

US is Offering False Hope to Syria's Kurds

By [Ulson Gunnar](#)

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The United States is very proud of the progress their SDF (Syrian Democratic Forces) have made on the battlefield in Syria's northeastern region against IS (Islamic State). In a hearing before a US congressional committee recently, US Army generals extolled the fighting prowess of these fighters. They portrayed the fighters, mostly Kurds, to be persistent and tenacious despite suffering heavy losses, a characteristic the generals and the US in general seemed very eager to exploit.

However, looking at an actual map of the Syrian conflict, it appears that these Kurdish fighters and their allies on the battlefield are not working on behalf of the United States as the US would like to claim, but are instead coordinating with other Syrian forces fighting to reestablish stability (and more importantly, unity) within the country.

Salients emerging from Kurdish-held territory reach out in offensives into IS and "rebel" held territory, like tentacles of a leviathan to meet up with the Syrian Arab Army reaching out from their respective fronts. Together they have encircled, cut off and sent IS and other militant factions fleeing in disarray. Together, their collective efforts have finally helped turn the tide of what has been a destructive war threatening to leave Syria divided and in perpetual turmoil just as Libya was in 2011 and onward.

When Russia entered the conflict upon the request of the Syrian government, Russian forces began coordinating and supporting Kurdish fighters as well. The duality of Russian and American support behind the Kurds has become a complex issue for analysts and causal observers alike.

Illustrating just how bizarre America's claims are regarding its "backing" of Kurdish fighters in Syria and its taking responsibility for their successes, Reuters' article, "[Kurds' advance in Syria divides U.S. and Turkey as Russia bombs](#)," would even go as far as claiming:

The rapid advance of U.S.-backed Kurdish fighters in northern Syria, taking advantage of Russian air strikes to seize territory near the Turkish border, has infuriated Ankara and threatened to drive a wedge between NATO allies.

Clearly Kurdish fighters are advancing because of Russian military assistance, not American, and while Reuters claims a wedge may be driven between Turkey and the US, it has only been Russia that has attempted to hold Turkey accountable for its aggression against Syria's Kurds, not the US.

Syria's Kurds, at least the majority who have taken up arms, seem to understand that further division for Syria as the US clearly desires, would be a disaster, not an opportunity.

Encouragement by the United States for the Kurds to fight the Syrian government or to carve out their own autonomous, independent region would be the partial fulfillment of Washington's "Plan B" for Syria, failing outright regime change.

While an independent Kurdish state would sound like the culmination of a long-desired dream for the Kurdish people it would be in reality the beginning of a much darker national nightmare.

Independent Kurdistan Would be the "Next Israel"

Geopolitically, an independent Kurdish state either in Syria or created out of an amalgamation of Kurdish regions in Syria and Iraq, would be many times weaker than any of the states they would be achieving independence from.

An independent Kurdistan would be incapable of defending itself from more aggressive offensives launched by Turkey who would no longer have to worry about provoking Baghdad, Damascus or their regional and international partners such as Iran and Russia. The United States, the chief agitator encouraging Kurdish independence, has already proven complete disinterest in truly protecting the Kurdish people from Turkish aggression both within Turkey's borders and well beyond them. In fact, the US appears to be cynically using Turkish aggression as a "stick" to be held in contrast to whatever "carrots" are being offered in exchange for Washington's tighter control over Ankara's leash.

An independent Kurdistan would look a lot like Israel, or perhaps Qatar or Bahrain. It would be small, composing perhaps almost the same minuscule population of Israel with no more than 10 million people, and exist as a dependent faux-nation in need of constant and substantial foreign aid both militarily and economically (provided by the United States).

Like Israel, this Kurdish state would be governed by proxies selected by Washington. Either through internal division or the constant threat of aggression from abroad, this Kurdish state, like Israel, would be plunged and intentionally left in perpetual conflict. This conflict could even be sustained by creating aggressive foreign policies like Israel has adopted, creating a "siege mentality" among the Kurdish people and justifying long-term military dependency on the US.

While Kurdish populated regions have significant oil reserves, they will be dependent on foreign corporations to extract them and like the oil barons of the Persian Gulf, revenue will be at the mercy of global markets and those special interests who control those markets.

The United States, as it has done to Israel and the Persian Gulf monarchies, would leave an independent Kurdish state in a precarious position intentionally, requiring it to depend on US backing. While Israel is often accused of being a regional bully (and it most certainly is), its menace is directly proportional to the immense financial aid and weapons it receives from the US and Europe.

Nations like Saudi Arabia which are vastly larger in territory than a potential Kurdish state would be, and double or triple its potential population, still depend on the United States for military weapons and regional protection. There is no reason to expect a Kurdish state to form under any other sort of arrangement.

Nothing Like Independence

It would in fact, be nothing like independence, or even autonomy. It would be perpetual, servile dependency on the special interests that helped create it solely for the purpose of using it to further divide and diminish the influence of any one single nation state in the Middle Eastern region.

As the British did before them, the United States is an expert in Balkanizing regions, and nations within regions. What is touted as “revolution,” “freedom” and “independence” often ends up becoming decades of instability, internal conflict and dependence on the US who had sold the idea of nation-making in the first place.

And while the US promises the Kurds a utopian future state, they have simultaneously promised overlapping spheres within the region to other allies, including Turkey, Saudi Arabia and even Israel. The diabolical brilliance of this arrangement allows the US to create future conflicts, divisions and weakness among all players in the region, between friends and foes alike, ensuring it alone maintains hegemony over a collection of infighting subordinates.

A Better Path for Syria’s Kurds

Both Damascus and Syria’s Kurds benefit from a strong, unified Syria. While Syria’s Kurds may desire and even seek greater representation or autonomy, their place within the Syrian state is both an asset for Damascus and Damascus an asset for the Kurds.

Turkey currently constitutes a common enemy. Syrian soldiers and Kurds alike have suffered the effects of Turkish aggression, both directly through armed aggression ordered by Ankara, and indirectly through the ongoing proxy war Syrian soldiers and Kurdish fighters are entrenched in against waves of foreign-backed fighters.

While Syria’s Kurds are suffering greatly because of Turkey today, they do not stand a chance against Ankara’s aggression tomorrow as an independent state without Damascus and its obligation to defend all within its borders, including Kurdish regions targeted by Turkey.

The same could be said for Kurds in Iraq, who have been lured away from Baghdad and in league with the United States, inebriated with promises of riches and power after establishing their own state. Perhaps as a preview for Syria’s Kurds to consider, as the schism between Baghdad and Iraq’s Kurds grows, Baghdad becomes increasingly unable and perhaps even unwilling to marshal forces to protect their northernmost region against Turkish incursions leaving the Kurds at their mercy with only the US and its various layers of machinations to depend on.

And just in case Baghdad did want to prove its commitment to Iraqi Kurds, they likely couldn’t as they desperately find themselves fighting IS on all fronts. A divided Iraq faces many years of fighting and instability, fighting and instability that will steal from Kurds and Arabs alike a peaceful and prosperous future.

Considering this, we see yet another geopolitical dimension in the use of IS by the US and its regional allies, using it as a means to apply pressure directly against its enemies and create tensions in parallel between potential alliances that could strengthen the region.

The deconstruction of Iraq (or even Libya) should serve as a warning to all in the region the danger of taking up arms against their own government and inviting the sort of chaos Syria is now steeped in. Nations like Israel, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Bahrain who depend entirely on the US and Europe for their continued existence should also serve as a warning for those in a position to establish their own independent state, that while the promises made by the US sound tempting, reality manifest clearly is not.

Ulson Gunnar is a New York-based geopolitical analyst and writer especially for the online magazine "[New Eastern Outlook](#)".

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