

The Turkish Offensive in North Syria: The Syrian Opposition justification

A hard day's fighting followed by a few hours on social media telling people why the Syrian National Army (SNA) is involved in the Turkish military operation against the Kurdish militias in north of Syria, just another working day for Aboyazan.

"Kurdish Militias are stabbing the Syrian people in the back" is one of the reasons why the (SNA) is involved in this operation according to First Lieutenant Aboyazan. People in Syria say that the Turkish justifications for the military operation against the Kurdish militias in northern Syria is to protect Turkey's borders and national security. Also, to deter Kurds from establishing a state threatens Turkey's interests in the region. But others wonder, what are the Syrian opposition's justifications and more specific the (SNA) for being involved in such a military campaign not against the Assad Regime.

Syria has become a cake, shared by the major power countries in the region. What led to this scenario was the signing of Astana conference in May 2017 by Assad Regime backers Russia and Iran, and the Syrian opposition's ally Turkey in the Kazakhstani capital. This convention led to form four so-called de-escalation zones which no longer exist except Idlib Province and north eastern parts of Latakia Province after Assad Regime and its allies took over in Eastern Ghouta in the Northern Damascus Countryside, Northern Homs Province, and parts of Deraa and Quneitra provinces in southern Syria. Recently, the sudden Washington's withdrawal of the American troops based in Ras Al-Ain and Tal-Abyad in northern Syria on the 7th of October has been very harsh on the Kurdish militias in the north-eastern swath of Syria. This movement meant abandoning the Kurds by their close Ally the United States. Thus Turkey is to unleash its Military machine against the Kurds after the green light has been given to it to claim the region that is beneficial to it.

In one hand, the goals of this military move according to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's tweet is to remove "the terrorist corridor" as he described it which the Kurdish militias are seeking to establish on the southern borders of Turkey. In the other hand, Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) issued a statement on Monday the 7th of October condemning Washington's troops withdrawal, "The Turkish military operation in northern and eastern Syria will have a great negative impact on our war against ISIS, and will destroy all the stability achieved during the past years." In the same statement, SDF called for support to confront the Turkish offensive: "We in the SDF will not hesitate for a moment to defend ourselves, and we call on our people, Arabs, Kurds, Syrians, Assyrians, to join our ranks and stand with their legitimate forces to defend our nation from this Turkish aggression." Whereas the Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Faisal al-Miqdad was quoted by Alwatan Newspaper as Referring to the Kurds: "Syria will not accept any occupation of any land, and anyone throws themselves in the arms of a foreigner, that foreigner will throw them eventually with disgust."

The 9th of October Turkey commenced its military campaign on the northern territories of Syria where the Kurds' stronghold. The offensive were launched by Turkish forces and Turkish backed Syrian opposition factions, mainly the Syrian National Army. Speaking to one of the field commanders in the SNA participating in the operation, First Lieutenant Aboyazan. He revealed that the main objectives of this military campaign is to expand the "liberated territories" and to stop them from collaborating with the Assad Regime indirectly.

"Ending their project of establishing an independent state within a state and the most important thing is to get refugees of Arabs, Kurds and various sects settled in this area" he said. It's worth mentioning that a part of these refugees that he was talking about might be the people who were displaced from areas in Northern Hama Province. That came after invading these areas by the Syrian Army backed by Russian air forces, despite many Turkish observation points were located around northern Hama to maintain the de-escalation zone's stability. "The Turkish state will not give up the Syrian people

because it helps them out of its humanity... As for its military bases in Hamah, until this moment, they still in their positions” he said.

He emphasised that a large number of Kurds in the (SNA) fighting the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). “Kurdish people’s rights is preserved and exist like any other sects in Syria. However, the Assad Regime is the one who planted the Kurdish terrorist parties; PKK and PYD to weaken the Syrian revolution. Assad Regime has supplied the Kurdish parties with weapons to create sedition between the Kurds and the rest of the sects” he said.

Osama Ali; Syrian Activist, said that in the beginning, Assad Regime unleashed the Kurdish militias to control areas in north Syria along with the Syrian security centres, trying to silence any Kurdish voice demanding the “overthrow of Assad”. Thus, chasing activists and politicians, arresting kidnapping, and assassinating them took place in an attempt to kidnap the revolutionary movement. He added that even dissidents of the Syrian Army in Kurds-controlled territories turned missing.

“The Kurdish militias were the first who stabbed the Syrian revolution in Raqqa, Hasaka and Aleppo, and at some point they were preparing to participate with the Russians and the Assad Regime in a massive offensive against Idlib” Ali Said.

Ali agrees with commander Aboyazan on the SNA’s justifications for being at the front line against the Kurdish militias. He said that the factions of the SNA are very eager to fight the “separatists”, “terrorists” and “anti-Syrian Revolution” parties. Because of the convergence of interests with their ally Turkey also to return occupied lands, mostly to Arab inhabitants after their displacement by the Kurdish militias.

The 17th of October a ceasefire was declared by the Turkish President Erdogan and the American Vice President Mike Pence after their meeting in Turkey. Eight days of constant fighting resulted to capture Ras Al-Ain, Tal Abyad, and Ain-Issa, by the SNA and the Turkish forces. James Jeffrey, the US Special Envoy for Syria said “The Turkish army has seized a great deal of territory in a very short period of time” CNN reported.

Regarding the Safe Zone’s fate after the military operation completed. President Erdogan said: "By our safe zone, we will ensure that Syrian refugees return home." Aboyazan Said that the Syrian National Army is fully involved in this campaign and it will for sure takeover of control once it accomplishes its missions. And as there’s no further details of how the Safe Zone is going to be ruled and controlled, and by whom. But what known is that Turkey is planning to push Kurdish militias 30 kilometres away from the Syrian-Turkish borders. All official statements refer preparing the Safe zone to receive refugees fleeing internally in Syria and others externally the President Erdogan talked about, who are in Turkey. According to Aljazeera, President Erdogan said that the offensive is aimed at removing Kurdish-led forces from the border area and creating a "safe zone" so millions of Syrian refugees can be repatriated.