

US says no deal yet on Manbij, talks continue

by Wladimir van Wilgenburg - 16/03/2018 00:00



ERBIL – The US State Department spokesperson Heather Nauert on Thursday **denied** there is a deal with Turkey on Manbij contradicting claims of Turkish officials.

“It is not our understanding. We have a lot of conversations that we’re having with the Turkish Government at this point. We had a day and a half or a day worth of meetings last week with Turkish Government officials,” she said.

“We’re still working to reach an agreement with Turkey at this point and we’re not done talking with them,” she added.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu last week **told** the German weekly Die Zeit that the U.S. and Turkey had “reached a common understanding” on the issue of the stabilization of the city of Manbij in northern Syria and other cities east of the Euphrates River.

However, Kurdish officials say there is no need for any deal on Manbij, since the town is ruled by the Manbij Military Council (MMC), and not the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG).

"In Manbij, there is the Manbij Military Council, which is part of the Syrian Democratic Forces, and there are no YPG forces there, and there are Manbij civilians, Turkey cannot enter it," Shahoz Hassan, the co-head of the Democratic Union Party (PYD) said in a press conference in Erbil, the capital of the Kurdistan region on Wednesday.

He moreover, added that it's unlikely that the US would betray the SDF forces that fought ISIS. "America knows who fought with them against ISIS," he added.

Reuters [reported](#) that the sacking of U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson may delay a deal between Ankara and Washington to pull Kurdish fighters out of the Syrian town of Manbij.