

Turkey could leave NATO within a year - experts

by Meghan Bodette - 22/08/2018 13:34



A U.S. financial firm that specializes in geopolitical intelligence **cautioned** that Turkey may leave NATO within a year.

“For the last six months, Academy has surveyed its Geopolitical Intelligence Group (GIG), comprised of ten retired admirals and generals, on the rising tensions with Turkey. Consistently, our GIG has identified this deteriorating relationship as a significant foreign policy concern. Additionally, the GIG sees the potential for Turkey to leave NATO by years end as likely,” the report concluded.

Despite the anti-NATO and anti-American rhetoric, Turkey has called more meetings under Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which allows any member state to call a consultative meeting to discuss a security threat, than any other NATO member. It

also purchases most of its weapons from NATO states, chiefly the U.S.

There is no specific procedure for a member state to leave NATO. When France [left](#) the alliance in 1966, it did not formally leave— rather, it withdrew its military forces from NATO's integrated military command. It continued to cooperate with some NATO operations, and fully rejoined in 2009.

A Turkish exit from NATO would likely affect the US and Coalition presence at Incirlik Air Base in Adana, which is used for anti-ISIS missions in Syria and Iraq. Documents [uncovered](#) by the Stockholm Center for Freedom reveal that pro-AKP lawyers have already tried to build a case for the arrest of U.S. officers at the base, citing involvement in the coup attempt of July 2016. The U.S. has scaled down its presence there, and Germany has already [pulled](#) its military forces from the base, transferring its forces there to Jordan.

There is also an American military base in Izmir that is largely used for NATO operations.

Turkish citizens across the political spectrum have opposed the US and NATO bases in the country. Both left opposition to the real US role in supporting Turkish authoritarianism and nationalist objection to supposed US attacks on the AKP government mean that a withdrawal from NATO may not be controversial in the country.

Its effects on the ongoing US-Turkey diplomatic crisis, however, would be more significant than any controversy that has arisen so far, affecting operations in Iraq and Syria and potentially changing the US calculus towards Kurdish groups that Turkey targets as terrorists. Turkey's [purchase](#) of Russian weapons alone has triggered the prospect of new US sanctions, on the grounds that they would endanger US and NATO weapons.