



## Turkish and Chinese Military Cooperation

**OE Watch Commentary:** While Turkey and China have had some level of security cooperation since the 1990s, in the past two years Chinese and Turkish officials have repeatedly expressed their willingness to organize high-level delegation meetings in order to plan more comprehensive security and defense cooperation efforts. The accompanying excerpted passage from *Al-Monitor*, a news website with analysts from the Middle East, provides insight into the rapprochement of China and Turkey with a focus on security and military cooperation.

The article states that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping recently met at the BRICS summit in Johannesburg, South Africa. Turkish diplomatic sources told the author that “Turkish and Chinese officials discussed how to strengthen cooperation between the two countries in the defense and security sectors.” Additionally, on 23 July 2018, a Chinese military delegation visited the Turkish National Defense University. A large number of Chinese officers were present at the Turkish military’s Ephesus 2018 military exercises in May 2018 and they “were particularly interested in new military technologies displayed by the Turkish Armed Forces during the maneuver.” According to the article, there is a strong indication that high level meetings between the two countries’ militaries will increase in the future while focusing on “boosting cooperation in professional military education, military training, the defense industry, terrorism, intelligence sharing, robotic systems, artificial intelligence and cyberwarfare.”

According to the article, security and military cooperation between China and Turkey will “address their common issues of security concerns” and build upon strengthening the foundation of their relationship. Both countries have expectations for the future besides their security concerns. On one hand, as the Turkish economy plummets, it expects China to be a major source of investment. On the other hand, Turkey’s importance for China is its location at the heart of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative.

**End OE Watch Commentary (Gunduz)**

**Source:** Metin Gucan, “Following Deals with Russia, Turkey now expands military cooperation with China,” *Al-Monitor*, 3 August 2018. <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/08/turkey-china-intensifying-defense-security-partnership.html>

*When the Chinese military attaché stationed in Turkey said on July 28 that cooperation between the Turkish and Chinese militaries will produce “fruitful results,” his words didn’t [go unnoticed in] defense circles...*

*Erdogan had recently met with his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, on the sidelines of the BRICS summit held in Johannesburg, South Africa, and the two leaders frequently talk on the phone.*

*...According to Turkish diplomatic sources speaking to Al-Monitor, during the meeting in Johannesburg, Turkish and Chinese officials discussed how to strengthen cooperation between the two countries in the defense and security sectors.*

*Frequent visits and talks between the two sides indicate that both countries desire to expand their economic, security and defense ties. The latest visit was on July 26 when a Chinese military delegation headed by Maj. Gen. Licun Zhou, the political commissar for the Joint Warfare Institute of the PLA at National Defense University, visited the Turkish National Defense University.*

*The number of high-level meetings between the Chinese and Turkish militaries will increase in the coming months, the same sources added. According to the sources, the discussions will cover boosting cooperation in professional military education, military training, the defense industry, terrorism, intelligence sharing, robotic systems, artificial intelligence and cyberwarfare.*

*...In May 2018, a large number of Chinese officers attended the Ephesus 2018 military exercise held in Izmir as observers. The sources said officers were particularly interested in new military technologies displayed by the Turkish Armed Forces during the maneuver...*

*It is clear that the international society will witness more intense military cooperation between Ankara and Beijing in the coming months.*

