Turkish mobster Peker extends accusations to NATO's Syria, Libya wars

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Far-right mobster Sedat Peker's videos making detailed allegations of ties between the mafia and the Turkish political establishment continue to shake President Recep Tayyip Erdo?an's Justice and Development Party (AKP) government.

His latest videos have raised Turkish involvement in US-led wars in the Middle East and North Africa and the AKP's resulting conflicts with its NATO imperialist "allies." With nearly 80 million views, Peker's videos focus on conflicts within the Turkish state apparatus and Erdo?an's closest circle.

Peker, who has not directly targeted Erdo?an but only his associates, recently stated he will address Erdo?an directly in his next video: "Our President, brother Tayyip, called me an international conspiracy without saying my name. When did we meet, when did we face, I will explain this in the next video. You are our big brother. We will say our goodbyes."

He said he would issue this video after Erdo?an's June 14 meeting with US President Joe Biden, pointing to the international nature of the campaign he is waging.

Amid a deepening economic crisis and growing social anger exacerbated by the homicidal response to the pandemic, Peker's allegations are undermining Erdo?an and the AKP. Their impact finally forced Erdo?an, who has been silent for weeks, to issue a statement defending Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu. Erdo?an described Peker's accusations as part of an international conspiracy to overthrow his government.

Speaking at the end of May, Erdo?an declared: "We have stood with our Interior Minister [Soylu] in his fight with criminal and terrorist groups; we are and will be standing with him." He said: "These are organized by international organizations under various names," and added, "We bring these criminals to our country and hand them over to the court."

After opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) leader Kemal K?l?çdaro?lu said Tuesday that "The third partner of the People's Alliance [between AKP and its far-right ally, Nationalist Movement Party, MHP] is the mafia," Erdo?an attacked the opposition parties, claiming that they are relying upon Peker's "slanders."

In a May 25 TV appearance, Soylu said: "I am not the subject, the target is Turkey. Their allegations and slanders are completely empty, but they are targeting the state." He linked this alleged operation to conflicts between Ankara's interests and US wars in the Middle East.

He said: "Today, there is an attempt to establish a state in northern Syria. US bases in Syria increased from 6 to 14 in 2020 and 2021. There is also an economic attack against Turkey. [They want to see] Turkey fall into the position of countries such as Syria, Lebanon and Iraq. 17-25 December [corruption scandal], 6-7 October [Kobane protests in Turkey], and [the NATO-backed coup attempt on] 15 July [in 2016] … In all these, Turkey is subjected to an operation."

Peker released a video last Saturday on a Facetime conversation with Serdar Ek?i, the husband of Erdo?an's niece, discussing arms deliveries to Al Qaeda-linked Islamist militias in Syria. During a friendly video call, Ek?i said he met with "Pelikanists" and asked Peker not to make any further statements on this group. The "Pelikanists" are described as a faction within the AKP, including Erdo?an's son-in-law and former Finance Minister Berat Albayrak.

In his eighth video, Peker discussed alleged Turkish arms deliveries to Al Nusra, the Al Qaeda branch in Syria backed by the NATO powers and Gulf monarchies.

It is an undeniable fact that in the war in Syria, NATO-backed Islamist groups are armed and financed by the CIA, the Gulf monarchies and Turkey. It is also known that the CIA and the Turkish National Intelligence Agency (M?T) sent weapons by truck. In 2014, amid deep

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conflicts within the Turkish ruling class, a Gendarmerie operation seized trucks allegedly belonging to the M?T. In his statement, Peker claims that after the M?T trucks were exposed, he prepared a project to send "UAVs, clothes, radios, steel vests—but they are too many in number, enough for all the fighters there.

"We talked the project with a deputy friend. He conveyed this idea to the necessary officials. And then they said, 'We can give you additional trucks and they can go together with your trucks,'" he said, before adding: "We were sending all the equipment. But other vehicles were going [to Syria] under my name. We thought that these were going to Turkmens in other places. We didn't know what was inside them. I mean, there were weapons."

Peker claimed only that this operation was not organized by the M?T but by SADAT. Founded in 2012, International Defense Consulting Construction Industry and Trade Inc. (SADAT) defines itself as "a company that provides consultancy and military training in the field of defense." It is rumored to conduct operations in many regions in the interests of the Turkish state.

SADAT conducts military advisory activities in at least 22 Muslim countries, according to the French Intelligence Research Center think tank. There are also allegations that SADAT has supported the forces fighting against French- and Russian-backed Khalifa Haftar in Libya. The Russian Federal News Agency claimed that SADAT teams took Free Syrian Army militias to Libya to fight Haftar's forces. SADAT founder Adnan Tanr?verdi became one of Erdo?an's most prominent advisors after the 2016 NATO coup in Turkey.

Peker also alleged that the resignation of Fayez al-Sarraj, the prime minister of the Turkish-backed Government of National Reconciliation in Libya, was caused by anger in Libyan business circles at tenders given to Turkish companies. "Our President told him [Sarraj], 'Let these tenders be given to these and such companies.' Then he [Sarraj] resigned, everyone asked why he resigned, I didn't know either. I just learned it."

Early last year, Turkey sent soldiers and Islamist rebels to support Sarraj's Tripoli-based Government of National Accord (GNA). Haftar's Libyan National Army, on the other hand, was supported by Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Russia, France and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), where Peker reportedly lives. Such conflicts over oil and strategic advantage in Libya and the eastern Mediterranean have repeatedly caused explosive standoffs between French and Turkish ships in the region.

NATO wars in Syria and Libya led to an ongoing conflict between Ankara and its imperialist allies, as well as the ongoing conflicts within the Turkish ruling class.

The moves by Washington and the other major imperialist powers to abandon Islamist militias and adopt Kurdish nationalist militias as their main proxy force inside Syria provoked a bitter conflict with the AKP government. This disagreement culminated in the NATO-backed coup attempt in 2016, as Erdo?an's government established closer relations with China and Russia, the main rivals of the United States.

Just several weeks after the failed NATO-backed coup attempt to topple Erdo?an, he ordered the first Turkish invasion of Syria, Operation Euphrates Shield, targeting US-backed Kurdish nationalist People's Protection Units (YGP) forces. This was followed by several Turkish military operations to smash the Kurdish-led proto-state there and chase YPG militias linked to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) out of the region.

Peker's allegations cannot be separated from the 30-year imperialist war and the destruction in the Middle East in which the entire Turkish political establishment is complicit. As the *World Socialist Web Site* explained, Peker is not speaking as a friend of the working class. The decisive question is the independent and international mobilization of the working class against imperialism and all factions of the bourgeoisie.

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