

Rumors: US Supplied Kurdish Forces in Syria with Air Defense Manpads

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Kurdish militias operating in Syria have allegedly received a batch of man-portable air-defense systems (MANPADs) from the US, according to rumors spread by pro-opposition sources on January 15.

Kurdish militias – YPG and YPJ – are a core of the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) that control large areas in northwestern and eastern Syria.

Opposition sources argue that the US had provided MANPADs to the part of the US-backed forces operating in the area of Afrin in northwestern Syria. However, they were not able to provide any evidence to confirm that the so-called “secret deal” between the sides really exists and the SDF had received the MANPADs.

Reports about the MANPADs supplies followed the escalation of tensions between Turkey/pro-Turkish militants and the SDF in northwestern Syria. Turkish forces repeatedly shelled positions of the SDF in the area of Afrin last weekend. The SDF, particularly Kurdish YPG units, responded with shelling positions of pro-Kurdish militants south and east of the Afrin area.

On January 14, the US-led coalition announced that [it is working with the SDF to establish a 30,000-strong border security force that will control the Syrian border with Turkey and Iraq.](#)

On the same day, [Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdogan claimed that Turkish forces may soon carry out an attack on the city of Afrin](#) and reports appeared that [Ankara is deploying additional forces south of it.](#)

On January 15, the Turkish president vowed to “drown” the forming “terror army” [border force] before it’s complete.

“Our duty is to drown this terrorist force before it is born,” AP quoted Erdogan. The president also said that the US role in establishing this force is “unacceptable”.

“This is what we have to say to all our allies: don’t get between us and terrorist organizations, or we will not be responsible for the unwanted consequences,” Erdogan continued threatening that Turkish forces will battle “until not a single terrorist remains along our borders, let alone 30,000 of them.”

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