

Turkey Plans New Military Operation in Syria in A 'Few Days': Erdogan

ISTANBUL - Turkey will start a new military operation in Syria east of the Euphrates river "in a few days", President Tayyip Erdogan said on Wednesday, a move that could further complicate relations with the United States.

Ankara and Washington have long been at odds over Syria, where the United States has backed the YPG Kurdish militia in the fight against Islamic State insurgents. Turkey says the YPG is a ter-

rorist organization and an extension of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which has waged an insurgency against the state in southeastern Turkey for 34 years. Turkey has already intervened to sweep YPG fighters from territory west of the Euphrates in military campaigns over the past two years, but up until now, it had not gone east of the river - partly to avoid direct confrontation with U.S. forces. (Reuters)

(1) Security Council...

Afghan-owned peace process, with full and meaningful participation of women."

The Geneva Conference on Afghanistan was attended by delegations from 61 countries and 35 international organizations, representatives of civil society, the private sector and the media.

UN Secretary-General's special representative Tadamichi Yamamoto has said the gathering was likely the first international meeting on Afghanistan when issues of "peace have been taken up with such weight." (Xinhua)

(2) Political Party...

recognition and adhering to principles of an Islamic republic system," said Nabil, who read the statement at the press conference.

"A long-term ceasefire shall come into effect during the peace talks," he added. "Furthermore, the peace treaty with the Taliban shall stipulate the disarmament of private armed groups and there should be a timeline for it."

"Peace with the Taliban must not compromise the achievements made in political, legal, social, cultural and economic fronts over the past 17 years," Spanta said.

Achieving a national consensus in peace talks and role of regional countries in the process are among the top priorities that, according to members of the party, should be addressed in the peace process.

"Taliban who participated in the peace talks must represent a unified leadership and group so that the Afghan people are assured that once the peace is ensured, they will no longer continue armed struggles against the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan," said Spanta. Spanta meanwhile talked about a possible participation of the party in the upcoming presidential elections.

"We believe that Mr. Nabil is one of the most suitable candidates and if it the party will take part in the elections, it will have its suitable candidate (for the presidential elections)," said Spanta member of the party.

Other parts of the statement reads that the role of women should not be ignored in the peace process and in government's structure. It adds that there is a need for regional consensus to ensure a lasting peace in Afghanistan.

The statement says that peace shall not compromise the independence and freedom of the country and that it should respect the national sovereignty so that a dignified peace is ensured in Afghanistan.

"Any peace agreement shall be binding in national, regional and international levels," the statement says. "Peace with the Taliban shall enjoy the support of all countries and international organizations." It also mentions that peace with the Taliban should not pose a threat to political parties, groups, social and civil organizations. (Tolonews)

(3) Iran Denies...

chief told reporters. It appears both officials were speaking about the same event.

It is not the first time that Afghan officials are attributing discovered

ammunition and weapons to the Islamic Republic. Local Afghan officials have often accused Iran of supplying arms to the Taliban, but they have rarely produced the evidence.

Earlier, Pentagon and the U.S. State Department had gone all out on November 29, to show that Iran is breaking United Nations resolutions by aggressively sending arms to rebel groups in the region.

The collection of weapons on display included pieces of what the Pentagon said were Iranian weapons transferred to militants in Yemen and Afghanistan. He also pointed out "Iran's relentless commitment to put more weapons into the hands of even more of its proxies regardless of the sufferings."

However, Tehran has repeatedly denied that it is supporting ultra-conservative Sunni group, Taliban, in Afghanistan. (RFE/RL)

(4) Our View on...

the Islamic State's presence in Afghanistan a constant threat to Pakistan, saying to region at large faced serious challenges and resolving the Afghanistan issue was key to lasting peace.

Janjua accused India of holding the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) hostage and becoming a hurdle in the way of hosting the grouping's summit in Pakistan.

She claimed the view of Pakistan on Afghanistan had been vindicated with the United States finally understanding that the road to peace lay through negotiations with all stakeholders. (Pajhwok)

(5) Investors to...

Herat chamber of commerce and industries appreciated the government's efforts at reducing land prices to encourage investors.

Hamidullah Khadim, head of the Herat chamber of commerce and industries, said that an assessment to identify requirements of investors at the Herat Industrial Park was underway.

"This process has recently begun and we are optimistic about a fair distribution of land in the park," he added.

According to Herat officials, there are around 500 factories in three phases of the Herat Industrial Park, but 320 of them are currently operating. (Pajhwok)

(6) Women Meet to...

and Promote Musharikat will support them in their advocacy work. She highlighted the vision and four objectives (see attachment) coming out of the two days and noted, "The Musharikat Women in Peace Process Coalition is a positive step towards women being heard". (PR)

(7) Health Situation...

significantly decreased, Besselink added.

"In principle, MSF talks to everyone. If you want to be present in a region, you need to negotiate with everyone. All parties to the conflict need to understand who you are..."

Te MSF did not receive any support from the Afghan government but coordinated its actions with Kabul, which did not prevent the

'A Very Uncivil War': Britain's Conservatives on the Brink Over Brexit

LONDON - The divorce deal British Prime Minister Theresa May agreed with the European Union after months of tortuous negotiations was meant to unite her ruling Conservative Party over Brexit.

But a month later, rifts over Europe run so deep lawmakers have triggered a leadership contest that some members fear could tear apart a centuries-old institution that has

produced prime ministers such as Winston Churchill and Margaret Thatcher. Divisions over how close Britain should be tied to Europe contributed to the downfall of May's three predecessors: David Cameron, John Major and Thatcher. May will become the next victim if a simple majority of her lawmakers move against her in a confidence vote on her leadership on Wednes-

day evening. While a party split may still seem a distant option, former Conservative party leader William Hague and former attorney general Dominic Grieve have both raised the specter of an end to the Conservative Party in its current form.

With her job on the line, May too appealed on Wednesday for an end to the bitter Conservative infighting. (Reuters)

mission from acting independently, he concluded. (Pajhwok)

(8) First Export...

facilities for the business community to export their products through such routes.

Afghanistan was expected to export the first shipment on December 7.

The Afghan products are expected to be sent through Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Georgia to Turkey and onwards to European markets.

"This Thursday, the first shipment of our products will be exported through the Lapis Lazuli Route to Turkey in the presence of high-level officials from the government and delegations from member nations," said Hassan Soroosh, Acting Director General for Economic Cooperation of MoFA.

"We expect this will not only be symbolic, but on a permanent basis. We should have the opportunity to export our fruit and minerals through the route to overcome our dependency on others," said Khan Jan Alokzay, deputy head of ACCI.

Based on statistics, the first shipment will include more than 175 tons of cotton, dried fruit and sesame, which will be exported through the route within the frame of TIR Carnet.

The Lapis Lazuli Route agreement was signed in October last year between Afghanistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Georgia and once implemented will become a key international trade and transport corridor to connect Afghanistan with Europe directly. The Lapis Lazuli Route will begin in Afghanistan's northern Aqina port in Faryab province and Torghandi in western Herat province and will run through to Turkmenbashi in Turkmenistan.

From there it will cross the Caspian Sea and will link the Azerbaijani capital Baku to Tbilisi and Georgia's Black Sea ports of Batumi and Poti.

It will then connect with Kars in eastern Turkey before linking to Istanbul and Europe.

The Lapis Lazuli Route agreement was finalized after three years of talks and was signed during the 7th Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA VII) in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. (Tolo news)

(9) Afghan Refugees...

of Prime Minister Imran Khan to provide citizenship to children of refugees was laudable, but he backtracked on it..."

A comprehensive parliamentary debate on the issue of refugees was essential to bring in a law filling the vacuum, Babar proposed. "This is a humanitarian issue and should not be politicized."

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government spokesman Ajmal Wazir said steps were being taken to address the issue of Afghan refugees. Recommendations and suggestions for making a proper policy would be welcomed, he added. (Pajhwok)

(10) IWA, MEC...

paid \$1.7 billion in bribes this year. The IWA survey said most of the corruption happened in the judi-

ciary, the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Attorney General Office, police, municipality, Parliament and less corruption at schools, universities, hospitals, the Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Directorate of Security (NDS).

However, Apex Court spokesman Amanullah Eman along with MoE and MoMP spokespersons rejected the IWA report and said the figures provided in the survey were unclear and misleading.

"The IWA anti-corruption survey is unjust, unprofessional and there is no mention of our achievements. We don't know on which basis the survey was conducted. We call it incomplete, unprofessional and absurd," said Eman.

He said in the past four years, 341 judges and prosecutors had been arrested over alleged corruption and their cases were being investigated by the authorities concerned.

He said 280 cases had been addressed during the period and 400 others had been entered into the database, a process still ongoing.

Nooria Nazhat, MoE spokesperson, said the IWA survey was inaccurate as it had no mention of the ministry. She said the interviewed persons did not have complete information regarding the MoE.

Nazhat said the MoE was fighting corruption within as a priority and had huge achievements in this regard.

Abdul Qadir Mustafa, MoMP spokesman, said the ministry was working on 'a strong' reform agenda. He rejected the MEC report and complained it carried no mention of the ministry's achievements. (Pajhwok)

(11) Afghan Air...

Warrior light attack helicopters for nighttime strikes in the near future, Defense Ministry spokesman Ghafoor Ahmed Jawed told Stars and Stripes. "We want to continue this. It is really important because now we have a problem supporting our ground forces, and if we improve our capabilities, casualties will decrease," Jawed said.

Last week, the incoming commander of U.S. Central Command, Lt. Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, told the Senate Armed Services Committee that the high casualties suffered by government forces were not sustainable. That assessment came after Defense Minister Gen. Tariq Shah told parliament in September that the previous month was the deadliest ever for local forces, with over 500 soldiers killed. Shah said a major factor was that ground forces were not being backed up by air support at night. Despite billions of dollars spent by Washington to strengthen Afghanistan's air force, the country's military still relies heavily on U.S. airpower. This year, U.S. forces dropped more munitions in Afghanistan than any other year in over a decade.

Efforts to boost the Afghans' air capabilities have been going on for more than a decade. But coalition officials say it will likely take years before the service is

self-sufficient. (Monitoring Desk)

(12) Daikundi...

was growing in my womb but no one knew its gender and a few months later the time came to go to hospital for delivery with my husband and mother-in-law, but he told me he would divorce me and will not take another baby girl."

"I was in pain ahead of the delivery and the words I heard from my husband were more painful, I thought with myself my family would leave me if I give birth to a girl, my anxiety caused the delivery to delay, I went through pains for two days, but I could not give birth," she said.

Her anxiety caused the birth to be done through c-section. "When I came into senses, I saw a beautiful baby on my side, I was alone and realized it is a girl, I was still praying that the baby is a boy, but unfortunately she was a girl," She said that hours passed after her delivery but no one from her family including her husband could be found around. "People walking around would mock at me, telling that this baby is fatherless because no one is around her," she said.

"I was crying and asking help from God when suddenly the mother of my husband appeared, she told me to stand up and go home, she was very angry like I had committed an unforgiveable crime," Jamila added.

"When I arrived home, my husband was not talking to me. After many days passed, he told me to be prepared for his second wife, I told him not to divorce me, I will give birth to a boy next time, if I could not then he can divorce me, my husband accepted and waited for the next baby," Jamila said.

"I don't know what was God's will, but I gave birth to a baby girl for the third time and before I could return home from hospital, my husband married a second wife and divorced me. He told me I should take my daughters with myself and he no longer needs me and my daughters, I had no way but to leave and go to my father's home."

Her father was treating her well initially but later his behavior changed. "I understood that I was a burden on my father. I was obligated to find a job and feed my children, currently I serve as a teacher in a school," she said. (Pajhwok)

(13) Afghanistan's...

and promotion section this year. Hamdullah Hamdard, secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, said the government was paying attention to the promotion of wheat, rice, pistachio, almond, grapes, vegetables and pomegranate cultivation in the country.

He said Afghanistan has a high agriculture capacity and could export a large amount of agricultural products.

He added the lack of cold storages; reservoirs for agriculture products, lack of canalization, traditional irrigation system were among problems, hampering the agriculture sector's growth. (Pajhwok)