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Obama names Turkey's Erdoğan among top five international friends



US President Barack Obama talks with Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan during a family photo at the G20 Summit in Cannes on Nov. 3, 2011. (Photo: AP)

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US [president](#) Barack [Obama](#) has listed Turkish [prime minister](#) Recep Tayyip [Erdoğan](#) among the [five](#) world [leaders](#) who he has the closest personal ties with.

In an interview with Time's Fareed Zakaria, Obama named his international top friends, who are Erdoğan, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, South Korean President Lee Myung-bak and British Prime Minister David Cameron, the Washington-based Foreign Policy magazine reported on Thursday. "Have you been [able](#) to [forge](#) similar [relationships](#) with foreign leaders?" Zakaria asked Obama. "Because one of the criticisms people make about your style of diplomacy is it's very cool, it's aloof, that you don't pal around with these guys."

Obama replied that he could not compare his relationships to those of past presidents, but "the friendships and the bonds of trust that I've been able to forge with a whole range of leaders is precisely -- or is a big part of what has allowed us to execute effective diplomacy."

The report added that Obama then went on to name the five world leaders who he feels especially close to and explained that he isn't exactly shooting hoops with them, but that they at least have good working relationships. "I mean, I think that if you ask them -- Angela Merkel, or Prime Minister Singh, or President Lee, or Prime Minister Erdoğan, or David Cameron would say, we have a lot of trust and confidence in the president. We believe what he says. We believe that he'll follow through on his commitments. We think he's paying attention to our concerns and our interests," Obama said. "And that's part of the reason why we've been able to forge these close working relationships and gotten a whole bunch of stuff done."



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