

CIA Director reportedly in Turkey for secret talks

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Theme: [Intelligence](#)

Global Research, September 04, 2012

intelNews.org

Turkish and American authorities have refused comment on persistent reports that the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency is currently on a secret visit to Turkey. News of the alleged trip was first reported on Monday by Turkish tabloid daily *Akşam*. The newspaper [said](#) David Petraeus, who heads the United States' foremost civilian intelligence agency, had arrived earlier that day in Istanbul's Atatürk International Airport, on his private plane. According to the article, the CIA chief decided to embark on the unannounced trip in order to discuss "counterterrorism and the situation in Syria" with senior Turkish officials. Several hours later, French news agency Agence France Presse [reported](#) that, according to "a US official", the CIA Director was indeed in Turkey, holding secret "meetings on regional issues".

However, the unnamed US source would not provide specific information about Petraeus' meeting arrangements while in Turkey, nor would (s)he divulge the names of the Turkish officials that were scheduled to meet with him. Another Turkish daily, *Hürriyet*, [said](#) the CIA Director would probably meet with his Turkish counterpart, MİT chief Hakan Fidan, as well as with Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan . But repeated efforts by the paper to confirm this were rebuffed by representatives of the US embassy in Ankara, as well as Turkish officials. The latter appeared to have coordinated their responses, with spokespersons from both Turkey's Foreign Ministry and the Office of the Prime Minister telling *Hürriyet* that they "had no information" on whether Petraeus was in the country.

If the reports of the CIA Director's secret visit to Istanbul are correct, the obvious questions are "why" and why now"? The last time Petraeus paid an unannounced visit to Turkey, which eventually leaked to the press, was roughly six months ago, reportedly do discuss the crisis in Syria. As *intelNews* as reported consistently, based on claims by British, German and American media, around the time of Petraeus' secret visit to Turkey, US President Barack Obama has [authorized](#) CIA officers stationed in the country to provide "non-lethal support" to Syrian anti-government rebels. It is also known that, Washington considers Turkey as one of its [most important](#) intelligence allies in the ongoing Syrian crisis, along with Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Israel. Could the CIA Director's second unannounced visit to Turkey in less than six months be heralding an intensification of Washington's intelligence involvement in the Syrian crisis?

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