

Trump Imposes Sanctions on Turkey in Response to Ankara's "Operation Peace Spring" in Syria

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On Monday, after a weekend of bloody chaos in northeastern Syrian brought on by Turkey's cross border military incursion "Operation Peace Spring" which included airstrikes, ISIS prison breaks, and a continuation of the exodus we've seen over the past few days of over a hundred thousand civilians fleeing their homes, President Trump signed an Executive Order authorizing sanctions against current and former Turkish government officials and anyone who is contributing to Turkey's actions in destabilizing northeast Syria.

In a formal statement, published by the White House, President Trump went on to say that steel tariffs will be increased back to 50%, which is the level they were at prior to a reduction in May of this year. President Trump also said negotiations led by the Department of Commerce which include a \$100 billion trade deal with Turkey, would cease immediately.

The Order goes beyond sanctions and would also authorize consequences including blocking of property and barring entry into the United States on anyone Washington deems to be involved in serious human rights abuses including obstructing ceasefires, preventing displaced people from returning to their homes, and forcing the repatriation of refugees etc.

President Trump mentioned a few times during the past few days that the United States and their partners are the ones that brought Daesh to their knees and are responsible for eliminating 100% of their territorial caliphate.

Each time I hear this claim, I justify its inaccuracy by saying even though this is categorically false, and the United States has protected and helped Daesh on more than one occasion and the previous administration supported extremist groups which bore Daesh, that if taking credit and feeding his enormous ego means that US troops will withdraw from Syria, then by all means give President Trump all the credit, perhaps even an award, or a trophy, heck add on a Nobel Peace Prize, just as long as he withdraws US troops, which will help end this monstrous western-manufactured war.

President Trump also cautioned Turkey against indiscriminate targeting of civilians, destruction of civilian infrastructure and targeting ethnic or religious minorities. He also mentioned that refugees must be returned in a safe, voluntary and dignified manner. President Trump announced again that he would be withdrawing remaining US service members from northeast Syria and that they will be redeployed while remaining in the region to monitor the situation to prevent a resurgence. Trump stated that a small number of troops will remain in southern Syria at Al Tanf Garrison to disrupt remnants of ISIS.

Repeating his threat to destroy Turkey's economy if they continue down this "dangerous and destructive path" could just be more posturing by President Trump and distancing Washington from Ankara's war crimes.

Vice President Mike Pence on Monday announced he would be leading a delegation to Ankara where they will be discussing with Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan the US's demands which include an immediate ceasefire and negotiating with the Kurds in Syria.

Just the notion of asking President Erdogan to negotiate with Kurdish militias is preposterous considering their history. Turkey will most likely say that they do not negotiate with terrorists, considering they see the Kurdish militias in Syria as an offshoot of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in Turkey who they have been at war with for over three decades.

Secondly, the Kurdish militias are now in talks with the Syrian government. It's a little too late for the US to try to win them back. I would hope that after seeing how many times the United States has left them out in the cold that the YPG/SDF/PYD would know by now not to put their trust in them again.

It's worth mentioning that corporate media and war hungry politicians have intentionally focused on the "plight of the Kurds" and highlighted their cause above and beyond any other ethnicity in Syria. This begs the question, why is 7-10% of the population given an unequal amount of attention when "the Kurds" are not even a homogenous group of people.

There's no mention of how Kurds migrated to Syria in waves and sought refuge and stayed for decades. Rather than telling you how they bought property, studied in Syrian schools, received benefits that are awarded to all Syrian citizens regardless of ethnicity and religion, propagandists will try to convince you that they were systematically oppressed.

There's also little to no mention of the war crimes committed by the Kurdish YPG and the SDF in Syria against the indigenous populations including closing the vast majority of schools, enforcing a non-authorized Kurdish curriculum, forced conscription, theft of property and businesses, kidnapping of children to turn them into soldiers, etc, much like the PKK in Turkey.

Reporting has been very one-sided and portrayed them as the leading fighters against terrorist groups in Syria and although they did play a part the Syrian Arab Army and their allies are the ones that did the heavy lifting and made the most progress, but they get trashed in the media.

And, many are surprised to learn that there are Syrian Kurds that are in the Syrian Army that categorically reject the notion of establishing a US/Israeli sponsored Kurdistan on sovereign Syrian land. They oppose the wrongdoing of the Kurdish militias and stand with the Syrian government and army.

Celebrations erupted once news was received that the SAA was on their way to northern towns. Even tribal leaders came out in support of the SAA, saying the SAA were the only true protectors of the land.

On Monday the SAA entered Manbij, Tal Tamr and towns in Raqqa's countryside. Videos showed US armored vehicles exiting the area while Syrian troops were entering, in a peaceful almost poetic re-alignment of power. The American-Israeli backed "Kurdistan" dream was destined for failure from the beginning.

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