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"If It Hadn't Been for Erdo?an..."

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"If It Hadn't Been for Erdogan..."

Before traveling to the NATO Summit held in Türkiye, U.S. President Donald Trump made a noteworthy statement:

"I'm going to Türkiye because of Erdogan."
Trump went on to say that he was disappointed with several NATO allies over their positions during the conflict involving Iran. According to him, if the summit had not been held in Türkiye, he would not have attended.

He stated that he decided to participate only after receiving a phone call from Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who personally invited him to the meeting.

Trump received a high-level welcome in Türkiye and did not hide his satisfaction with the reception. During his meeting with Erdogan, he praised the Turkish President, describing him as a "strong leader." He also indicated that he would work toward lifting the restrictions on the sale of F-35 fighter jets to Türkiye.

The U.S. President once again expressed his disappointment with several NATO allies. This is far from the first time he has voiced such criticism. He also argued that Europe is no longer what it once was and warned that if the United States withdrew its military forces and security guarantees from Europe, the continent would face serious security challenges.

The NATO Summit, held in Türkiye on 7 July 2026, brings together the heads of state and government of all 32 Allied nations. One of the summit's primary objectives is to strengthen cooperation between NATO and the European Union, a priority repeatedly emphasized by NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte.

The key question now is whether relations between NATO and the European Union can return to the level they once enjoyed. Is such a development possible during Donald Trump's presidency?

The United States and many European countries continue to disagree on several major issues, including Iran, climate policy, and broader security matters. Trump has repeatedly argued that the United States

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bears a disproportionate share of Europe's defense burden and has suggested that Washington may reconsider its security commitments.

For now, the question remains whether Trump's decision to attend the summit, by his own account, at President Erdogan's personal request, will help thaw relations between the United States and Europe or whether the existing differences will continue to deepen.

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