

# Turkey withdraws military support for EU security, defence policy

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**Turkey withdrew its military support to the EU under the European security and defence policy.**

Turkey supported the EU's several military operations with its air and naval troops since the beginning of 2000s.

After the EU failed to meet Turkey's expectations and resolve some problems, Turkey decided to withdraw its support.

Reliable sources said that Gen Yilmaz Oguz, Turkey's highest level military representative to NATO and the EU, officially conveyed Turkey's decision to the EU in May.

Turkey did not inform NATO on its decision.

In its decision, Turkey said, "We have supported the European security and defence policy since the very beginning and contributed to the EU's basic targets. Turkey has totally fulfilled its commitments stemming from the European security and defence policy. During this process, Turkey explained some of its difficulties and expectations to the EU. However, we could not get a tangible development yet."

Turkey also expressed its uneasiness over the EU's describing its contributions only as an "appendix" in the documents.

Sources in Brussels said that Turkey, on numerous occasions, expressed its uneasiness over its exclusion from decision-making and command mechanisms in the European security and defence policy operations.

On the other hand, Turkey's call to the EU to finalize the necessary administrative arrangements for its participation in the European Defence Agency was not met. Earlier, the EU decided to make some administrative arrangements to pave the way for participation of Norway and Turkey in the agency. Norway signed a document to this end. However, signing of a similar document with Turkey was vetoed by the Greek Cypriot administration.

Turkey's decision created a shock effect in Brussels. The EU has been trying to convince Turkey.

Meanwhile, Turkish National Defence Minister Vecdi Gonul said that the special operations brigade, which would join the European security and defence policy Targeted Military Programme and Projects in 2010 was withdrawn after it was placed among reserve units.

"If Turkey's demands are not met, the General Staff will carry out a new planning," Gonul added.

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## Sources

Source : BBC Monitoring Europe - Political, June 7, 2007 Thursday