

Turkey's New Relationship with Russia — and Assad

By [Eric Zuesse](#)

Global Research, August 29, 2016

[Strategic Culture Foundation](#) 26 August
2016

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

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

Until the July 15th US-backed (or so the Turkish government alleges) coup-attempt to overthrow Turkey's President Tayyip Erdogan, Erdogan was trying to overthrow Syria's President Bashar al-Assad, whom the US regime likewise wants to overthrow.

However, Russia's President Vladimir Putin saved Erdogan's Presidency, and probably Erdogan's life, by [contacting](#) him hours prior to the pending coup and thus enabled him to plan and prepare so as to overcome the attempt, and crush the operation.

Putin wouldn't have known ahead-of-time about the coup-plan unless Russian intelligence had provided to him intelligence that it was coming. This intelligence might have included information about whom the source of it was. If Putin had intelligence regarding that matter, then he presumably shared it with Erdogan at that time - prior to the coup.



Promptly on July 16th, Erdogan announced that the source of the coup was his long-time foe (but former political supporter) Fethullah Gulen, who in 1999 had relocated himself and the headquarters of his multibillion-dollar Islamic organization to Pennsylvania in the United States. Erdogan said that he would demand Gulen's extradition to stand trial in Turkey. However, the US State Department said it had not yet received a «formal extradition request».

On August 4th, «Turkish Justice Minister Bekir Bozdag [said](#) Ankara had submitted a second extradition request», but the US 'Justice' Department was «still trying to evaluate if the documents can be considered a formal extradition request».

The 'Justice' Department is still trying, 16 days later, as of the present writing.

Meanwhile, on August 9th, Erdogan flew to Moscow to meet privately with Putin - the man who had saved his Presidency if not his life. Presumably, Erdogan wanted to see all of Russia's intelligence on the matter. After that meeting, he may be presumed to have seen all of the intelligence on it, both from Turkish and from Russian intelligence agencies.

Erdogan continued his demand that the US extradite Gulen. Evidently, after his having seen all of the intelligence from both Turkey and Russia, he remained convinced that Gulen was behind it.

Putin is determined to prevent what the American-Saudi-Qatari-Turkish alliance have been demanding on Syria: the ouster of Syria's President Bashar al-Assad prior to any election

being held in Syria. The repeated demand by Putin has instead been that only the Syrian people themselves, in a free and fair internationally monitored election, can decide whether or when to terminate Assad's present term of office, and that Russia will accept whatever the voters of Syria decide as to the identity of Syria's President going forward.

The UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, has, [on at least two occasions](#), publicly stated that he supports Putin's position on this, and that there would be no legitimacy for a forced ouster of the current Syrian President.

On Saturday August 20th, the AP [bannered](#) «Turkey: Assad can be part of transition in Syria», and reported that «*Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim said Saturday his country is willing to accept a role for Syrian President Bashar Assad during a transitional period but insisted he has no place in Syria's future... 'Could Syria carry Assad in the long-term? Certainly not... The United States knows and Russia knows that Assad does not appear to be someone who can bring (the people) together'.*».

Of course, Russia does not «know» that (and, in fact, [more than 50 %](#) of Syrians even when polled by western firms, want Assad to continue being President of Syria, and [more than 80 %](#) blame the US for backing the jihadists), but Turkey's statement that Russia does «know» it, will help the Turkish public (whom the Erdogan regime has indoctrinated to consider Assad evil) acclimate to thinking of Assad's ally Russia as being actually a friend, no foe, of Turkey; and this will, in turn, assist Erdogan going forward, especially if he's aiming to, for example, remove Turkey from the NATO alliance and align with Russian foreign policy.

What's happening here is the setting of the terms for the next Presidential election in Syria. Washington and its allies (which used to include its fellow-NATO-member Turkey) demand that the Syrian 'democratic revolution' (or foreign invasion by fundamentalist-Sunni jihadists hired and armed by the US, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, and UAE) succeed and establish a fundamentalist-Sunni leader for Syria, who will then, perhaps, hold elections, which, perhaps, will be 'democratic' instead of imposing Sunni Islamic law. But Assad, and Russia, demand that there be no such overthrow prior to the election; and, now, Turkey has stated that this would be acceptable to them. That's a big change in Turkey's international relations.

How seriously should one take Turkey's continuing demand that «Certainly not» could the Syrian people re-elect Assad to be their President? One should take it with a grain of salt that would easily be washed away if Assad does win that election.

In other words: Turkey has announced, on August 20th, that, at least on the Syrian issue, it's no longer an ally of the US

An earthquake has thus happened in international relations.

The original source of this article is [Strategic Culture Foundation](#)
Copyright © [Eric Zuesse](#), [Strategic Culture Foundation](#), 2016

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Eric Zuesse](#)

About the author:

Investigative historian Eric Zuesse is the author, most recently, of *They're Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010*, and of *CHRIST'S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity*.

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca