

No “Problems” with Export of Iraqi – Kurdish Oil via Turkey and Drawing New Borders in the Middle East

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Global Research, April 12, 2017

[nsnbc international](#) 11 April 2017

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

Theme: [Oil and Energy](#), [US NATO War](#)

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Amidst intense discussions about a referendum on the independence of northern Iraq's predominantly Kurdish region, the Kurdistan Ministry of Natural Resources notes that there were no problems with the export of oil via Turkey. The statement comes against the backdrop of a fundamental reorganization of the Middle East.

The Ministry dismissed reports according to which there were political issues that had prompted a halt in the export of oil from Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan region via Turkey. A source at the Ministry told reporters that Turkey had informed the Kurdistan regional Government (KRG) that it was going to conduct planned maintenance work on the pipeline that carries the Kurdish oil exports to Turkey's Ceyhan port.

The routine maintenance was reportedly planned three months ago, and was originally was due in March, but the MNR and the state-owned Turkish company, Botas, that operates the Ceyhan pipeline agreed to “delay” the maintenance to April 10.



The Ministry noted that exports may resume as early as Wednesday and that the scheduled work is expected to take 2 – 3 days. The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region of Iraq stated on Monday that the NOC, at the same time, is taking the opportunity to repair a technical problem with the Kirkuk pipeline to minimize the disruption of the flow. Between 550,000 to 600,000 barrels of oil are exported through the Kurdistan Region-Ceyhan port in Turkey daily.

The oil business between the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq and the Turkish AKP government prompted a great deal of controversy in recent years. Syrian oil stolen by the self-proclaimed Islamic State in Syria's Deir Ez-Zor province has been “laundered” via Iraqi Kurdistan before it was pumped to Turkey to finally make it to the international markets via Ceyhan.

Antidote against propaganda-induced ignorance

This financial support of the Islamic State was boosted when the European Union, in 2013, lifted its sanctions against the import of Syrian oil, provided that it comes from “rebel-held territories”.

Ironically, in September 2014 the EU Ambassador to Iraq chastised Iran, Kurdistan and Turkey for financing the so-called Islamic State by facilitating their oil export. Turkey's

Energy Minister Taner Yildiz described such rumors as lies. Nobody appears to recall that the EU lifted its embargo on the import of Syrian oil from rebel-held territories on April 22, 2013.

EU's Ambassador to Iraq and former European Parliament MP for the Czech Republic, Jana Hybášková, addressed the EU's foreign affairs committee, chastising Iran, the Kurdish administrated region of Iraq and Turkey for "*inadvertently*" supporting the so-called Islamic State, a.k.a. ISIS/ISIL/IS by facilitating the "*terrorists*" export of oil for a net revenue of \$3 million per day.

Hybášková demanded that the European Union "*exert pressure on Iran, Kurdistan and Turkey in order to stop this trade*", adding that this wasn't the first time that Turkey had been accused of turning a blind eye to the political situation in Iraq for financial gain.

Turkey's Energy Minister Taner Yildiz, for his part, denounced allegations about Turkey's involvement in financing the Islamic State, claiming that such statements aimed at creating controversy about Turkey's politics.

Yildiz did, however, admit that Turkey is transporting oil from the Kurdish administrated region of Northern Iraq via Turkey, while the Kurdish government described Turkey as reliable partner in that regard. In fact, [the export of northern Iraqi oil via Turkey has almost doubled in 2014 and increased to 400,000 barrels per day.](#)

✖ Neither EU Ambassador to Iraq, Jana Hybášková, Turkey's Energy Minister Taner Yildiz, nor any of the mainstream media in EU and NATO member states, however, appear to recall that the EU legalized the import of Syrian oil from so-called "*rebel-held territories*".

On Monday, April 22, 2013, the 27 EU foreign ministers decided to lift the EU's embargo on the import of Syrian oil from rebel-held territories to support more economic support for the so-called Syrian opposition.

The then UK Foreign Secretary William Hague told reporters that the move aimed at laying the legal groundwork to get the flow of crude oil going as rapidly as possible reported [Yahoo News, quoting Hague as saying:](#)

"The security situation is so difficult that much of this will be difficult to do, but it is important for us to send the signal that we are open to helping in other ways, in all the ways possible."

The then [German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle commented](#) on the lift of the oil-import ban:

"We wish for good economic development in the areas controlled by the opposition, therefore we lift the sanctions which hinder the moderate opposition forces work."

The irony of EU Ambassador Hybášková, chastising Iran, Kurdistan and Turkey was palatable.

Neither the BBC, the Wall Street Journal, the New York Times, nor *the guardian* mention the

EU's lifting of the oil-import ban in 2013 in relation to the EU Ambassador's 2014 criticism of Iraq, Turkey and "Kurdistan".

Hague's words about "*helping in all ways possible*" however, were indeed ominous in more than one sense.

Not to be fooled twice ? Understand the timeline!

- [April 22, 2013, the EU lifts the ban](#) on the import of Syrian oil from rebel-held territories".
- [nsnbc warned since June 2013](#) that a major chemical weapons attack was planned to serve as pretext for a military intervention against Syria.
- [August 20, 2013, nsnbc reports that a major offensive](#) in the predominantly Kurdish and oil-rich eastern regions of Syria had begun in the attempt to conquer the Syrian oil fields in the Deir Ez Zour province and the city of Deir Ez-Zor and reiterated the risk of an imminent chemical weapons attack.
- [August 21, 2013, Liwa-al-Islam](#), under the command of the Saudi Arabian intelligence asset and chemical weapons specialist Zahran Alloush, and under direct U.S. orders, launched the chemical weapons attack on the Damascus suburb East Ghouta.
- [August 30, 2013, the BBC had to report](#) that British PM David Cameron's motion to join a U.S.-led military intervention against Syria had been rejected by the UK's parliament.
- [On August 31, U.S. President Obama](#) had to follow suit saying that he had decided to consult with Congress first, reported *the guardian*.
- [November 22 - 23, 2013, the Atlantic Council convened for an Energy Summit in Turkey's capital Ankara](#). Atlantic Council President Frederick Kempe stated before the meeting, that decisions which were about to be made in the nearest future would have a historical bearing on Iran, Turkey, the U.S. and the region, which were comparable to the historic events in 1918 and 1945.
- [June 22, 2014, nsnbc international published a report](#) after a meeting with a person from within the inner circle around the former Lebanese PM Saad Hariri. The whistleblower presented evidence in support of his statement that the invasion of Iraq by ISIL had originally been planned for 2013, but that it was called off when the UK parliament voted against bombing Syria.
- [The final green light for the invasion of Iraq via ISIL/ISIS or IS](#) was given on the sidelines of the Atlantic Council's Energy Summit in Ankara, in November 2013, he said, adding that the campaign was managed via the U.S. Embassy in Turkey and that U.S. Ambassador Ricciardone played a central role in the management of the war waged with ISIS as mercenary force that both served as friend and foe.

Note that nsnbc, already in [October 2013 reported that the agenda of the Atlantic Council's Energy Summit](#) was the distribution of Syrian and Northern Iraqi oil to the international markets and the "Balkanization" of Iraq. EU Ambassador Jana Hybášková's chastising of Iran, Kurdistan and Turkey has, as all statements in politics a function. The question is what function her statement has, especially in the light of the given, although omitted facts.

Watching recent history repeat itself



The most noteworthy recent developments are the push of the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces towards Raqqa and U.S. attempts to disrupt the Syrian Arab Army's attempt to reassert control in Deir Ez-Zor;

The U.S. cruise missile attack following an alleged chemical weapons attack;

Sustained U.S. support for the establishment of an independent Kurdish State in Northern Iraq, thus weakening the role of the federal government in Baghdad and of Iran as a regional actor;

Close U.S. cooperation with the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP); The KDP's support of KDP-I militants who have increased their armed struggle against Iranian Revolutionary Guard units in northwestern Iran since the summer of 2016.

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