

London Court Says Turkish Group Must Pay Altimo \$1.6Bln

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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LONDON — A British court ruled that Turkey's Cukurova Group must pay \$1.57 billion to Russian telecom firm Altimo to recover Turkcell shares appropriated for a defaulted loan, opening the way to end an eight-year dispute between major shareholders.

Shares in Turkcell, Turkey's biggest mobile phone operator, rose 3 percent Tuesday after the announcement of the figure, which includes the interest accrued over the years the dispute has been running.

The announcement follows a British Privy Council ruling in January that Altimo had been entitled to appropriate the shares but that Cukurova should have an opportunity to recover them "on appropriate conditions."

The long-running shareholder dispute forced the cancellation of Turkcell's annual general meeting last month, leaving it unable to agree the composition of its board and preventing

the approval of accounts and distribution of dividends.

The row centers on Cukurova's 13.8 percent holding in Turkcell, which is a controlling stake due to a complicated shareholder structure. Altimo seized the shares when Cukurova defaulted on a \$1.35 billion loan eight years ago.

Altimo separately owns 13.2 percent of Turkcell.

The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council ruled on Tuesday that Cukurova has to pay the \$1.57 billion to Altimo within 60 days.

It will also have to pay further interest accruing between the date of the judgment and the date of payment.

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