

Turkey Opposed to U.S. Missile Defense Deployment

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ANKARA: Turkey objects to plans of deploying U.S. missile defense elements on its soil because it could worsen relations with Russia and Iran, national media reported Wednesday.

According to the Milliyet daily, U.S. President Barack Obama last week proposed placing a "missile shield" on Turkish soil.

"Both Russia and Iran will perceive that [deployment] as a threat," a Turkish military source was quoted as saying.

U.S. President Barack Obama recently scrapped plans for Poland and the Czech Republic to host missile shield elements to counter possible strikes from Iran.

Due to a re-assessment of the threat for Iran, Washington announced a new scheme for a more flexible system, with a combination of land and sea-based interceptors based on the Standard Missile interceptor, SM-3.

Under the new plan, the U.S. would place ship-based SM-3s in the North and Mediterranean seas in 2011, and mobile land-based SM-3s in Central Europe by 2015.

The paper said "such technology will turn Turkey into a legitimate target for Iran's medium and shorter range missiles."

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