
TURKEY AND RUSSIA CAN'T SACRIFICE EACH OTHER, SAYS GOV'T SPOKESMAN

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Turkey and Russia cant sacrifice each other, government spokesman and Deputy Prime Minister Numan Kurtulmuş has said, referring to Russian President Vladimir Putins recent comments on the relations between the two countries.

Neither Russia, nor Turkey can sacrifice each other. Both of the countries cant do that, Kurtulmuş told journalists at a press meeting after a cabinet meeting at Çankaya Mansion in the capital Ankara on May 30.

Speaking about the downing of a Russian jet on the Turkish-Syrian border in November 2015, which enflamed the tension between the two countries, Kurtulmuş said Turkey didnt know the nationality of the plane at the time.

The identity of the plane wasnt known when it was shot. Turkey didnt take part in the downing of the jet intentionally. It was a result of the warnings. I think that prolonging the subject wouldnt do Russia good. I wish this never happened. I wish this tension never took place. We hope that it will be settled as soon as possible, he added.

The Russian president had said on May 27 that Russia was ready to enhance relations with Turkey, if Ankara takes the first step.

Our plane was not only downed, but its pilot was killed. This is a war crime according to international law. We received explanations about the incident, but never heard an apology [from Turkey]. We want to improve the relations. We werent the ones ruining it. They [Turkey] have to do something, Putin said in a press conference during his visit to Athens.

Meanwhile, the spokesperson for Russian President Vladimir Putin, Dmitry Peskov, said a working group between Turkey and Russia, a proposal put forth by Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, could not solve the problems between the two countries.

There are, undoubtedly, contacts to solve the problems between the two countries but no working group can solve the problem between us, Peskov said.

Putin has quite clearly put our attitude forth. One should search [for] the answer in his words, Peskov added. Our expectations from Turkey are extremely clear.

Relations between Turkey and Russia have been tense since Turkey downed the Russian fighter jet on Nov. 24, 2015, on grounds of a border violation along Turkey's border with Syria, leading to the death of two Russian soldiers.

While Turkey stated that it warned the Russian jet about its infraction multiple times, Russia denies this.

Following the jet crisis, Russia began imposing an embargo on Turkish goods as well as visas on Turkish travelers.

Kaynak/Source: