

NATO Aircraft Participated in Turkish-Pakistani Air Combat Exercise

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[NATO's Allied Air Command reported](#) that the military bloc participated in the multinational air combat exercise *Anatolian Eagle 2021*, which occurred from June 21 to July 2.

Hosted by Turkey at its Third Main Jet Base in Konya, the war games included combat aircraft from Turkey, Pakistan, Azerbaijan and Qatar. All four nations are NATO members or partners.

Earlier the Turkish Defense Ministry also confirmed that NATO was conducting a certification assessment of six F-16s, a Boeing KC-135R Stratotanker and six Stinger air defense teams “[committed to the NATO Response Force \(NRF\)](#)” for the first time during the exercise.

[As previously reported](#), Qatar provided French-made Rafales of the sort recently sold to Greece and India, and Azerbaijan supplied Russian-made combat planes used by Armenia and India: Sukhois and MiGs, respectively, are the very backbone of the Armenian and Indian air forces.

Please note the terminology in this excerpt from the NATO press release on the event: “The exercise was designed to provide training opportunities for *combat ready aircrews* to increase proficiency and [exchange experiences with allied and partner nations.](#)” Allied in NATO language means a NATO member and partner is a member of a NATO military partnership. The latter term is never used in any other capacity.

The transparent, the irrefutable purpose of the two-week exercise was to train the Turkish and Pakistani air forces for encounters with those of Armenia and India and even with NATO member Greece.

NATO was fully aware of that, and in participating in the maneuvers it endorsed alike their intent and probable application.

To editorialize. The growing and at time deafening chorus of voices from both sides of the world and across the political spectrum (such as it is) claiming that the Turkey-Pakistan-

Azerbaijan military alliance – we have to have to courage to admit it is [now a Turkey-Pakistan-Azerbaijan-Russia axis](#) – is a challenge or counterbalance to NATO need only acquaint themselves with the evidence of the facts, which are amassing daily, that the above alliance represents anything but opposition to NATO. Recent examples abound, they are legion: [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#).

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