

Reports of Troop Movements Near Syria's Borders

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In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

After Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced new rules of engagement, Turkey deployed missile batteries, rocket launchers, and anti-aircraft weapons close to Syria's border.

About 30 military trucks arrived in Iskenderun. From there, they moved toward Syria's border 30 miles away.

Armored military vehicles also headed for Sanliurfa and Reyhanli in Southern Turkey's Hatay Province.

On June 29, Reuters headlined ["Syrian tanks amass near Turkish border, FSA \(Free Syrian Army\) general says."](#)

According to General Mustafa al-Sheikh, Syria deployed around 170 tanks north of Aleppo within 19 miles of Turkey's border. No independent confirmation was provided.

Speaking to Reuters by phone, al-Sheikh said:

Tanks from the 17th Mechanized Division "are now at the Infantry School. They're either preparing to move to the border to counter the Turkish deployment or attack the rebellious (Syrian) towns and villages in and around the border zone north of Aleppo."

On Thursday, Turkey belligerently sent troops and weapons close to Syria's border. Damascus perhaps reacted defensively.

Expect no imminent attack by either side. Ankara won't act without orders from Washington. It hasn't come, but could given escalating violence and rhetoric.

Saber rattling suggests public opinion is being conditioned for war. On June 28, Ankara's [National Security Council](#) (MSK) said:

"Turkey will act with determination and make use of all its rights within international law

against this hostile act.”

It referred to Syria downing its aircraft. It provocatively entered its territory low and fast. Damascus was blamed for Ankara’s belligerence. Expect more provocations to follow.

Meanwhile, Mossad-connected [DEBKAF](#) (DF) headlined “Saudi forces mass on Jordanian, Iraqi borders. Turkey, Syria reinforce strength,” saying:

“(H)heavy Saudi troop movements (headed) toward the Jordanian and Iraqi borders (with Syria) overnight and up until Friday morning....after King Abdullah put the Saudi military on high alert for joining an anti-Assad offensive....”

Units include tanks, missiles, special forces and anti-air batteries. Two units were deployed. “One will safeguard Jordan’s King Abdullah against potential Syrian or Iranian reprisals from Syria or Iraq.”

“The second will cut north through Jordan to enter southeastern Syrian, where a security zone will be established around the towns of Deraa, Deir al-Zour and Abu Kemal – all centers of the anti-Assad rebellion.”

DF said Western forces reported Jordan “on war alert.”

Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and other regional states know Syria poses no threat. If confirmed, deploying Saudi troops to Syria’s border escalates tensions. It may also reflect belligerent intent.

On June 28, [Assad](#) was interviewed on Iran’s IRIB channel 4. He blamed Turkey for inciting violence. He’s hopeful military action won’t follow.

Libya’s model isn’t “a solution to be copied because it took (the country) from one situation into a much worse one. We all now see how the Libyan people are paying the price,” he said.

“The policies of the Turkish officials lead to the killing and bloodshed of the Syrian people,” he added.

He said reports about Iranian and Hezbollah forces aiding Syria are false.

“This is a joke that we hear many times in order to show that a rift has been created within the army and that therefore there is not an army.”

Pointing fingers at Washington, he said:

“The colonialist nature of the West has not changed. From the colonialist standpoint, regional countries should not move according to their national interests and if any country moves against their (Western) values and interests, they say no, like what happened in the case of Iran’s nuclear program.”

“Western states are opposed to Iran’s access to nuclear knowhow; they are more fearful of Iran’s expertise in the nuclear field than what they claim to be a nuclear bomb.”

He also called insurgents “gangs of mercenaries and criminals.” Outside forces are directing them.

For them and their sponsors, “reforms are not important, since the very forces that claimed (a lack of) reforms were the problem. They never benefited from them...all they wanted was (continued) unrest.”

He heavily criticized Arab League states. Their policies harm their own people. They supported NATO’s war on Libya.

“Syria was the only country that opposed the move and therefore we had to pay the price for this policy.”

“Consequently, immediately following our decision,” Western states “acted through the Arab League to put the attack on Syria on their agenda.”

“This has been the Arab League reality in the past, as it is at present.”

He acknowledged that Western-instigated violence ravages Syria. Thousands of ceasefire violations occurred. He has no information about planned military attacks. However, some countries “are making efforts to guide the situation toward” one.

“The West expresses support for the Annan Plan on the one hand, while on the other hand, they seek a plan to overthrow (the government).”

“This is the same double standard (approach) and political hypocrisy.”

“Westerners speak of human rights but give Israel weapons to kill Palestinians. This Western hypocrisy has not changed and will not change.”

He holds “outlaws, saboteurs and armed terrorist gangs” responsible for Syrian violence.

He'll continue confronting it responsibly.

On June 30, Hillary Clinton and Sergei Lavrov will discuss Syria in Geneva. Expect no breakthroughs. Washington wants regime change.

Moscow wants Syrians alone to decide who'll lead them. Lavrov and other Russian officials have been firm opposing foreign intervention. Expect neither side to yield on Saturday.

DF sounded an ominous warning, saying:

"The failure of (US/Russian) talks "would spell a worsening of the Syrian crisis and precipitate Western-Arab military intervention, which according to military sources in the Gulf is scheduled for launch Saturday, June 30."

Determining when DF is right or wrong isn't easy. The above comment sounds like bluster. It's also about conditioning public opinion for war. Events on the ground bear watching.

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