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## **RUSSIA OUTPERFORMING US IN BUILDING 'STRATEGIC MILITARY TIES' WITH TURKEY**

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During his recent visit to Russia, Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim said that Russia and Turkey would develop strategic bilateral relations. "The relations between the two countries have gone through a difficult time over the last year. And after this negative experience, we plan to develop our relations at a strategic level," he said during talks with his Russia counterpart Dmitry Medvedev

Russia, Turkey 'Turned a Difficult Page' in Ties, Can Move Forward - Russian PM The prime minister added that partnership between Moscow and Ankara is very important, in particular in the "fight against terrorism and ensuring peace." Russian-Turkish ties soured following the downing of a Russian bomber over Syria by a Turkish jet in Syria last November. At the beginning of 2016, Russia imposed a number of restrictive measures, including a ban on charter flights, food and flowers imports. Normalization began in June after Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan apologized for the incident. Yildirims statement indicates the willingness of the Turkish government to move Moscow-Ankara defense cooperation to a new level, according to Hasret Comak, a military and political analyst and head of the international relations department at the Istanbul Arel University. "Strategic partnership is a large-scale and multidimensional phenomenon. It means not only trade and economic and social and cultural cooperation but also ties in defense. For Moscow and Turkey it is of a special importance. After an incident last year tensions between our countries deepened. This was a big mistake. But we understood and admitted this mistake, which helped restore bilateral contacts," Comak told Sputnik Turkiye. According to him, a strategic approach to bilateral ties will realize the potential of Russia-Turkey cooperation in all spheres. "Currently, as I see, Turkeys relations with the United States are not strategic. But our relations with Russia are developing at a strategic level. Such an approach will help realize the potential of Russia-Turkey cooperation in all directions," Comak said. © FLICKR/ GAGE SKIDMORE Ankara Hopes for Reset of US-Turkey Relations Following Trump's Election Win He added that Moscow has long supported Ankara, since the very dawn of the Turkish State in the 1920s. According to the expert, moving Russia-Turkey ties to a strategic level will add the "military and nuclear component" to the bilateral relations. "Currently, bilateral military and technical cooperation between Russia and Turkey is developing. The sides also have projects in atomic energy. These two areas are very important and can be described as strategic," Comak pointed out.