

## Tanks for Ukraine will only prolong war, line pockets of arms dealers: Erdogan

The Turkish president has also doubled down on his opposition to allowing Sweden into NATO following Quran-burning protests in Stockholm

By [News Desk](#)

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*Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has [criticized](#) the decision by his NATO allies to [provide](#) Ukraine with over 300 heavy tanks to prolong the war against Russia, calling it a “high-risk move.”*

“I personally can’t say that sending tanks will resolve this issue,” Erdogan told state broadcaster TRT during an interview on 1 February. “This is a high-risk endeavor and will only line the pockets of [gun barons](#),” he added.

The Turkish leader also said his nation would continue talks with both Russia and Ukraine as part of efforts to find a path to peace.

Erdogan’s criticism of his western allies is the latest show of [discord](#) between Ankara and NATO, as over the past year, Turkiye has been holding up [Sweden](#) and Finland’s ascension to the war alliance.

The two Nordic nations formally applied to join NATO last May, abandoning decades of neutrality. Any country joining NATO requires the unanimous approval of member states.

Tensions recently spiked between Ankara and Stockholm after Danish-Swedish extremist Rasmus Paludan burned copies of the Quran on two separate occasions last week.

“Despite warnings, Sweden turned a blind eye to the Quran burning, and police protected the perpetrators. Hate crimes against Muslims are not acceptable,” Erdogan said, adding that “an apology from Sweden won’t fix issues.”

Earlier on Wednesday, Erdogan said Turkiye “looks positively” on Finland’s application for NATO membership, but does not support Sweden’s bid.

“Sweden should not bother to try at this point. We will not say ‘yes’ to their NATO

application as long as they allow burning of the Quran,” Erdogan said during a speech in parliament.

Last month, Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson told reporters that Stockholm wants to [resume talks](#) with Turkiye.

“Our collective message is that we want to call for calm, for reflection, for calm in the process so that we can return to functioning talks between Sweden, Finland, and Turkiye on our common NATO membership,” Kristersson told reporters.

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