

Clashes in Northeastern Syria Put Turkish-Russian Memorandum at Risk

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On Tuesday, exactly two weeks after Ankara launched its cross border military operation “Operation Peace Spring”, in northern Syria east of the Euphrates River, Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Turkish counterpart President Recep Tayyip Erdogan met in Sochi for what proved to be a lengthy diplomatic discussion that resulted in an agreement that sets the stage for de-escalating tensions in that region.

The Russian-Turkish memorandum published by the [Kremlin](#) covers ten mutually agreed upon points. Many of the same issues that were addressed but not resolved by the United States and Turkey during their recent agreements were mentioned.

The agreement begins with reiterating the importance of maintain Syria’s political unity and territorial integrity and the protection of Turkey’s national security as well.

Both parties also confirmed their commitment and emphasized their determination to combating all forms of terrorism and to not allow separatist agendas to prosper, this of course is referring to the US-backed Kurdish militia’s and their so-called self-administration policies which are illegitimate.

The importance of the 1998 Adana Agreement which was created as a security pact between Ankara and Damascus and ensures the PKK will not be allowed to regain momentum in Syria and if it does Turkey reserves the right to carry cross border military operations against them. Although Syria never denounced the pact, diplomatic relations during the conflict were severely damaged and after the PKK was squashed it re-emerged as the PYD, and Turkey views the PYD, YPG, and the newest US created rebranding the SDF all to be Syrian offshoots of the PKK.

Wednesday at noon a new deadline for the Kurdish militias to leave with their weapons started, giving them 150 hours to leave from the 30km Turkish-Syrian border. Syrian border guards along with Russian military police will enter to facilitate the removal of YPG members. After the deadline Russian and Turkish patrols will start in a 10km deep area in the west and the east of the area surrounding the area covered by “Operation Peace Spring” except for Qamishli.

In addition to the YPG elements in the previously stated areas, all Kurdish fighters and their weapons must be removed from Manbij and Tal Rifat. Measures will be taken to prevent infiltrations of terrorist elements.

As for the refugees, joint efforts will be launched to safely and voluntarily return them. Joint monitoring and verification mechanisms will also be established to coordinate and oversee that all parts of this memorandum are effectively implemented.

Both Russia and Turkey will continue to work on finding a lasting political solution to the Syrian conflict within Astana Mechanism and will support the activity of the Constitutional Committee taking place next week.

The issue of ISIS prisoners was also brought up, and the importance of preventing detainees from escaping.

Turkey is accomplishing its goal of removing Kurdish militias from its border by stating they are a threat to its national security. Regardless, it's operation and support for terrorist factions is illegal and NATO's pretentious concern is unavailing.

However, there's another incentive to discontinuing its cross-border military operation, the US lifted sanctions which were imposed on October 14th and this will drastically improve Turkey's aching economy.

President Trump was up against bipartisan disapproval for his decision to withdrawal US troops and end military support for the Kurdish factions, and he stood his ground. And lest we forget, America's number one ally in the region, Israel, is the biggest supporter of separatist Kurdish factions in Iraq and Syria, the independent Kurdistan project is conveniently aligned with the Greater Israel project. Standing up to both Capital Hill and Israel is a bold move.

As for the [Israeli-Kurdish](#) relationship, not much has changed since I originally reported on their mutually beneficial dealings a few years ago. Israel's selfish interests in supporting Kurdish independence remain two-fold, oil and to counter supposed "increased Iranian influence" in the region.

President Trump is trying to end what the Obama administration began with their failed "regime change" efforts in Syria. As Trump mentioned, Washington has wasted 8 Trillion dollars in Middle Eastern wars, which brought forth nothing but death and destruction to the region, killing millions and displacing many more millions of innocent people.

Immediately following his lengthy meeting with Erdogan, Putin spoke with his Syrian counterpart Bashar al Assad who expressed support for the memorandum and confirmed Syrian border guards were ready to work with the Russian military police.

The Kremlin reiterated the need for all illegal foreign military presence to leave Syria. Also, the Syrian government needs to regain control of all the oil facilities in northeastern Syria.

Russia wants a broad dialogue to take place between the Syrian government and the Kurds living in northeastern Syria. The constitutional committee in cooperation with the United Nations will also work towards peaceful political process in Syria. US troops are guarding some of the oil fields and President Trump has even suggested that Kurds should move to these oil rich areas.

With the Syrian army establishing 15 observation posts on the Turkish Syrian border east of the Euphrates and the Kurdish militias being forced to move south outside of the "safe zone" and Syrian refugees returning to northern Syria, it's only a matter of time before the

US/Kurdish militias lose their grip on these oil fields. US troops are currently guarding some of them, Trump even insinuated on Thursday that Kurds should move into these oil rich areas.

President Erdogan needs to immediately rein in the so-called Turkish-backed Syrian National Army (SNA) militants which consist mostly of Free Syrian Army terrorists and other factions that merged immediately prior to the "Peace Spring Operation". Even with the ongoing Turkish-Russian "safe zone" agreement in place, the SNA has launched several attacks south and southeast of Ras al-Ayn while attempting to expand their presence in the area.

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