

Washington Slapdown: Turkey Turns to Moscow for Help

By [Mike Whitney](#)

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"Turkey is slowly leaving the Atlantic system. That is the reason behind this coup. That is the reason why NATO is panicking. This is much broader and much bigger than Erdogan. This is a tectonic movement. This will affect Turkish-Syrian relations, Turkish-Chinese relations, Turkish-Russian relations and Turkish-Iranian relations. This will change the world." — Yunus Soner, [Deputy Chairman Turkish Patriotic Party](#)

"It is becoming clear that the attempted putsch was not just the work of a small clique of dissatisfied officers inside the armed forces; it was rather the product of a vast conspiracy to take over the Turkish state that was decades in the making and might well have succeeded." — Patrick Cockburn, [CounterPunch](#)

On August 9, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan will meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Saint Petersburg. The two leaders will discuss political developments following the recent coup-attempt in Turkey, tourism, and the launching of Turkstream, the natural gas pipeline that will transform Turkey into southern Europe's biggest energy hub.. They are also expected to explore options for ending the fighting in Syria. Putin will insist that Erdogan make a concerted effort to stop Islamic militants from crossing back-and-forth into Syria, while Erdogan will demand that Putin do everything in his power to prevent the emergence of an independent Kurdish state on Turkey's southern border. The meeting will end with the typical smiles and handshakes accompanied by a joint statement pledging to work together peacefully to resolve regional issues and to put an end to the proxy war that has left Syria in tatters.

All in all, the confab will seem like another public relations charade devoid of any larger meaning, but that's certainly not the case. The fact is, the normalizing of relations between Russia and Turkey will foreshadow a bigger geopolitical shift that will link Ankara to Tehran, Damascus and other Russian allies across Eurasia. The alliance will alter the global chessboard in a way that eviscerates the imperial plan to control the flow of energy from Qatar to Europe, redraw the map of the Middle East and pivot to Asia. That strategy will either be decimated or suffer a severe setback. The reasons for this should be fairly obvious to anyone who can read a map. Turkey's location makes it the indispensable state, the landbridge that connects the wealth and modernity of the EU with the vast resources and growing population of Asia. That vital connecting piece of the geopolitical puzzle is gradually slipping out of Washington's orbit and into enemy territory. The July 15 coup is likely the final nail in the NWO coffin for reasons we will discuss later. Here's a clip from Eric Draitser's insightful piece titled "Erdogan's Checkmate: CIA-Backed Coup in Turkey Fails, Upsets Global Chessboard" that summarizes what's going on:

“Ultimately, the failed 2016 coup in Turkey will have lasting ramifications that will impact the years and decades ahead. With Turkey now clearly breaking with the US-NATO-EU axis, it is rather predictable that it will seek to not only mend fences with both Russia and China, but to place itself into the non-western camp typified by BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, China’s One Belt One Road strategy, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, etc.” ([“Erdogan’s Checkmate: CIA-Backed Coup in Turkey Fails, Upsets Global Chessboard”](#), Global Research)

In an earlier part of the article, Draitser correctly identifies the followers of Fethullah Gulen as the perpetrators of the coup. As he and others have pointed out, Gulen’s agents have penetrated all levels of the Turkish state and military acting as a shadow government (aka-“parallel state”) that poses a direct threat to Turkey’s national security.. Here’s journalist Patrick Cockburn making the same point in a recent article in CounterPunch:

“There is little question left that the followers of Fethullah Gulen were behind the coup attempt, despite his repeated denials. “I don’t have any doubt that the brain and backbone of the coup were the Gulenists,” says Kadri Gursel, usually a critic of the government. He adds that he is astonished by the degree to which the Gulenists were able to infiltrate and subvert the armed forces, judiciary and civil service.

...it is difficult to find anybody on the left or right who does not suspect that at some level the US was complicit in the coup attempt. Erdogan is probably convinced of this himself, despite US denials, and this will shape his foreign policy in future....

...if the coup had more successful, Turkey would have faced a full-blown military dictatorship or a civil war, or both. Erdogan said in an interview that foreign leaders who now counsel moderation would have danced for joy if he had been killed by the conspirators....” ([“After the Coup, Turkey is Being Torn Apart”](#), Patrick Cockburn, CounterPunch)

If the coup had succeeded, then it is quite likely that Erdogan would have been savagely murdered like Gadhafi while the state was plunged into a long-term civil war. This is why Erdogan has removed tens of thousands of Gulen sympathizers or operatives from their positions in the state, the media, the military and the universities. These prisoners will now be charged with supporting the coup (treason?) and could face the death penalty. Critics in the Obama administration and western media have lambasted Erdogan for violating civil liberties in his effort to rid the country of fifth columnists and traitors, but the Turkish President will have none of it. He has angrily responded saying that Washington was “taking the side of the coup leaders.”

“Now I ask”, said Erdogan, “does the West give support to terror or not? Is the West on the side of democracy or on the side of coups and terror? Unfortunately, the West gives support to terror and stands on the side of coups....We have not received the support we were expecting from our friends, neither during nor after the coup attempt.”

Erdoğan lamented that no Western leader had come to Turkey to express condolences and show solidarity with the Turkish people.” (*Hurriyet*, Turkish Daily)

He has a point, doesn’t he? While I am no fan of the autocratic and narcissistic Erdogan, it’s very suspicious that Washington is so eager to criticize and so reluctant to help. After all,

the two countries are allies, right?

And what does Erdogan want?

He wants the US to extradite Gulen (who currently lives in exile in Pennsylvania) so he can face charges of treason in Turkey.. According to Erdogan, "Documents have been sent to the U.S." establishing Gulen's guilt. But the Obama administration remains unmoved, even though Turkey has handed over terrorists to the US in the past without evidence. Apparently, sauce for the goose is not sauce for the gander.

It's worth repeating what Cockburn said in the excerpt above. He said: "it is difficult to find anybody on the left or right who does not suspect that at some level the US was complicit in the coup attempt."

Why is that? Why does everyone in Turkey -regardless of their politics or ethnicity-think the US had a hand in the coup?

Take a look at this clip from an article at the World Socialist Web Site which helps to explain:

"US claims that Washington had no advance warning of the coup are simply not credible. Turkey's Incirlik Air Base, which hosts more than 5,000 American soldiers and is the main base for the US-led bombing campaign against Syria and Iraq, was the organizing center of the putsch. Pro-coup fighter jets flew in and out of Incirlik as the coup unfolded. Shortly after the coup failed, the base commander, General Bekir Ercan Van, was arrested along with other pro-coup soldiers at the base.

Given that Incirlik is the site of dozens of US nuclear weapons, no credibility can be given to claims that US intelligence was unaware that a coup against Erdogan was being organized from there. Were that truly the case, it would represent a CIA intelligence breakdown of stunning proportions....

A pro-coup officer captured by the Turkish government, Lieutenant Colonel Murat Bolat, told the conservative Yeni Savak newspaper that his unit was designated to detain and possibly murder Erdogan after receiving precise information on Erdogan's location from US sources.

"A person in the meeting, whom I guess was an officer from the Special Forces, said, 'Nobody will be allowed to rescue the president from our hands,'" he said, indicating that this meant Erdogan was to be shot after he was captured if the forces who had arrested him faced any counterattack." ("[Erdogan accuses US of supporting failed coup in Turkey](#)", World Socialist Web Site)

While the information is not conclusive, it is suspicious. At the very least, Washington knew a coup was being planned and looked the other way. This except from a post by Harvard professor, Dani Rodrik seems like a very plausible explanation of US involvement to me. Here's a brief clip:

"The U.S. government may not have had a direct hand in Gulen's activities, but it is more difficult to dismiss the argument that it provided tacit support - or that some parts of the U.S. administration prevailed on other parts who were less keen on Gulen.

...As the Wikileaks cables I referred to above make clear, the State

Department, at least, has been well aware of Gulenist infiltration of the Turkish military for quite some time. The Gulenists's role in Sledgehammer, which led to the discharge of many of the most Kemalist/secularist officers in the military is equally clear. Beyond Sledgehammer, the Gulenists' wide range of clandestine operations against opponents in Turkey must be well known to American intelligence.....

...the head of the Turkish military, who was held hostage by the putschists during the coup attempt, has said that one of his captors offered to put him in touch with Gulen directly. This, on its own, is prima facie evidence of Gulen's involvement, and likely passes the "probable cause" test that is required for extradition. Incredibly, administration officials are still quoted as saying "there is no credible evidence of Mr. Gulen's personal involvement." In other words, these officials must think that the army chief of their NATO ally is lying." ("[Is the U.S. behind Fethullah Gulen?](#)", Dani Rodrik's Blog)

The Obama administration's support for the Kurds in Syria as well as its behavior following the coup of July 15, has led to a dramatic deterioration in US-Turkey relations. This will undoubtedly effect Erdogan's willingness to allow the US to use its airbases for conducting bombing raids in Syria in the future. It's also bound to accelerate the pace at which Turkey strengthens relations with Russia, Iran and others as it will need the protection of new allies to better defend itself against threats from the west.

The Obama administration is still uncertain of how to proceed mainly because no one had expected that Erdogan would break with Washington, purge his enemies, pursue rapprochement with Moscow, Tehran and Damascus, and throw a wrench in Uncle Sam's plan for redrawing the map of the Middle East. At present, the administration is trying to ease tensions by dispatching one high-ranking official after the other to persuade Erdogan that the US was not involved in the coup. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joseph Dunford visited Ankara just this week while Secretary of State John Kerry and Vice President Joe Biden are scheduled for later in the month. Eventually, even Obama will be asked to make the trek. No effort will be spared to bring Erdogan back into the fold.

If, however, the charm offensive fails, as I expect it will, Erdogan will be crucified in the western media (Hitler Erdogan) while covert operatives and NGOs try to foment political instability. At least, that's the way things normally play out.

Mike Whitney lives in Washington state. He is a contributor to [Hopeless: Barack Obama and the Politics of Illusion](#) (AK Press). Hopeless is also available in a [Kindle edition](#). He can be reached at fergiewhitney@msn.com.

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