fallen on an empty field in Gaziantep, a city neighboring Adana—home to NATO’s Incirlik Air Base, which is used by the United States—with no casualties or injuries reported.

The defence ministry’s statement further declared: “We once again emphasize that all necessary measures will be taken decisively and without hesitation against any threat directed at our country’s territory and airspace. We also reiterate that it is in everyone’s interest to heed Türkiye’s warnings in this regard.”

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in remarks delivered that evening directed at Iran, stated: “However, I would hereby like to underscore that despite our warnings, extremely wrong and provocative steps, which will undermine Türkiye’s friendship, are continued to be taken. All should avoid calculations, which will inflict deep wounds in the hearts and minds of our nation, and which will cast a shadow on our 1,000-year-old neighborhood and brotherhood. Türkiye’s stance and attitude are clear.”

During a phone conversation with Erdoğan on Monday night, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian denied claims regarding Iran launching a missile strike on Türkiye, according to the Iranian press.

About one hour before the announcement of the missile incident—which Iran has not confirmed—the US State Department ordered non-emergency diplomatic personnel and their families stationed at the US Consulate in Adana to depart Türkiye. Washington also advised American citizens to leave southeastern Türkiye.

Iran, the target of an unlawful aggression by the US and Israel, is retaliating against Israel and US bases across the region in exercise of its right to self-defence. However, a strike on Incirlik—a base used by, but not belonging to, the

United States—could, by virtue of its legal status, trigger Article 5 of the NATO treaty and draw the entire alliance into war against Iran. This is far from a desirable outcome for Iran, which is already under massive imperialist assault with limited capacity to sustain it.

Monday’s missile incident follows the interception of another missile approaching Turkish airspace last Wednesday. In that case, Iran rejected claims that Türkiye had been targeted; Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi stated: “We have no reason to attack Türkiye. Türkiye is a good neighbour of ours.”

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, speaking on Saturday, addressed Iran directly, saying that Türkiye “does not easily fall for provocations and has no difficulty defending its security, but also knows the risks of being dragged into a wider conflict.”

Fidan then issued a warning to Iran: “If this was a missile that lost its course, that is one thing. But such incidents should happen only once. If there are going to be more, our advice is: Please be careful, no one in Iran should embark on such an adventure.”

Whatever the origin of the missiles, Ankara is being drawn step by step into the war, despite its warnings and calls for negotiation. The Turkish government’s objective and historical position in the war against Iran aligns with the US-Israeli axis.

Top officials of the Turkish government have, since February 28, carefully avoided openly condemning the US-Israeli war of annihilation against Iran—a war based on assassinations of a sovereign state’s leaders, the destruction of civilian infrastructure including hospitals and schools, and the massacre of civilians including schoolchildren. Yet they have been far more forthcoming in criticising Iran under the shadow of US bombs. In his Saturday remarks, Fidan once again stated: “I want to emphasize once again that we strongly condemn [Iranian] attacks targeting third countries.”

In truth, Ankara had calculated that the best outcome for the interests of the Turkish bourgeoisie would be Iran’s

capitulation to the United States—short of a war of regime change and the country’s dismemberment. As the *World Socialist Web Site* has previously explained, “Ankara nevertheless fears that this imperialist attack, which could lead to the collapse of the Iranian regime, could in turn increase Israel’s influence on its own borders, trigger a new wave of migrants, and encourage separatist initiatives by Kurdish nationalist forces linked to the US and Israel.”

Ankara’s role as “good cop”—played in the hope that Washington’s objectives could be achieved through negotiation—has yielded nothing. Fidan’s remarks on March 3 expressed Ankara’s frustration that Iran, attacked while negotiating, refused to capitulate voluntarily:

The Iranians want certain things in exchange for concessions ... The Americans are also under time pressure due to their military buildup. On the one hand, there is immense pressure from Israel. I believe that if the Iranians had better understood the decision-making pressure President Trump was facing and offered something earlier, Israel’s pressure might not have been as effective.

In the same statement, Fidan implied that the elimination of Iran’s leadership could represent an opportunity, and advised whatever new leadership emerged to accept capitulation: “I think there may be a window of opportunity here, if handled carefully. Of course, Iran should not be humiliated, but the concerns of others must also be addressed.”

Fidan made clear that he sees no alternative to capitulation before the United States, stating that “the war could end at the earliest with eliminating Iran’s military capabilities...” To gauge the reliability of Fidan’s assessments, one need only recall his February 9 statement, “Right now, there does not appear to be any imminent threat of war.”

These words reveal not the leadership of a country “defying the world,” as Ankara claims, but rather a regime that has itself submitted to a bullying imperialist power—and now sees fit to recommend the same submission to its beleaguered neighbour, presenting this counsel as “independent” foreign policy.

What concerns Ankara is not the slaughter and devastation being visited upon the Iranian population, but the negative consequences the war could produce for the Turkish bourgeoisie. The collapse of the Iranian regime, which has served as a stabilizing counterweight in the region, could lead to the fragmentation of Iran, spearheaded by pro-imperialist forces in Iranian Kurdistan openly backed by

both the US and Israel. Moreover, Israel, which has declared the Kurds—spread across four countries, including Türkiye and Iran—its “natural allies,” could extend its influence all the way to Türkiye’s borders.

The possibility of Türkiye and Israel, allies since 1948, coming into geopolitical conflict is no baseless speculation; it is a scenario increasingly discussed in Ankara, Tel Aviv and Washington alike.

On March 4, the *Wall Street Journal* published an article titled “An Urgent Need to Contain Türkiye—If the Iranian regime falls, beware Ankara’s regional influence.” Its author, Bradley Martin, is a retired naval officer with 30 years of service and executive director of the Near East Center for Strategic Studies (NESA), a Pentagon-affiliated institution in Washington D.C.

Martin wrote: “Should NATO continue its relationship with Türkiye? What should its role be in the Middle East after the Iranian regime falls? When considering these questions, the U.S. shouldn’t forget that Türkiye opposes U.S. foreign policy and is a headache for its allies.”

Meanwhile, European NATO forces, including those of Britain, France, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands and Greece, continue to reinforce their military presence in the Eastern Mediterranean against Iran, using as their pretext a drone strike of as yet undetermined origin that hit a British base in Cyprus on March 2.

Ankara has seized on this opportunity to deploy six F-16 fighter jets to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, recognised solely by Türkiye. Late last year, a “strategic alliance” was formed between Israel, Greece and Cyprus, related to hydrocarbon resources in the Eastern Mediterranean.



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