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NATO Leaders Need to Have a Frank Talk with Turkey's President -- Behind Closed Doors

by [Soner Cagaptay](#)

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By helping Erdogan break his authoritarian habit now, Washington and Paris can prevent the nightmare scenario of a Turkey crippled by its own self-destructive tendencies.

From the West's perspective, the Turkish government is the equivalent of a close relative with a substance abuse problem: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has become addicted to authoritarianism. The effects on the family—in this case the NATO alliance, which has included Turkey since 1952—are devastating. It's time for President Trump and French President Emmanuel Macron, two leading NATO heads of state, to have a clarifying conversation with Erdogan about his country's self-destructive impulses. Wednesday's phone conversation between Trump and Erdogan, which subsequently triggered a public disagreement between Erdogan and the White House on what was discussed, is precisely not how this should be done...

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