

Imperialist War Crimes Against the People of Syria Piling Up

Demonstrators denounce mercenary attack on Kassab

By [Taylor Goel](#)

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)
Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#), [US](#)
[NATO War Agenda](#)
In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

On March 21, crossing the Turkish border at Yayladagi, over 1500 mercenaries affiliated with Al-Qaeda attacked the Syrian town of Kassab, which is predominantly populated by Armenians in the province of Latakia. As the armed opposition groups overran the town, most of the residents were forced to flee, taking refuge in the nearby city, Latakia. Three groups were behind the attack: Jabhat al-Nusrah, an Al-Qaeda off-shoot in Syria, Suqour Al-Izz brigade of ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant), an Al-Qaeda splinter group and Ahrar ash-Sham. Reports indicate that the Turkish military was providing support from the Turkish side of the border to these groups by artillery, tank and missile fire directed at the Syrian Arab Army fighting the opposition groups. There are also claims that members of Turkish special forces were fighting alongside the mercenaries, helping direct the artillery. After visiting the Turkish-Syrian border area in Yayladagi, Mehmed Ali Ediboglu, a deputy of the Turkish parliament and a member of the main opposition party CHP, stated that the Turkish military was helping the mercenaries cross the border to and from Syria.

Turkish Air Force shoots down Syrian jet

On March 23, as the fighting continued between the terrorist groups and Syrian Arab Army which intervened to defend the city, the Turkish Air Force shot down a Syrian jet which was engaging terrorists within Syrian territory. After the incident, speaking at an election campaign rally, with his usual arrogant, war-mongering attitude, the Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan used the incident to deflect the public attention from the ongoing corruption scandals surrounding his Justice and Development Party (AKP) government. He told his supporters: "Our F-16s went up in the air and shot that plane down. Why? Because if you violate my airspace, then from now on, our slap will be hard."

Contrary to Erdogan's claim that Turkish airspace had been violated, the Syrian pilot who survived by bailing out from the plane stated that he was carrying out a mission of pursuing terrorists within Syrian territory, more than 7 kilometers from the border, when his plane was hit by a missile fired from a Turkish jet. In a statement released by the Syrian government, the attack was described as unprecedented and unjustifiable, a proof of Turkey's involvement in the events in Syria from the beginning.

The downing of the Syrian jet by NATO member Turkey is only the last one of many provocations by the AKP government in an attempt to drag Turkey into war with Syria. The Kassab assault is a recent example of how the Turkish border with Syria has served as a shelter and staging area for these groups to launch attacks against Syrian civilians and

government forces.

Protests in Turkey and around the world denounce the AKP-backed attack in Kassab

On March 25, a protest was held in Hatay, a Turkish town on the Syrian border, denouncing the AKP-backed attack in Kassab, the ongoing AKP aggression towards the people of Syria and provocation for war. Attended by people of both Turkish and Arabic origin, some of the slogans in the protest read “Evil Tayyip!” “Murderer U.S., collaborator AKP!” Protesters also staged a sit-in to block the paths of ambulances that were carrying Al-Qaeda militants wounded in the fighting in Kassab. In a statement read, it was said, “The scent of blood has now reached our homes. The people who are being killed over there are our brothers. This is not an issue of Sunni and Alawite.”

In Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, a protest was held in front of the UN office, demanding an end to persecution of ethnic minorities in Syria. Karen Andreassian, human rights ombudsman of the Republic of Armenia, issued a message to the human rights organizations around the world calling on them to end the human rights violations by Turkey.

Demonstrations in Paris were also held in front of the Turkish Embassy. The protestors demanded an end to the aggression against the Armenians in Kassab, shouting “Erdogan, Al-Qaeda terrorists!”

Syria and Russia denounce attack on Kassab while UN silent

Russia denounced the Turkish, western and Gulf Arab backed war on Syria and the recent killing and ethnic cleansing of Armenian Syrians in Kassab. A statement released by the Russian Foreign Ministry on April 1 said: “Moscow strongly denounces the barbaric acts of extremists in Syria expressing belief that the mission of coordinating efforts of the Syrian government and opposition to overcome terrorism and expel terrorist from the country during the current conditions acquire special importance.”

Implying the role of the AKP government in supporting terrorism in Syria, the Russian delegation to the UN reported that the UN Security Council had refused to take a stand on the attack perpetrated against Kassab, thereby unveiling the support of several of its members for the actions of Al-Qaeda.

Condemning the UN’s hypocritical silence on the terrorist violence against the people of Syria, Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Faisal Mikdad said: “The massacres of Erdogan government-backed terrorist groups against the residents of Kassab town are still a living example that appeals to every UN official to feel ashamed of having turned into a tool for supporting terrorism”

It is no surprise that the UN keeps ignoring the dirty role played by NATO member Turkey in providing shelter, funding and arms to the terrorist groups fighting against the Syrian government since the start of the conflict. After all, the UN is an organization whose agenda is ultimately driven by U.S. imperialism. The aim of U.S. imperialist diplomacy is obviously not to achieve peace but regime change in Syria by any means possible.

Turkish diplomat admits Al-Qaeda behind Reyhanli bombing in Turkey, exposing AKP’s lies

At the meeting of the Permanent Council of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe on March 27, Turkey's Ambassador Tacan Ildem admitted that the bombing in Reyhanli, Turkey that took place in May 2013, taking the lives of at least 53 people and wounding 143 was carried out by Al-Qaeda. Until this time, the AKP government had been accusing the Syrian government of the attack.

The Turkish diplomat was responding to a commentary by the Armenian Ambassador Arman Kirakossian who pointed to the role Turkey has played in the attack in Kassab by supporting Al-Qaeda affiliated terrorist groups. Kirakossian called on Turkey to take immediate and effective measures to prevent the use of its territory by terrorist groups to conduct attacks on Kassab. In an effort to deny the allegations against Turkey and to show that Turkey was also coming under attack by Al-Qaeda, the Turkish diplomat ended up admitting Al-Qaeda's involvement in Reyhanli bombing. "Al-Qaeda elements operating from Syria carried out the attack" were his words.

Until now, AKP had claimed that the Syrian government was behind the bombing. Right after the bombing in May 2013, the Syrian government's proposal to Turkey to hold a joint investigation into the attack had haughtily been rejected by Erdogan on his way to meet with U.S. President Barack Obama.

Hours after the attack, 13 Turkish citizens allegedly belonging to Acilciler a Marxist group that has been defunct for 30 years, were arrested in connection with the bombing. AKP claimed that Acilciler was collaborating with the Syrian government.

The Syrian government denied any involvement and accused Erdogan of "fabricating evidence" in order to derail the latest U.S.-Russian peace plan and to spark an international intervention ahead of his meeting with Obama.

Leaked tape reveals Turkish officials planning a "false-flag" operation to attack Syria

On March 29, on the eve of the local elections in Turkey, an audio recording of Turkish officials was leaked on YouTube. This exposed for everyone to see that the AKP government will stop at nothing in order to drag Turkey into open war with Syria in the proxy war led by U.S. imperialism.

In a dialogue that took place on March 13 between Ahmet Davutoglu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hakan Fidan, the head of the Turkish Intelligence, Yasar Guler, Deputy Chief of Military and Feridun Siniroglu, undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Turkish officials discuss plans for a "false-flag" operation, a staged attack against the Tomb of Suleiman Shah, a piece of sovereign Turkish territory in Syria under the control of Turkish forces, in order to set the pretext for a military intervention.

The conversation also undeniably reveals that the AKP government is a direct supporter of terrorism in Syria, having shipped arms to the terrorist groups fighting in Syria (2,000 trucks of weapons and ammunition) and that members of the Turkish armed forces have already been deployed in Syria to support these groups.

A full English transcript of the recording can be found [here](#).

Speaking at a campaign rally, the Turkish Prime Minister said: "They even leaked a national security meeting, this is villainous, this is dishonesty..." Speaking to reporters, Foreign

Minister Davutoglu said, "A cyber-attack has been carried out against the Turkish Republic, our state and our valued nation. This is a clear declaration of war against the Turkish state and our nation."

By these statements, AKP officials have essentially admitted that the recordings were authentic. The AKP government quickly censored the recording by banning access to YouTube.

The Turkish and international mainstream media chose to focus on how YouTube was banned by the prime minister, avoiding the content of the dialogue captured in the recording. Most of the coverage by the news outlets glossed over the content of the tape as "plans for Turkish intervention in Syria," shamelessly hiding the true nature of the dialogue's content: an undisputable violation of international law as well as evidence of war crimes by the AKP government against the people of Syria.

It is not easy to pinpoint who leaked the tapes. It could be U.S. intelligence in an attempt to rein in an out of control Turkish prime minister who is ready to do anything to hold onto power as his government is haunted by recent corruption scandals and the popular uprising of June 2013.

The tapes could also have been leaked by Russia in order to stop the AKP in its tracks heading for open war with Syria.

US imperialism is split on how to deal with the current situation in Syria

As the Syrian conflict is nearing its fourth year, the Syrian government has gained the clear upper hand against the NATO backed opposition groups and is likely within a year of final victory. The U.S. ruling class is split on how to approach the current situation in Syria. While the more hawkish Secretary of State John Kerry and Samantha Power, the U.S ambassador to the U.N advocate direct military intervention, the Pentagon camp led by Minister of Defense Chuck Hagel and Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff push back against a direct military intervention pointing to the risk of an open-ended foreign entanglement. Both sides however agree on the need to expand the arms and training support given to the groups fighting in Syria.

Was AKP behind the chemical attack in Ghouta last year?

In a report published on April 6, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Seymour Hersh claimed that the chemical attack on August 21, 2013 that took place in Ghouta, a suburb of Damascus, was carried out by the opposition groups controlled by the AKP government of Erdogan in an effort to set the stage for a NATO led attack on Syria. Soon after the incident, the U.S. government started beating the war drums for an all-out attack on Syria, blaming the Syrian government for the attack which had killed hundreds. The mainstream media delivered to the U.S. public the usual propaganda necessary for setting up the public hysteria for war. Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu called on the United Nations to act decisively adding that "all red lines" had been crossed and that the U.N. "can't assume an indecisive attitude about chemical weapon attacks in Syria".

According to Hersh's article, while the U.S. President Obama was busy finalizing with the Pentagon the plans for a massive attack in Syria, U. S. intelligence was having serious doubts as to whether the Syrian government was really behind the attack. Their doubts

increased after the findings of British intelligence were made available. Having obtained a sample of the Sarin gas used in the attack, the British analysis proved that the gas used in the attack didn't match the batches in Syrian Army's chemical weapons arsenal. According to the same report which cites various U.S. military and intelligence officials, the belief by the U.S. officials that the Turkish government was behind the gas attack in Ghouta resulted in the cancellation of the U.S. strike at the very last minute.

Turkey's link to the chemical attack in Ghouta can be traced back to an incident that took place in Turkey in May of the same year. On May 30, after a search carried out by the Turkish Security forces in the Turkish city of Adana which is close to the Syrian border, Sarin gas was found in the homes of Syrian militants from the Al-Qaeda linked Al-Nusra front. Five militants were detained. The government and the mainstream media quietly dropped the whole issue in a few days and the militants were quietly released. Details on the events that led to the chemical attack in Ghouta and the AKP's potential role in planning the chemical attack in Ghouta can be found in this [article](#) published by the Turkish daily soL in August 2013.

Syria's UN Ambassador warns of armed gangs in Syria planning to stage a chemical attack in Damascus

Eerily reminiscent of the Ghouta attack, on March 27, Syria's ambassador to the UN, Bashar Jaafari, wrote a letter addressed to Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and the UN Security Council, warning that armed groups in Syria were conspiring to stage another chemical attack in the suburbs of Damascus. According to the letter which was published on the [UN web site](#), the Syrian authorities intercepted wireless communications confirming that there were plans to use toxic gas in the Jawbar quarter and other areas in Damascus with the aim of accusing the Syrian government afterwards.

US imperialism and its lackeys in the region: The common enemy of the people

The recent Kassab assault that displaced hundreds of Armenians from their homes, the Al-Qaeda bombing in Reyhanli that killed over 50 and wounded hundreds of Turkish, the chemical attack in Ghouta, Syria that killed over 400 Syrians and the recent leaked recording of Turkish officials planning a "false-flag" attack are clear evidence of the horrendous war crimes committed by U.S. imperialism, its junior partners in the region, like the AKP government of Turkey as well as their henchmen on the ground in Syria: the armed opposition groups. The people of Syria as well as other peoples in the region have suffered immensely at the hands of all these criminals. These crimes should serve as a reminder to all the peoples in the region that whether they are Arab, Armenian, Turkish or Kurdish, their enemy is common: U.S. imperialism and its lackeys in the region.

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At the meeting of the Permanent Council of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe on March 27, Turkey's Ambassador Tacan Ildem admitted that the bombing in Reyhanli, Turkey that took place in May 2013, taking the lives of at least 53 people and wounding 143 was carried out by Al-Qaeda. Until this time, the AKP government had been accusing the Syrian government of the attack.

The Turkish diplomat was responding to a commentary by the Armenian Ambassador Arman Kirakossian who pointed to the role Turkey has played in the attack in Kassab by supporting Al-Qaeda affiliated terrorist groups. Kirakossian called on Turkey to take immediate and effective measures to prevent the use of its territory by terrorist groups to conduct attacks on Kassab. In an effort to deny the allegations against Turkey and to show that Turkey was also coming under attack by Al-Qaeda, the Turkish diplomat ended up admitting Al-Qaeda's involvement in Reyhanli bombing. "Al-Qaeda elements operating from Syria carried out the attack" were his words.

Until now, AKP had claimed that the Syrian government was behind the bombing. Right after the bombing in May 2013, the Syrian government's proposal to Turkey to hold a joint investigation into the attack had haughtily been rejected by Erdogan on his way to meet with U.S. President Barack Obama.

Hours after the attack, 13 Turkish citizens allegedly belonging to Acilciler a Marxist group that has been defunct for 30 years, were arrested in connection with the bombing. AKP claimed that Acilciler was collaborating with the Syrian government.

The Syrian government denied any involvement and accused Erdogan of "fabricating evidence" in order to derail the latest U.S.-Russian peace plan and to spark an international intervention ahead of his meeting with Obama.

Leaked tape reveals Turkish officials planning a "false-flag" operation to attack Syria

On March 29, on the eve of the local elections in Turkey, an audio recording of Turkish officials was leaked on YouTube. This exposed for everyone to see that the AKP government will stop at nothing in order to drag Turkey into open war with Syria in the proxy war led by U.S. imperialism.

In a dialogue that took place on March 13 between Ahmet Davutoglu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hakan Fidan, the head of the Turkish Intelligence, Yasar Guler, Deputy Chief of Military and Feridun Siniroglu, undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Turkish officials discuss plans for a "false-flag" operation, a staged attack against the Tomb of Suleiman Shah, a piece of sovereign Turkish territory in Syria under the control of Turkish forces, in order to set the pretext for a military intervention.

The conversation also undeniably reveals that the AKP government is a direct supporter of terrorism in Syria, having shipped arms to the terrorist groups fighting in Syria (2,000 trucks of weapons and ammunition) and that members of the Turkish armed forces have already been deployed in Syria to support these groups.

A full English transcript of the recording can be found [here](#).

Speaking at a campaign rally, the Turkish Prime Minister said: "They even leaked a national security meeting, this is villainous, this is dishonesty..." Speaking to reporters, Foreign

Minister Davutoglu said, “A cyber-attack has been carried out against the Turkish Republic, our state and our valued nation. This is a clear declaration of war against the Turkish state and our nation.”

By these statements, AKP officials have essentially admitted that the recordings were authentic. The AKP government quickly censored the recording by banning access to YouTube.

The Turkish and international mainstream media chose to focus on how YouTube was banned by the prime minister, avoiding the content of the dialogue captured in the recording. Most of the coverage by the news outlets glossed over the content of the tape as “plans for Turkish intervention in Syria,” shamelessly hiding the true nature of the dialogue’s content: an undisputable violation of international law as well as evidence of war crimes by the AKP government against the people of Syria.

It is not easy to pinpoint who leaked the tapes. It could be U.S. intelligence in an attempt to rein in an out of control Turkish prime minister who is ready to do anything to hold onto power as his government is haunted by recent corruption scandals and the popular uprising of June 2013.

The tapes could also have been leaked by Russia in order to stop the AKP in its tracks heading for open war with Syria.

US imperialism is split on how to deal with the current situation in Syria

As the Syrian conflict is nearing its fourth year, the Syrian government has gained the clear upper hand against the NATO backed opposition groups and is likely within a year of final victory. The U.S. ruling class is split on how to approach the current situation in Syria. While the more hawkish Secretary of State John Kerry and Samantha Power, the U.S ambassador to the U.N advocate direct military intervention, the Pentagon camp led by Minister of Defense Chuck Hagel and Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff push back against a direct military intervention pointing to the risk of an open-ended foreign entanglement. Both sides however agree on the need to expand the arms and training support given to the groups fighting in Syria.

Was AKP behind the chemical attack in Ghouta last year?

In a report published on April 6, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Seymour Hersh claimed that the chemical attack on August 21, 2013 that took place in Ghouta, a suburb of Damascus, was carried out by the opposition groups controlled by the AKP government of Erdogan in an effort to set the stage for a NATO led attack on Syria. Soon after the incident, the U.S. government started beating the war drums for an all-out attack on Syria, blaming the Syrian government for the attack which had killed hundreds. The mainstream media delivered to the U.S. public the usual propaganda necessary for setting up the public hysteria for war. Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu called on the United Nations to act decisively adding that “all red lines” had been crossed and that the U.N. “can’t assume an indecisive attitude about chemical weapon attacks in Syria”.

According to Hersh’s article, while the U.S. President Obama was busy finalizing with the Pentagon the plans for a massive attack in Syria, U. S. intelligence was having serious doubts as to whether the Syrian government was really behind the attack. Their doubts

increased after the findings of British intelligence were made available. Having obtained a sample of the Sarin gas used in the attack, the British analysis proved that the gas used in the attack didn't match the batches in Syrian Army's chemical weapons arsenal. According to the same report which cites various U.S. military and intelligence officials, the belief by the U.S. officials that the Turkish government was behind the gas attack in Ghouta resulted in the cancellation of the U.S. strike at the very last minute.

Turkey's link to the chemical attack in Ghouta can be traced back to an incident that took place in Turkey in May of the same year. On May 30, after a search carried out by the Turkish Security forces in the Turkish city of Adana which is close to the Syrian border, Sarin gas was found in the homes of Syrian militants from the Al-Qaeda linked Al-Nusra front. Five militants were detained. The government and the mainstream media quietly dropped the whole issue in a few days and the militants were quietly released. Details on the events that led to the chemical attack in Ghouta and the AKP's potential role in planning the chemical attack in Ghouta can be found in this [article](#) published by the Turkish daily soL in August 2013.

Syria's UN Ambassador warns of armed gangs in Syria planning to stage a chemical attack in Damascus

Eerily reminiscent of the Ghouta attack, on March 27, Syria's ambassador to the UN, Bashar Jaafari, wrote a letter addressed to Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and the UN Security Council, warning that armed groups in Syria were conspiring to stage another chemical attack in the suburbs of Damascus. According to the letter which was published on the [UN web site](#), the Syrian authorities intercepted wireless communications confirming that there were plans to use toxic gas in the Jawbar quarter and other areas in Damascus with the aim of accusing the Syrian government afterwards.

US imperialism and its lackeys in the region: The common enemy of the people

The recent Kassab assault that displaced hundreds of Armenians from their homes, the Al-Qaeda bombing in Reyhanli that killed over 50 and wounded hundreds of Turkish, the chemical attack in Ghouta, Syria that killed over 400 Syrians and the recent leaked recording of Turkish officials planning a "false-flag" attack are clear evidence of the horrendous war crimes committed by U.S. imperialism, its junior partners in the region, like the AKP government of Turkey as well as their henchmen on the ground in Syria: the armed opposition groups. The people of Syria as well as other peoples in the region have suffered immensely at the hands of all these criminals. These crimes should serve as a reminder to all the peoples in the region that whether they are Arab, Armenian, Turkish or Kurdish, their enemy is common: U.S. imperialism and its lackeys in the region.

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