

Rheinmetall ready to produce tanks with Erdogan's close political circle

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Despite the pending approval, Rheinmetall brings the upgrade of Turkey's "Leopard 2" tanks on the way: According to BR and Stern there is already a deal with Turkey's BMC.

At the end of January when the Turkish army started using Leopard 2 tanks in Operation Olive Branch, there was a great deal of anger: tanks made in Germany are being used in an offensive that violates the international laws. Germany's Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel had promised in a meeting with his counterpart from Turkey, that the federal government would approve a retrofit for Leopard 2 tanks.

The agreement includes Rheinmetall equipping Leopard 2 tanks with better armour against rocket fire and booby traps. But after the beginning of Turkey's assault in Syria's Afrin, the Foreign Minister rowed back and postponed the decision until the formation of a new government.

Agreement four days after Foreign Minister meeting

But now it turns out: Already on 9 January, four days after the meeting of the two foreign ministers, apparently, a delegation Turkey's BMC arrived in Dusseldorf and signed an agreement on retrofitting with Rheinmetall, Stern reported their sources within Rheinmetall.

Obviously, Rheinmetall already assumed that approval for retrofitting would come.

Rheinmetall plans joint venture with Turkey

Rheinmetall's Turkey plans go much further: President Erdogan would like to have tanks built soon. Rheinmetall wants to be there and has founded a subsidiary in Turkey. It is called RBSS and is based in Ankara - a joint venture with, among others, Turkey's BMC group, which belongs to people in Erdogan's close political circle. That is, Rheinmetall will produce tanks in Turkey cooperating with BMC which is owned by the political elites of Erdogan's ruling party.

Sancak, a central executive member of the ruling AKP, is the owner of BMC, the company producing armoured vehicles which have been used, among other things, to disrupt protests in Turkey.

“Thanks to its advanced technology and vast experience in the defence industry, BMC meets the demands of the Turkish Armed Forces alongside other armies all around the world”, BMC boasts.