

Fifty US, French, British Spies in Turkey “Working Very Closely on Syria Issue”

By [Global Research News](#)

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There are nearly 50 high-ranking intelligence agents on Turkey’s Syria border, including agents from the United States, France, Germany, [Britain](#) and “perhaps Greece,” former [CIA](#) agent Philip Giraldi told Tolga Tanış of daily [Hürriyet](#) in an interview.

The former agent said there would be numerous spies working under the high-ranking spies and “many” informants working under them.

Giraldi said he thought there were 15-20 high-ranking [CIA](#) agents in [Turkey](#) working on the Syrian conflict alone.

“They would be paramilitary agents,” Giraldi said. “They would be based at the consulate in Adana or the İncirlik Air Base, but could operate in the field as well,” Giraldi said, adding that the agents would not cross into Syria but would direct intelligence operations from within [Turkey](#) in collaboration with Turkey’s National Intelligence Agency (MIT).

“The [CIA](#) probably has only 10 agents who are fluent in Arabic and maybe five who can speak Turkish fluently. For this reason, they need to rely on MIT agents when dealing with Syrian rebels,” Giraldi said.

The [CIA](#) lacks personnel who are fluent in Middle Eastern languages because their tours of duty only last two or three years before they are transferred elsewhere. “The agents do not have enough time to specialize in that language or culture,” he said, but added that the Russians were much better trained language-wise. “A [Russian](#) agent receives language courses for two years before arriving in Turkey, and once here, they can stay on duty for up to 10 years.”

Turkish and [American](#) intelligence agencies were working “very closely” on the Syrian issue, Giraldi said, adding that the U.S. provided [Turkey](#) with photographs including satellite pictures and sensitive technical information it normally would not share with anyone. A Turkish intelligence officer “always” accompanies [CIA](#) agents in their dealings with officials from the Free Syrian Army, according to Giraldi. “This is not a rule, but that is how things work.”

Giraldi guessed there would be high-ranking agents from France, Germany, [Britain](#) and “possibly Greece” near the Turkish-Syrian border, and would operate from the İncirlik Air Base, since it was a [NATO](#) base. Saudi Arabia and Qatar, meanwhile, worked in cooperation with the Turkish Foreign Ministry, he added.

‘Everyone is an amateur next to MIT’

Turkish intelligence agents were better than any other agent, and anyone would be considered “an amateur” when it came to regional issues of the Middle East. “A [CIA](#) agent, on the other hand, would be far more advanced in technical issues, such as phone tapping, or following people on the ground via satellite imagery.”

Giraldi said the MIT coordinated all intelligence gathering activities related to Syria and worked in coordination with German, French, British and [American](#) intelligence services. He said each and every piece of information gathered by the agencies would be shared by all. “You cannot keep any information only to yourself in this environment.”

Intelligence agencies do not take initiatives on their own and have to take the MIT as reference, which is currently acting as a leader, Giraldi said.

“If [Turkey](#) was not in the picture, the operations would have been dominated by the CIA,” he said.

Giraldi was the head of the [CIA](#) team in [Istanbul](#) between 1986 and 1989 during his intelligence career of 18 years.

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