

## **Turkey Sends Reinforcements to Protect ISIS-Daesh** in Idlib, Syria

By <u>Stephen Lendman</u> Global Research, February 12, 2020 Region: <u>Middle East & North Africa</u> Theme: <u>Militarization and WMD</u>, <u>Terrorism</u> In-depth Report: <u>SYRIA</u>

Throughout nine years of preemptive US war in Syria, Turkey supported ISIS other jihadists, pretending otherwise.

*Earlier in the war, Ankara colluded with ISIS in transporting, refining and selling stolen Syrian oil – Erdogan and other regime officials profiting hugely.* 

Evidence supplied by Kurdish sources in northern Syria showed "detailed invoices used by IS to calculate daily revenues from their oil fields and refineries, as well as the amount of oil extracted there," adding:

"All the documents had Islamic State's symbol at the top." They showed ISIS "kept very professional records of their oil business."

Syrians forced against their will to aid ISIS' oil trade said "extracted oil was delivered to an oil refinery, where it was converted into gasoline, gas and other petroleum products."

"Then the refined product was sold. (I)ntermediaries from Raqqa and Allepo arrived to pick up the oil and often mentioned Turkey."

According to a captured ISIS jihadist at the time, "the reason why it was so easy for him to cross the Turkish border and join IS was, in part, due to the fact that Turkey also benefitted."

Ankara let anti-Syria jihadists move freely cross-border between both countries, giving them safe haven in Turkey.

The Erdogan regime continues supporting these elements, using them to advance its revanchist aims in northern Syria.

The same goes for the US, NATO, Israel and the Saudis — on the side of the devil in stark contrast to Russia and Lebanon's Hezbollah, aiding Damascus combat this scourge.

In response to significant advances on the ground in Idlib by Syrian forces, Turkey beefed up its illegal cross-border presence.

According to Lebanon's Al Mayadeen television, the Erdogan regime sent scores of tanks, armored vehicles, other military equipment, and accompanying troops into northern Syria — to aid jihadists against Syrian forces.

On Monday, five Turkish soldiers were reported killed, others wounded by Syrian strikes on jihadists' positions.

Southfront reported that al-Nusra terrorists in Idlib attacked Syrian forces, "supported by Turkish rocket and artillery strikes." Retaliation by government troops resulted in Turkish casualties.

Ankara and jihadists its supports are aggressors, Syrian forces involved in defending their homeland, combatting the scourge of terrorist invaders supported by the US and Turkey.

Claims by the Erdogan regime of delivering "devastating blows" to Syria's army in Idlib are dubious, no evidence presented to support them.

Besides significant earlier advances, government troops liberated the following villages on Monday: al-Qanati, Kafr Halab, Khirbat Jazraya and Miznaz — despite Turkish support for routed jihadists.

In talks with their Turkish counterparts, Russian diplomats are trying to keep things from developing into more serious clashes.

Ceasefires don't work. Whenever declared, US/Turkish supported jihadists breach them straightaway — armed with heavy weapons supplied by these and other countries.

Greatly aided by Russian airpower, Damascus is determined to eliminate jihadists in Idlib, their last remaining stronghold in the country.

According to AMN News on Tuesday, government troops "surround(ed) a strategic Turkish...observation" post in Saraqib, Idlib — a former major jihadist stronghold in the country liberated last week.

A Syrian soldier was quoted saying: "All the observation points are completely surrounded by the Syrian Arab Army."

"The Turks tried to withdraw from Tell Toqan towards Tavtanaz and Bab Al-hawa."

AMN News said Syrian forces began "encircling Turkish observation posts (in) August 2019 (after) recaptur(ing)" jihadist-held areas.

Following Saraqib's liberation, Turkey began beefing up its military presence in Idlib to aid jihadists combat government forces.

Last week, Russia's UN envoy Vassily Nebenzia noted during a special Security Council session on Syria that whenever government forces achieve significant advances, these sessions are called for by the US and/or its imperial allies — urging ceasefire to halt Syrian liberating efforts, noting:

These "meetings are convened at the moment when terrorists in Syria are under threat, and the Syrian government reinstalls control over its national territory."

"Let me remind that those are terrorists recognized as such by the Security Council."

"We talk about sovereign territory of Syria and about militants that it is the right and duty of

any government to fight with."

"In December 2019 (and) January 2020, (US/Turkish supported jihadists) launched over 1,400 attacks" on government forces and residential areas, "us(ing) tanks, machine guns, mortar and artillery bombardments" — weapons supplied by the US, other Western countries and Turkey.

Nebenzia quoted Pompeo saying: The Trump regime "condemns the continued, unjustifiable, and ruthless assaults on the people of Idlib by (Syria), Russia, Iran, and Hezbollah."

"Let me clarify," said Nebenzia. "Idlib is not a country. It is Syria's governorate...Syrian nationals" held hostage by terrorists as human shields.

Iranian military advisors are in Syria, not frontline combat troops.

The US, Britain, France, Turkey, Israel, the Saudis, and their allies actively support anti-Syria jihadists.

Government troops, Russia, and Hezbollah forces are committed to defeating them.

Preserving and protecting Syrian sovereignty and territorial integrity depends on liberating Idlib and areas controlled by US and Turkish occupiers.

Enemies of peace and stability, their presence in Syria represents a flagrant UN Charter breach — what establishment media never explain, supporting what demands denunciation.

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