

Turkey's "Operation Peace Spring" Rages on Creating a Chaotic Battlefield in Northeastern Syria

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

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On Saturday, the fourth day of Turkey's cross border military operation, Turkey's Defense Minister claimed that they had captured a key border town called Ras Al Ain, however the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) denied the claim.

Turkey accidentally put US special forces in harm's way on Friday, when they attacked a known US observation post on Friday. Turkey denied firing on US forces. No injuries were reported.

Turkey has stated that "Operation Peace Spring" is directed at safeguarding its border security, preventing the formation of a terror corridor, preventing the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) and its Syrian offshoots the People's Protection Units (YPG), Democratic Union Party (PYD) and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) from disrupting the demographic structures of the region, protecting Syria's territorial integrity, resettling Syrian refugees in terror-free safe zone, terminate the PKK/YPG/PYD drug trade including production and sales, and preventing these militias from recruiting child soldiers.

However, residential neighborhoods have been targeted, and civilians have been killed in border towns. The situation is fluid with chaos, fear, and violence raging on. Armenia has reached out the Armenian Bishop and offered Armenians in Qamishli to leave Syria during this difficult time but many are saying that they would rather remain in their country (Syria).

The PKK is recognized as a terrorist organization by NATO including the US and the EU. Turkey states the PKK has killed 40,000 people in Turkey since its inception thirty years ago.

Turkey is worried about a terror corridor being built under the guise of being an energy corridor. The Kurdish militias took control of energy sources. They wanted to transfer gas and oil that they seized to the Mediterranean passing through Hatay through this "energy corridor" which Turkey believes is a terror corridor.

Mortar shells and rocket attacks have been launched by both sides dozens of times claiming hundreds of innocent civilian lives. Turkey says that they want to prevent the Kurdish militias from disrupting the demographic structure of the region. Stating that the PKK/YPG/PYD are terrorizing civilians and forcing Arabs, Kurds, Turkmen out of their homes if they do not recognize their authority and then seizing their properties. They also demolish buildings where land registry records are kept.

On the ground sources in Syria that are not allied with Turkey have also stated similar things, homes and businesses are being confiscated, young men are kidnapped from the streets in forced conscription by the Turkish militias. Illegitimate taxes are being placed on

non-Kurds. Schools have been closed and administrators thrown in jail for not accepting an unrecognized Kurdish curriculum.

Although Turkey has stated at every opportunity that it is interested in protecting Syria's territorial integrity and wants to prevent the establishment of a Kurdish state on its border some worry that the real intention behind establishing a safe zone and peace corridor is to encroach on Syrian land. Turkey has claimed that they will return Syrian land to "its rightful owners" but hasn't specified who that is.

Turkey claims it wants to eliminate the presence of all terrorist groups in the region, but that doesn't seem to include the nefarious militias and terrorists that it supports such as the Free Syrian Army and its affiliates. Turkey is fixated on eliminating only Kurdish militias.

Turkey's two previous military operations, Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch cleared Kurdish militias along 4,000 km of Turkey's border and this latest operation is aiming to clear 480 kilometers east of the Euphrates and establishing a safe zone.

Another aim is to terminate the Kurdish militia's drug trade. Turkey states that the PKK/YPG/PYD have drug production facilities in the region and sell their drugs to Europe and the USA. Turkey is aiming at ending their drug production and trade in the region.

Turkey is also looking to resettle 1-2 million of the 3.6 million Syrian refugees it is currently hosting. It aims to purge the Kurdish militias first, then restore the infrastructure system and then resettle them in the safe zone area. The issue here is that demographics will be forcefully changed by Turkey, just as they were in the two previous cross border operations.

Turkey makes the distinction that Kurdish militias do not represent most Kurdish people. Most Kurdish movements and political parties are focused on the concerns and autonomy of Kurds within their respective countries. Within each country, there are Kurds who have assimilated and whose aspirations may be limited to greater cultural freedoms and political recognition.

The PKK/YPG have previously admitted to recruiting and using child soldiers. Turkey is aiming at eliminating that as well.

It's important to remember that Turkey was not granted permission by the Syrian state to carry out these military operations on its sovereign land. Also, had the United States and the Kurdish self-administration given control of these areas to the Syrian army Turkey wouldn't have had a pretext to justify these illegal military missions.

Turkey is using artillery and war plans in Ras al-Ayn and Qamishli in the Al Hassaka governorate and Ein Issa in Raqqa's northern countryside. Also, the Allouk water station in Ras al-Ayn is not rendered after electrical cables were severed during Turkish aggression. It's also been reported that 100 US soldiers withdrew from the targeted areas in two batches and headed to Iraq along with dozens of vehicles and that ten US officers and several foreign experts left the Rumailan US base for Iraq.

On Thursday, the Directorate-General for Antiquities and Museums (DGAM) stated that archeological sites and hills in northern Syria have sustained serious damage. **Dr. Mahmoud Hammoud** the Director General of DGAM said that several archeological sites that date back to the modern stone age and have been home to several consecutive

civilizations for thousands of years have been targeted by Turkish aggression. He is pleading with the international community, academics, archeologists and UNESCO to pressure Turkey into halting its aggression which threatens Syria's cultural heritage. He also noted that the northern area of Syria which Turkey wants to occupy contains archeological sites that date back more than 3,000 years and are an integral part of this region's history. He called the Turkey's actions crimes against humanity and stated that its barbaric aggression is a methodical attack on Syria's heritage.

By Friday, the UN estimates 100,000 civilians have fled their homes, 342 Kurdish fighters have been killed, major cities in northern Syria have been hit including, residential neighborhoods, dams, vital electric and water facilities. Civilian casualties are rising as well. President Trump has said mediation is one of the three options the other two are to send thousands of troops or enforce harsh sanctions.

We are likely to see more bloodshed, civilian deaths, prison breaks, ISIS detainees fleeing, battles over border towns such as Ras Al Ayn and other strategic areas in the upcoming days. Although the international community has called for Turkey to end its invasion and exercise restraint not enough is being done to end "Operation Peace Spring" which is anything but peaceful.

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The article was also published on [The American Herald Tribune](#)

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