

Turkish Airstrikes On Kurds Complicate U.S. Operations In Iraq And Syria

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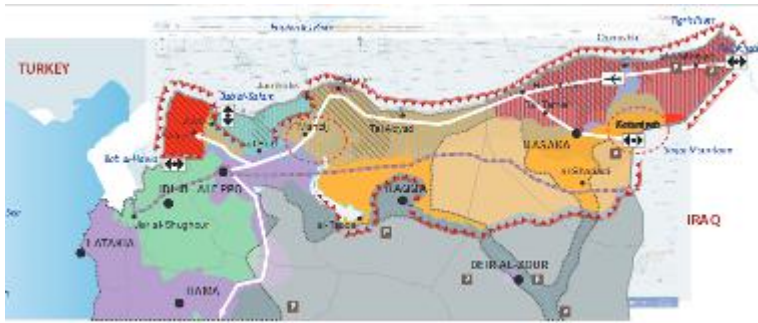
A few hour ago the Turkish airforce hit Kurdish and Yezidi positons on both sides of the Singal mountains in east-Syria and west-Iraq. Near Derik in east-Syria more than 20 bombs destroyed a YPG headquarter, a radio station and a media center. At least nine YPK fighters were killed. The YPG is the Syrian sister organization of the Kurdish PKK in Turkey. The PKK is a designated terrorist organization. Within Syria U.S. special forces are embedded with the YPG and are coordinating YPG moves against the Islamic State in Raqqa. YPK and PKK follow the anarcho-marxist theories of their leader Abdullah Öcalan who is in isolation detention in Turkey.

The Turkish airstrike in Iraq hit YPG and Peshmerga positions near Shingal where they protect a displaced person camp of [Yezidis](#). The Yezidis are an ancient religious minority. The Peshmerga are the main Kurdish militia in Iraq. They are controlled by Kurdish regional government. At least five Peshmerga fighters, all followers of Barzani clan, were killed and several more wounded. The Barzani family holds all important position in Iraq's Kurdistan – president, premier, intelligence chief and several others. Its election mandate has long run out but it simply ignores the regional parliament and rules through force and bribes. The Barzani clan is allied with Turkey and the U.S. It allows the Turkish army to operate several bases within its area. The U.S. is operating from Erbil airport in the Iraqi-Kurdish area. The oil pumped from wells in the Kurdish area is sold by the Barzanis to Turkey. The Turkish hit on Barzani fighters is deeply embarrassing for them and may incite new protest against the Barzani' quasi dictatorship.

The YPK is training Yezidi self defense forces. This is against the Barzanis' interest who sees their monopoly force in the area endangered.

Turkey is a U.S. ally and the U.S. has several bases in Turkey which it uses to fight the Islamic State. The U.S. is also allied and operates with the YPG in Syria and the Peshmerga of the Barzani clan in Iraq. The airspace in east Syria and north-west Iraq supposedly under U.S. control. There will be some serious explaining to do why the U.S. did not prevent one of its allies from bombing its other allies. Did it agree to this Turkish attack? Either way U.S. operation in the area will experience new difficulties.

Turkey has also [threatened](#) to invade the Kurdish held areas in east-Syria at Tal Abjad to move onto Raqqa and thereby split the Kurdish held areas.



Map by Winep – see [bigger picture here](#)

The primary winner of these Turkish operations is the Islamic State.

The YPK is now likely to divert forces from the U.S. led attack on the Islamic State in Raqqa to protect against further Turkish adventures. The PKK within Turkey may restart its guerrilla campaign against the Turkish military. The Barzani clan will come under renewed pressure by Kurdish people in Iraq as well as by the Iraqi government to loosen its ties with Turkey. All sides will blame the U.S. and its operations against Syria and the Islamic State.

The whole mess in Syria and Iraq thus becomes even more complicate than it already was.

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