

Turkey to Send Troops to Combat Armenia in Nagorno-Karabakh?

By <u>Stephen Lendman</u> Global Research, October 23, 2020 Region: <u>Asia</u>, <u>Europe</u> Theme: <u>Intelligence</u>, <u>Militarization and</u> <u>WMD</u>

Like the US, Turkey's Erdogan pursues interests at the expense of peace and stability.

He favors war for extending Turkey's borders to further his neo-Ottoman aims.

He, his family members and regime profited earlier from stolen Syrian oil.

He gave ISIS and other terrorists safe haven in Turkish territory, providing them with weapons, other material support, and a launching pad for attacks on Syrian soldiers and civilians.

Turkey under Erdogan is a fascist police state — speech, media and academic freedoms they way they should be banned.

So is dissent. Anyone publicly criticizing or insulting him risks prosecution for terrorism, espionage or treason, including children.

As long as he doesn't act against US interests, as a NATO member and in other ways, his tyrannical rule and regional destabilizing actions are tolerated — if only barely.

On Wednesday, his **Vice President Fuat Oktay** said Ankara is ready to send troops to back Azerbaijan's war on Armenia in Nagorno-Karabakh (NK below).

In response to Turkey's deployment of armed and directed jihadists to combat Armenian forces in NK, the country's **Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan** called on regional countries to unite against them and their Turkish paymaster.

"Regretably (they) have not responded to this reality seriously enough yet," Pashinyan added.

"It is beyond doubt that the presence of foreign terrorists will pose a threat to the region in the future."

"The region's countries must deal with this issue more seriously."

The Erdogan regime is also involved militarily in NK by providing Baku with command and control services, training of its military forces, and heavy weapons for warmaking.

He and hardliners surrounding him support war, not resolution in NK.

Pashinyan stressed it, saying "the Karabakh question...cannot have a diplomatic solution."

"Everything that is diplomatically acceptable to the Armenian side...is not acceptable to Azerbaijan..."

Baku's ruling authorities intend endless war until Armenian forces are driven from NK — no matter the human toll, according to comments from its leadership.

As Azeri forces advance, civilians in harm's way are caught in the crossfire.

Unconfirmed reports suggest that they've taken control of areas bordering Iran and Armenia's international border — increasing the risk of conflict spilling into both countries.

Armenia's Defense Ministry spokesman **Artsrun Hovhannisyan** accused Azerbaijan of sending "small...subversive groups...into villages and towns, film(ing) themselves there, spread(ing) those images...to feed their society. But, unfortunately, this also affects us."

While conflict continues, foreign ministers of both warring sides will meet with Trump regime's Pompeo for talks in Washington on Friday.

Yet on Tuesday, Azeri **President Ilham Aliyev** said the following:

"We are fighting on our own land, giving martyrs and restoring our territorial integrity. These steps will continue to be taken."

"Armenia must declare before it is too late that it is withdrawing from the occupied territories. After that the fighting may stop."

From the above remarks and two failed Russian/Minsk Group arranged ceasefire, Aliyev is unwilling to compromise on his aims in NK.

With support from Turkey, including Erdogan's willingness to send troops if asked, Aliyev rejects diplomacy while sending his foreign minister to discuss ceasefire with his Russian, French and US counterparts.

According to the Asia Times, Erdogan's support for Azerbaijan is driven by energy interests in competition with Russia.

An unnamed Erdogan advisor said "Russia is neither an ally, nor an enemy, but we can't negotiate if we are too dependent on them, especially when it comes to energy."

"We have vital interests to protect," including two pipelines from Azerbaijan to Europe, one for oil, the other for gas.

One runs close to NK, the other near northern Armenia, the unnamed advisor close to Erdogan adding:

"We can't afford losing our sight on what's going on around our pipelines in the Caucasus, especially in the Tavush region, where there have been several clashes (with Armenia) over the last years."

The so-called BTC oil pipeline is owned by Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Britain's BP.

The South Caucasus Pipeline runs from Azerbaijan's Caspian Sea field to Turkey, and Georgia — soon as well to Italy, Greece and Bulgaria.

Earlier in October, Erdogan accused Armenia of endangering supplies of energy to Turkey and other European countries.

Oil and gas pipelines from Azerbaijan to Europe are only endangered by its preemptive war on Armenia in NK.

No danger would exist if conflict resolution ended weeks of fighting.

Russia also supplies gas to Turkey through Turkstream 1.

Turkstream 2 is under construction, completion expected around yearend.

Azerbaijan will compete with Russia for the European natural gas market.

Moscow prioritizes cooperation with other nations, confrontation with none.

Turkey's Erdogan prioritizes the advancement of his neo-Ottoman interests.

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