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US Supports Kurds in Northern Syria: Turks React. Is America at War with Turkey?

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In-depth Report: SYRIA

The Operation Olive Branch in northern Syria started five days ago. Five days ago the Afrin region became a possible hotbed of a full-scale conflict between the Turkish troops aided by the armed fighters of the Free Syrian Army and the US-backed Kurdish units which had been dominating the area. The operation started with shellings and airstrikes of the Turkish artillery and AF and later grew into a full-blown invasion.

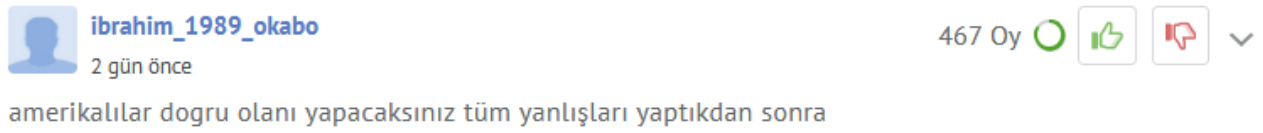
According to Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan, one of the incentives for Ankara to invade Syria was a possible threat of the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), characterized as a "terror army", which could initiate an offensive on the territory of Turkey. Quite peculiar is that this army is armed with equipment supplied by Washington, and trained by American military instructors who still may be in the ranks of the SDF.

Recently, there emerged footages showing a downed Turkish helicopter and a damaged tank both hit with shots of US-made weapons.

Obviously, this brought to the agenda a possible direct confrontation between Ankara and Washington and urged the presidents of the two countries to exchange rather harsh statements regarding the crisis (1, 2).

But what do Turks think about the conflict and the US involvement in Kurdish support? As there have been no large polls conducted yet on this topic, a short analysis of online activity may shed the light upon the current trends in the Turkish society.

One of the best examples are comment sections to news or articles about the operation. They contain an outstanding amount of aggressive comments addressed to the United States. For instance, these ones were written under the same news piece on the US warning to stop supplies to Kurdish units:



"Americans should do the right thing after all the mistakes they have done"

negan
2 gün
önce

145 Oy

Sağ kalırlarsa desteği kesersin.

"If they want to stay alive they should stop the supplies"

ipekce3435
2 gün önce

137 Oy

Ne kadar varsa gelsin gereken yapılacaktır sende gel abd

"No matter how many of you there are, come, what's needed will be done. USA, come too"

Hurriyet readers express the same point of view:

dodo'nun yorumu
25 Ocak 2018

ABD için ne Türkiye'nin ne de Suriye'nin bir önemi ve değeri yok. Onlar sadece Ortadoğu'daki çıkarlarını korumak istiyor. Son terörist temizlenene kadar mücadele devam etmeli.

"Not Turkey nor Syria matter to the US. They only want to secure their profit in the Middle East. Fight against terrorists must continue till none of them lives"

Posts on Twitter mostly represent the same negative attitude towards Washington's policy.

Ogün
@ogun_toyata

Takip et

Abd'den afrin açıklamalı üst üste geliyor. Benim anladığım pyd'den desteği çekiyormuş gibi yapıyorlar ama asla çekmeyecekler! Sivilleri vurun, pyd ye sivil giyinin v Türkiye sivilleri vurdu olarak gösterin önerisi kesinlikle abd'nin pyd de bunu düşünecek zeka yok

08:06 - 24 Oca 2018

"US statements on Afrin come one after the other. As I understood, they said they would stop supporting PYD but they never will! They dress PYD militants as civilians and make it look like Turkey kills civilian population"

ahmet avkaya
@aavkaya

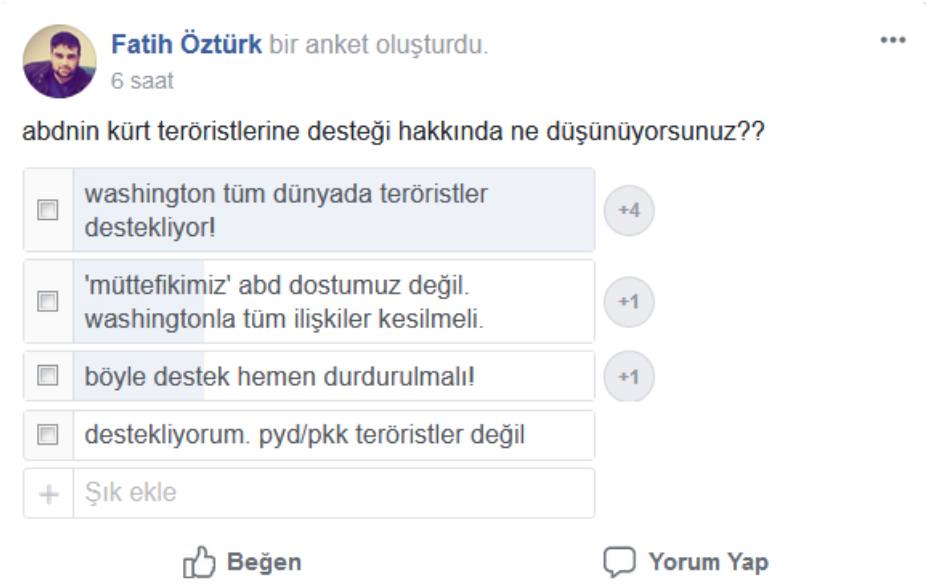
Takip et

İşte 2 yüzlü ABD,dün: Afrin operasyonuna karşıyız..Bugün: PYD Afrine giderse desteği keseriz...Hey ABD kimi kandırıyorsun.

14:47 - 23 Oca 2018

"Here is the two-faced US. Yesterday: – We are against the Afrin operation. Today: If PYD enters Afrin we'll cut the support. Hey, who are you trying to fool?"

And as for Facebook, one may come across such polls like this one:



What do you think about US aiding Kurdish terrorists?

- Washington supports terrorists all over the world!
- Our "ally" USA is not our friend. All ties with Washington must be disrupted.
- Such support must be stopped immediately!
- I support [it]. PYD/PKK are not terrorists

And they are followed by angry comments:

"A terrorist state supports terrorists"

As we can see, many Turks took quite an aggressive stance towards the US because of its Kurdish project. Nonetheless, there many who criticize Erdogan for kicking off the Olive Branch military operation and threatening the lives of quite a number of young Turks.

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