

War on Syria: Turkey Plans to Annex Aleppo?

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*Turkish **President Recep Tayyip Erdogan** has announced his plan to return Syrian refugees in Turkey to Aleppo. For many years he has proposed a plan to create a safe zone, or de-escalation zone specifically developed to hold the millions of Syrian refugees living in Turkey.*

The Erdogan plan, dubbed the Aleppo model, includes Idlib, and parts of the countryside of Aleppo, Hama and Latakia.

In March 2020, Russia and Turkey entered into an agreement concerning Idlib. Turkey had promised to secure the M4 highway stretching from Latakia to Aleppo. This vital route provides imported cargo, and exported cargo between the port of Latakia and Aleppo. The highway, when operating safely makes the drive time between Latakia and Aleppo about two hours in length. However, Turkey failed to fulfill their promise to Russia. The terrorists who occupy Idlib control the M4 highway and make it impassable for cargo or civilians. The trip takes six hours of drive time because a detour must be taken for safety, and Syria faces a chronic gasoline shortage, making the passage of goods and travelers an ordeal.

Idlib is the sole remaining territory in Syria occupied by Radical Islamic terrorists. They hold 3 million civilians as hostages. The UN, US, EU and other international humanitarian aid agencies such as Doctors Without Borders provide supplies to the civilians; however, it is the terrorists who manage and warehouse all the aid. Often the terrorists will distribute aid to those who are aligned with them, while depriving secular Syrians from any aid. The surplus aid is sold by the terrorists in a huge shopping mall owned by **Mohamed al-Jolani**, the leader of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS).

Jolani is a Syrian who fought against the US occupation of Iraq. He first was a member of Al Qaeda, but after spending time in a US prison in Iraq with **Abu Bakr Baghdadi**, the leader of ISIS, Jolani switched to ISIS. Baghdadi asked Jolani to go to Syria and make an ISIS branch there, but after Jolani arrived in Syria he formed his own terrorist group Jibhat al-Nusra.

Jibhat al-Nusra was known as the Al Qaeda affiliate in Syria. The US had funded Jolani in Syria, but when the UN designated the terrorist group as banned, the US re-branded the group and changed the name to Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS). Jolani and his terrorists have recently hung people in Idlib who refused to conform to the dictates of extreme Radical Islamic ideology. Jolani has prevented women in Idlib from benefiting from international aid programs targeting women with business education.

Erdogan's ruling party, AKP, is aligned with the Muslim Brotherhood which is a global organization advocating the destruction of democracy in favor of Islamic Law. Erdogan has directed the AKP, the Ministry of the Interior, and the AKP members of the Parliament to promote Syrians returning to Syria from Turkey.

Turkey claims to be negotiating with Russia and Syria concerning the return of Syrian refugees to Aleppo under the Erdogan proposal to boost the commercial and social fabric there.

Aleppo is the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world (tied with Damascus). Prior to the conflict which began in 2011, Aleppo was considered the industrial capital of Syria. The Industrial Zone in Aleppo was a vast center of factories making products from soap to fabrics for both domestic use and international export.

In the first few years of the conflict, Aleppo did not participate in the US-NATO attack on Syria for regime change. Jibhat al-Nusra saw the opportunity to surround and occupy the eastern section of Aleppo. This cut the huge city of 4 million into two: the free western section under Syrian administration, and the eastern section under the occupation of various Radical Islamic terrorist groups supported by the US and Turkey.

During the conflict years of 2014 to 2016 the terrorists dismantled the factories in Aleppo and transported the materials to Turkey where they were re-assembled by Erdogan loyalists and cronies.

After Erdogan's terrorists destroyed the economy in Aleppo and stole the factories, now he suddenly proposes to rebuild factories and boost the economy of Aleppo. But, Erdogan is not proposing to fund or support existing Syrian businesses in Aleppo, instead under his plan Turkish businesses along the border region will develop Turkish businesses and employ Syrian workers. The workers will have an income, but the Syrian businesses will be targeted for extinction. It appears Erdogan is proposing an annexation of Aleppo and more regions in Syria.

The Syrian refugees returning to Syria would be working for Turkish businesses with no benefit for Aleppo.

Erdogan has repeatedly voiced his wish to meet with Syrian **President Bashar al-Assad**. Damascus has said their condition for the meeting is the complete military withdrawal of Turkish military in occupation of area in Syria, and the removal of Radical Islamic terrorist groups which Turkey has employed in Syria.

A planned meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Erdogan is scheduled at the end of this month. According to the Turkish media, "Hürriyet Daily News", the leaders will discuss two issues concerning Syria.

The return of refugees is the first issue, while the second is the normalization between

Ankara and Damascus, which was originally proposed by Putin to Erdogan. The Russian negotiating teams in Syria have been successful in clearing areas from terrorist groups and targeting terrorists like ISIS and Hayat Tahrir al-Sham.

The Syrian people continue to suffer under the occupation of US troops illegally occupying parts of Syria, while stealing the Syrian oil production of the best producing wells, which prevents the Syrian people from having enough gasoline and almost no electricity. The US and EU continue sanctions on the Syrian people which prevent rebuilding or investment to recover from the years of armed conflict. The US continues to support the Radical Islamic terrorists holding Idlib civilians as hostages. The international community sits and watches as the Syrian people starve while the western governments maintain the status quo.

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