

Erdogan's Plan to Establish a Buffer Zone in Syria to Punish Kurds, Thus Aiding ISIS



Turkish Soldier on border overlooking Kobani

Source: Murad Selzer/Reuters

The Daily Beast has a report today, that Erdogan is threatening to establish a buffer zone in Northern Syria, the better to halt the successful Syria Kurdish advance against ISIS, "[Turkey Plans to Invade Syria, But to Stop the Kurds, Not ISIS](#)". These developments followed Erdogan's remarks last Friday night at a Ramadan break-fast Iftar dinner saying that he would never accept a Kurdistan state comprised of southeastern Turkey and adjacent Northern Syria. *The Daily Beast* article noted the unease of Turkish military about this latest diktat by the figurehead President whose Islamist AKP party was defeated by a minority of Kemalist, Nationalist and a Kurdish secular party:

In a speech last Friday, Erdogan vowed that Turkey would not accept a move by Syrian Kurds to set up their own state in Syria following [gains by Kurdish fighters](#) against the so-called Islamic State, or ISIS, in recent weeks. "I am saying this to the whole world: We will never allow the establishment of a state on our southern border in the north of Syria," Erdogan said. "We will continue our fight in that respect whatever the cost may be." He accused Syrian Kurds of ethnic cleansing in Syrian areas under their control.

Following the speech, several news outlets reported that the president and Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu had decided to send the Turkish army into Syria, a hugely significant move by NATO's second biggest fighting force after the U.S. military. Both the daily *Yeni Safak*, a mouthpiece of the government, and the newspaper *Sozcu*, which is among Erdogan's fiercest critics, ran stories saying the Turkish Army had received orders to send soldiers over the border. Several other media had similar stories, all quoting unnamed sources in Ankara. There has been no official confirmation or denial by the government.

The government refused to comment on the reports. Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said "the necessary statement" would be issued after a regular meeting of the National Security Council, which comprises the president, the government and military leaders, this Tuesday.

The reports said up to 18,000 soldiers would be deployed to take over and hold a strip of territory up to 30 kilometers deep and 100 kilometers long that currently is held by ISIS. It stretches from close to the Kurdish-controlled city of Kobani in the east to an area further west held by the pro-Western Free Syrian Army (FSA) and other rebel groups, beginning around the town of Mare. This "Mare Line," as the press calls it, is to be secured with ground troops, artillery and air cover, the reports said. *Yeni Safak* reported preparations were due to be finalized by next Friday.

There has been speculation about a Turkish military intervention ever since the Syrian conflict began in 2011. Ankara has asked the United Nations and its Western allies to give the green light to create a buffer zone and a no-fly area inside Syria in order to prevent chaos along the Turkish border and to help refugees on Syrian soil before they cross over into Turkey. But the Turkish request has fallen on deaf ears.

Remember Obama saying that he wished there were more Islamist leaders like AKP Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in the Arab ummah of the Middle East. Erdogan's threatening to invade Syria to build a buffer zone to do what, protect shrines of ancient Ottoman Sultans. We bet he's mad at the Kurdish HDP party, that together with the Kemalist CHP and Nationalist HNP, thwarted his dream of becoming the Sultan of a neo-Ottoman empire with the minority parties copping a plurality of votes in the June 7th parliamentary elections. He's also mad at the plucky Syrian Kurds for beating back the ISIS in a string of victories this month. This despite bloody raids by ISIS on both Kobani and Hasakah that were beaten back. Those Kurdish actions may have cut off the main route for those foreign fighters that Turkey gives a wink and a nod to backed by funds and assistance from the infamous Muslim Brotherhood global IHH charity, You remember IHH? They backed the infamous 2010 Free Gaza Flotilla Mavi Marmara incident infamy. We wrote about IHH caught sending cash and weapons from Turkey into Syria for brothers in AQ and, ahem, ISIS. We bet the Turkish military isn't so keen to do Erdogan's bidding given their NATO membership and because the 45 days aren't up to see if a ruling minority government can be formed or a new election is called so that Erdogan might return his Premier, Ahmet Davutoglu to power with a super majority. Since the Obama White House doesn't want to give the Syrian Kurds perhaps US Rep. Trent Franks (R-AZ) and Senate Armed Forces Committee Chairman Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) can put the squeeze on Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter to release those quality weapons from the US War Reserve Stock already positioned in Israel. Perhaps this Daily Beast report may be a clarion call to action to deliver the quality weapons from both Syrian Kurds and Iraqi Peshmerga to push back ISIS. They are the only boots on the ground doing this successfully. I've said my piece and more in a forthcoming July NER article with the apt title "Empowering Kurdistan". watch for its release on Tuesday June 30th.