

Turkey's state terrorism, the United States, and the Kurds

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The Kurdistan liberation movement fought the Ottoman Empire and the Safavids long before the United States became an active international participant in conflicts in the Middle East. Kurdish people continued to struggle for their national and democratic rights after the colonial order of the Sykes-Picot agreement, as it never granted the Kurdish people a state of their own. The agony of Kurdish people only grew as Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria gained military and political strength. These states have committed atrocities and genocide against Kurdish people, and other indigenous people in the region, since their foundation.

Even if Kurdish political parties and intellectuals are well aware of multi-billion-dollar military exports from Western democracies to these rogue states, there has always been a hope, even if small, that these democracies will one day support a peaceful political resolution to the Kurdish question. A recent bitter experience proves that such a hope is not only very small, but also very fragile.

I will give the reader a short summary of the background of this issue.

Despite the will of Kurdish people to respect a federal system in Iraq, the Iraqi central government and Iraq's political establishment treat Southern Kurdistan (Iraqi Kurdistan) as a colony, and choose to cooperate with Ankara, Damascus and Tehran in order to keep the Kurds under control. The day after the referendum, 25th September 2017, tells us much.

In Syria, despite the fierce battle of young Kurdish men and women against terrorist proxy forces, including ISIS, the United States and the international community still refuse to stop Turkey's aggression. The whole northern part of Syria would be liberated, stable, and friendly to cooperation with other states if not for Turkey. Bashar al-Assad hardly represents anything, but still refuses to recognize the slightest national and democratic rights of Kurdish people. He prefers rather that Syria be torn apart by Turkey, Russia and Iran.

The last 39 years of Islamic fascism have been a nightmare for Kurds, Balochis and Arabs in Iran. The Islamic government of Iran not only suppresses the peoples of Iran by every means, but also interferes in neighboring countries throughout the region.

Turkey, a NATO member, a candidate for membership in the European Union, and a member of dozens of Western institutions and organizations, is one of the most racist countries in the history of colonialism. Turkish racism is not based on skin color as the traditional doctrine suggests, but rather on total exclusion, of the denial of the existence of any other culture or identity.

Every single politician in the Western world, from radical leftists to ultra-conservatives, knows about Turkey's barbaric oppression of the Kurdish people. Since 1923, the founding of the Turkish republic, Turkish oppression indoctrinated the denial of Kurdish existence and the prohibition of the Kurdish language. The history of Turkey in that part of Kurdistan is the history of extermination, confiscation, stealing money and property, imprisonment, persecution, arbitrary killing and all kinds of harassment and violence on a daily basis.

The PKK, or Kurdistan Workers' Party, has been calling for a peaceful political solution of the Kurdish question. They have knocked on every door in the United States and the EU asking for political support. Kurdish people have marched millions of miles in hundreds of cities in the world, asking for a peaceful solution and an end to human suffering.

The imprisoned Kurdish leader, Abdullah Ocalan, has been asking for a reconciliation process between Turks and Kurds (and other persecuted minorities in Turkey, like Armenians) and for a political dialogue and a political solution to the Kurdish

question. The leaders of the PKK and the HDP, along with many average people in North Kurdistan, have been calling for peace and asking the US, EU, and others to mediate and to support a political solution of the Kurdish question. Unfortunately, this has all been in vain.

The PKK has been a stabilizing factor in the region, fighting ISIS and other terrorist groups. It has led the Kurdistan national liberation movement toward pluralism, secularism, gender equality and democratic values. Ocalan specifically emphasizes a sustainable and long-term peace and solution approach in his writings.

Therefore, the statement of the new U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Mr. Mathew Palmer, on 6th November 2018, comes as a surprise. There has been an understanding that the US has freed itself from the Turkish narrative and its traditional state-terrorism ideology— especially when the US possesses plenty of evidence concerning Turkish aggression across all parts of Kurdistan, such as its interventions in Rojava/North Syria and its military buildup in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The US has very good knowledge of Erdogan's wars, his terrorist proxies, and his eagerness to reorganize radical Islam around the world.

The homepage of the Rewards for Justice shows photos of children, in order to express that children are the first victims of terrorism. I would like to remind Mr. Mathew Palmer that the Kurdish people have lost tens of thousands of children at the hands of the Iraqi, Turkish, Iranian, and Syrian regimes over the last hundred years.

There are thousands of Kurdish children in Turkish prisons right now, alongside many elderly people and women who have no dispute with the Turkish state other than their Kurdish identity. Between 18th March 2018, the day Afrin was occupied, and today, there have been 2,500 kidnappings in Afrin— of which 145 victims are women and many are children and youths. The homepage of the Department's Rewards for Justice would certainly appear as a realistic anti-terror program if, instead of aiding Turkey's political targeting of the Kurdish people, it talked about these atrocities and highlighted the Turkish state's crimes against humanity.

Thus, this decision has nothing to do with justice or with defending democratic values. In fact, it is counterproductive. I advise Mr. Trump's administration to instead involve itself in reviving the peace process of March 2013 that was initiated by Mr. Ocalan, the leader of the Kurdistan national liberation movement. This is the only way to bring about a sustainable and lasting peace in Turkey and the broader Middle East.

For us, Mr. Murat Karayilan, Mr. Cemil Bayik and Mr. Duran Kalkan are what Mr. Abraham Lincoln, Mr. George Washington, and Mr. Luther Martin King are for

Americans— revolutionaries and national heroes. We intend to protect them.

And yes, we too "have a dream," and that is a free Kurdistan.