

Die Welt: Erdogan ordered top brass to sink Greek ship or warplane; military refused



The German newspaper Die Welt this week claimed that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan recently ordered his top military officers to provoke a political crisis in the east Mediterranean by sinking a Greek vessel or shooting down a Greek fighter jet.

The shocking newspaper article cites Turkish military sources, while claiming that the authoritarian and Islamist Turkish leader wanted military action but without causing the loss of human lives.

According to Die Welt, the orders were rejected by the Turkish military leaders.

US State Department rebuke against Islamist Turkish gov't

In a related development, the US State Department on Tuesday again condemned Turkey's illegal seismic research, stressing that Ankara's actions are raising tensions and destabilizing the east Mediterranean region.

At the same time, Washington announced the partial lifting of a 33-year embargo on the sale of US-made defence materials to the Republic of Cyprus, allowing the sale of non-lethal equipment to the island republic.

The move is part of the Eastern Mediterranean Security and Energy Partnership Act, the same announcement stated.

The lifting of the embargo concerns the fiscal year 2020-2021 and can be renewed. As the State Department explained, US diplomacy acts along the lines of a 'wait and see' policy, and as such, avoids abrupt actions.



Anastasiades, Pompeo

Taking to his personal Twitter account on Monday, Cyprus President Nikos Anastasiades stated that "...I welcome the lifting of the US arms embargo on non-lethal defence articles; a positive development which reinforces further the bilateral security relationship between Cyprus and the United States."

On his part, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo stressed, in a Tweet on Tuesday that "...The Republic of Cyprus is a key partner in the Eastern Mediterranean. I am pleased to announce that we are deepening our security cooperation. We will waive restrictions on the sale of non-lethal defense articles and services to the Republic of Cyprus for the coming fiscal year."