

Don't Be Fooled, Trump's "Withdrawal" From Syria Isn't What It Seems

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Trump's decision to "withdraw" US troops from Syria is being universally praised by all but his "deep state" foes, but things aren't exactly as they seem and the celebrations might be premature because this deceptive move simply changes the nature of the Hybrid Wars on Syria, Iran, and Pakistan by making them less kinetic but nevertheless equally dangerous.

Trump supposedly "defied" his foes in America's permanent military, intelligence, and diplomatic bureaucracies ("deep state") by ordering the "withdrawal" of American troops from Syria, which is being celebrated across the world as a pragmatic peacemaking gesture that's long overdue. The fact of the matter, however, is that this isn't the so-called "retreat" that some in the [Alt-Media](#) are portraying it as but is actually a cunning move for more cost-effectively advancing the US' military, political, and ultimately strategic objectives in the Arab Republic and beyond.

On the surface, it appears to some that Trump flinched in the face of Erdogan's threat to commence an anti-terrorist intervention east of the Euphrates in the US-occupied corner of Syria and basically betrayed America's Kurdish allies there, but the "withdrawal" should instead be seen as keeping the Kurds in check and preempting a possible Turkish campaign against them there by getting them to curb their ambitions as part of a pragmatic US-brokered deal between them and Ankara. Still, even if Turkey does indeed intervene, then that doesn't necessarily mean that the YPG-led SDF will be destroyed.

Most observers overlooked the US Special Representative for Syria's statement earlier this month that his country was deliberating the creation of an Iraqi-style "no-fly zone" following a possible withdrawal of its grounds from there, which the author drew attention to in his piece at the time about how "[The US Might Withdraw From Syria If A 'No-Fly Zone' Is Imposed In The Northeast](#)". The argument put forth in that analysis is that it would be much more cost-effective and less risky for the US to control the agriculturally, hydrologically, and energy-rich corner of Northeastern Syria from the air through a "no-fly zone" than through "boots on the ground".

Under such a scenario, which is veritably plausible following Trump's [public reassurance](#) that the "withdrawal" doesn't imply the end of its military mission in Syria, the US and some of its "Coalition of the Willing" allies could maintain control of the region through aerial means and therefore keep Turkish, Syria, and especially Iranian forces at bay if they violate the so-called "deconfliction line" that the Pentagon imposed along the Euphrates over the past two years

This could ensure that the US-backed but Kurdish-controlled SDF doesn't lose its predominant position in the region even in the event that Turkey launches a small-scale

intervention there because it could ultimately be “contained” by the US and its allies’ de-facto “no-fly zone”. Thus, given that the “withdrawal” of American troops probably won’t have any practical on-the-ground consequences, this move should therefore be seen as a mostly political one aimed at achieving several objectives.

Most immediately, the optics of an American military “withdrawal” from Syria are supposed to catalyze the stalled peace process and create the conditions for pronounced international pressure to be brought upon Iran to follow suit, which is in alignment with President Putin’s unofficial peace plan for the country which the author touched upon in his piece last month about how [“Russia’s Non-Denial About Brokering Iran’s Withdrawal From Syria Is A Big Deal”](#).

Furthermore, [“Israel’s” publicly expressed concerns](#) over this development could push it even further under Russian tutelage as Moscow progressively replaces Washington as Tel Aviv’s patron per the model that the author described in his summer analysis about how [“It’s Official, ‘Israel’ Is Now A Joint Russian-American Protectorate”](#). In hindsight, it shouldn’t be seen as a coincidence that Russian and “Israeli” military officials [recently visited](#) one another in the run-up to Trump’s announcement, suggesting that they were either informed of it in advance or accurately forecast this development and decided to publicly intensify their military relations with each other in response.

Apart from the Syrian-related analytical angle, Trump is also signaling to the Taliban (whether sincerely or not) that the US is seriously contemplating pulling its troops out of Afghanistan too, which is the group’s main condition for continuing the unofficial peace talks between the two sides. That said, it’s doubtful that the US would surrender its strategic presence in the tri-regional crossroads between Central, South, and West Asia and will probably end up replacing any of its “withdrawn” troops with mercenaries, which might be a “face-saving compromise” between itself and the Taliban but one which might deliberately drive a wedge between the so-called “moderate” and “hardline” factions of the second-mentioned and possibly “provoke” dissatisfied elements to “defect” to Daesh (which could in turn be blamed on Pakistan for escalating the ongoing Hybrid War on that country).

Lastly, Trump wants to show the American public that he’s keeping his campaign pledge to (at least conventionally) draw down the War on Syria following the Republicans’ loss of the House last month and ahead of the 2020 elections, knowing that the Democrats will hold his feet to the fire over that unfulfilled pledge and weaponize it as part of election campaign against him if he doesn’t make visible progress on that front (and possibly also in Afghanistan too per the aforementioned scenario). In view of this, domestic political interests might have also played an influential role behind Trump’s decision and the specific timing thereof.

Altogether, while the US’ “withdrawal” from Syria is certainly a welcoming move that will undoubtedly do a lot to advance the stalled peace process in the war-torn country, it’s nevertheless much more of a cunning strategy aimed at comprehensively advancing a wide range of interests than the supposed “retreat” that some are “victoriously” celebrating it as. The US’ Hybrid Wars against Syria, Iran, and also Pakistan aren’t stopping any time soon, but it’s just that they’re evolving in response to new conditions and taking on less kinetic forms that are still more than capable of creatively shaping events in America’s favor so long as its intended targets don’t understand the nature of the new threats that they’re facing.

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