

Erdo?an to meet with Trump, Turkey and Egypt's tensions with Israel intensify

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Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdo?an will be hosted by US President Donald Trump at the White House on Thursday, during his visit to the United States to attend the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

In a statement, Erdo?an said, “Our meeting with Trump concerns the region; every step taken in the Middle East is of vital importance to us.” Trump stated on the Truth Social platform, “We are working on many Trade and Military Deals with the President, including the large-scale purchase of Boeing aircraft, a major F-16 Deal, and a continuation of the F-35 talks, which we expect to conclude positively. President Erdo?an and I have always had a very good relationship. I look forward to seeing him on the 25th!”

Under intense government pressure through the judiciary, Republican People's Party (CHP) leader Özgür Özel claimed a few days ago that Erdo?an had held a secret meeting with Trump's son at his office in Istanbul, that a promise to order Boeing aircraft had been made so that Erdo?an could meet with Trump, and that Palestinians in Gaza had been abandoned to their fate in order to get along with the US President. The meeting was later confirmed.

On Monday, Özel made the following appeal to Erdo?an: “If he [Erdo?an] is going to [the US] in order to stop the bloodshed in Gaza, I would see him off. He is feeding off Trump to gain support for the anti-democratic process in Turkey and remaining silent about the persecution. He shouldn't place a Boeing order live on air; he should say this to Trump: ‘How can you call Netanyahu a hero? He's genocidal.’ Then when he comes to Ankara, I'll welcome him! Let's see if he dares to challenge Trump. Özgür Özel will welcome Erdo?an at Esenbo?a Airport and shake his hand. Come on, bring it on!”

Erdo?an government has been complicit in the Zionist regime's genocide against Palestinians by continuing trade with Israel “through Palestine,” mediating for oil flows from Azerbaijan to Israel, permitting the use of US bases in Turkey for Israel's benefit, and through other means. However, the struggle against this cannot be led by the CHP. Despite rhetorical criticisms, the CHP, in line with the

reactionary interests of the Turkish bourgeoisie, supports the military-strategic alliance with US and NATO imperialism—the forces behind the genocide.

The Erdo?an-Trump meeting coincides with a period of escalating rivalry and dispute between Ankara and Tel Aviv. Tensions between Turkey and Israel increased after Israel's attack on Hamas negotiators in the Qatari capital of Doha. This illegal attack by Israel fuelled speculation that Hamas officials in Turkey, which does not view Hamas as a terrorist organization, could also be targeted.

The dispute and rivalry between these two allies of US imperialism in the region primarily concerns their shares in the carve up of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. Ankara, like Tel Aviv, supports Washington's drive for complete dominance in the Middle East, but it is concerned that Israel's growing influence in the region, including in Cyprus and Syria, and the outbreak of a large-scale war with Iran, would harm the interests of the Turkish bourgeoisie.

Speaking to Egypt's *MBC Masr* channel, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said, “Israel has calculated all risks and turned regional expansion into a policy that goes beyond the Palestinian issue... Adopting such an expansionist policy as a strategy in the name of security is dangerous for everyone.”

Fidan responded by saying that Turkey should cooperate with countries such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt on “military defence,” meaning developing their war capabilities. In this context, it was announced that, in a significant development, the Turkish and Egyptian navies would conduct their first joint military exercise in the Eastern Mediterranean in 13 years, from September 22 to 26.

Tensions are rising between Egypt's military dictator Abdel Fattah el-Sisi regime and the Netanyahu regime, in whose crimes it is complicit. Egypt's ruling elite are sounding the alarm bells over the possibility of Israel driving Palestinians from Gaza into Egypt. According to an article in *The National News*, al-Sisi described Israel as an “enemy” in his speech at the Arab-Islamic summit in Qatar and

warned that “the 1979 peace treaty between them would be annulled if the current situation continued.”

According to the article, sources consider the possibility of war between Israel and Egypt to be low. However, the Sinai Peninsula, where Egypt has been building up its military presence, including China’s latest HQ-9B air defence system, was the scene of four wars with Israel between 1948 and 1973.

This escalation in the Eastern Mediterranean, which has large energy reserves, has also affected Cyprus. According to Anadolu Agency, sources from the Turkish Ministry of National Defense announced that the Ministry is monitoring the “ongoing armament efforts” of the European Union member the Cyprus Republic and reports it has “procured an Air Defense System from Israel.”

The northern part of the island, which was effectively divided in two by the 1974 military coup and Turkey’s military operation, is home to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), which is only recognized by Ankara.

The struggle for influence in Syria continues to be the most significant flashpoint between Turkey and Israel. Last December, the rise to power of the US and Turkey-backed and Al-Qaeda-rooted Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) further heightened tensions between Ankara and Tel Aviv, which occupy northern and southern Syria, respectively.

Ankara has declared that the emergence of a US-Israel-backed Kurdish state on its southern border is a red line, while Tel Aviv is seeking to increase its influence by promoting the autonomy of minorities such as the Druze and Kurds in Syria’s new regime.

Ankara is attempting to use its influence over the HTS regime and is proposing the establishment of a “Turkish-Kurdish-Arab” alliance through an agreement with Abdullah Öcalan, the imprisoned leader of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK). This is not cast as an initiative against US plans but put forward as an alternative that is compatible with them.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu recently emphasized that he has no intention of withdrawing from the Golan Heights, stating, “We are discussing with Syria a security arrangement in which they demilitarize southwestern Syria.” HTS leader Abu Muhammad al-Colani (Ahmed al-Shara), who travelled to Washington for the UN meeting, is expected to discuss this security agreement with Trump.

As the “integration agreement” between HTS and the PKK’s Kurdish allies (Syrian Democratic Forces, SDF) in March reached an impasse, recent reports indicate that HTS and SDF forces have again come face to face. Ankara has threatened military intervention if the SDF, which it has

called on not to be “Israel’s tool in Syria,” does not end its autonomous political and military structure and join the new Damascus regime.

Amid the Syrian regime-change war, launched in 2011 and supported by Ankara, the SDG became the US’s primary proxy force, one of a series of growing tensions between Ankara and Washington.

Tensions peaked with the failed NATO-backed coup attempt to overthrow Erdoğan on July 15, 2016. At that time, Erdoğan first made agreements with China, and then, after the coup attempt, with Russia to purchase air defence systems. Although the agreement with China was cancelled before the coup, S-400 air defence systems were purchased from Russia and brought to Turkey. This led to Washington imposing a series of sanctions, including Turkey’s removal from the F-35 program.

Devlet Bahçeli, leader of the fascist Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), which formed a close alliance with Erdoğan after the 2016 coup attempt, made an unprecedented statement last Thursday: “The most appropriate option for the world, in the face of the US-Israel evil coalition that challenges the world, is to build and revive the ‘TRC’ alliance, which is in line with reason, diplomacy, the spirit of politics, geographical conditions, and the strategic environment of the new century. It is our desire and recommendation that the TRC alliance be composed of Turkey, Russia, and China.”

In the US, when asked about Bahçeli’s statement, Erdoğan dismissed the issue by saying, “To be honest, I didn’t quite follow it.”

Both the statement by Bahçeli, leader of the MHP, which has strong historical ties to the US and NATO, and Özel’s accusations against Erdoğan indicate that the imperialist war in the Middle East has deepened the political crisis within Turkey’s government and establishment parties. However, these right-wing bourgeois parties are inherently incapable of providing a progressive response to this crisis.

The struggle against war, genocide, and imperialism cannot be waged except by the working class and targeting the capitalist system. The Socialist Equality Party appeals to the international working class, the only social force capable of ending genocide and imperialist war and attempts to mobilise workers for the struggle for political power by putting forward a socialist programme.



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