



Turkey's Double Standard on Terrorism:

Accuses BBC of supporting PKK, backs other groups from China, Russia and US

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September 2015

Abstract

Turkey appears to have a double standard when it comes to terrorism. On 21 August, Turkey accused BBC of supporting terrorists after airing a report on why Kurdish and Yazidi women join PKK to fight ISIS. At the same time, Turkey is supporting other countries' designated terrorist groups: Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, ETIM/TIP, Al Nusra, and other Al Qaeda affiliates that are listed by China, Russia, US/EU, Israel, Egypt and other Arab Gulf states, among others. Going beyond airing a documentary, Ankara has provided material support for these groups, which provoked Israel to lodge a formal complaint to NATO as well as rebuke from Germany regarding Ankara's hopes for EU membership.

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Analysis

On 21 August, Turkey accused BBC of supporting terrorism¹ after airing a report² on why Kurdish and Yazidi women join PKK to fight ISIS.

The paragraph in question appears to be BBC merely stating the obvious. "The PKK is considered a terrorist organization by the Turkish authorities and several Western states, but it is now a key player in the battle against the jihadist group Islamic State."

However, Ankara condemned this as some form of glorification and support for terrorism, and the foreign ministry statement warned BBC "This publication violates the U.N. and Council of Europe resolutions in this field. Promoting and glorifying terrorism is a crime."

This begs the question — if Ankara believes "promoting and glorifying terrorism is a crime," then is it guilty of this very crime given its support for Hamas, Muslim Brotherhood, Al Nusra/Al Qaeda affiliates, ETIM and TIP that are designated terrorist groups by various countries such as China, Israel, Egypt, Russia, EU and US?

Egypt's Terrorists

While Ankara expresses outrage for a BBC profile of its designated terrorist group PKK, it seems to have no qualms supporting Egypt's designated terrorist group Muslim Brotherhood, which is also recognized as such by Russia and other Arab Gulf states.

In fact the Brotherhood has set up television stations³ in Ankara with commentators delivering ominous predictions of violence in Egypt, and Cairo accusing Ankara of also working with ISIS on the Sinai Peninsula to destabilize Egypt.

On 23 July, Cairo identified four agents⁴ with Turkey's intelligence agency MiT (Colonel Ismail Aly Bal and operatives Daa El Din Mehmet Gado, Bakoush Al Hussaini Youzimi and Abd Allah Al Turki), who were linked to ISIS affiliate in Sinai *Ansar Beit Al Maqdis* (Champions of Jerusalem) that also calls itself Wilayat Sinai, or Sinai Province. Egyptian officials contend Turkish weapons show up in the hands of *Ansar Beit Al Maqdis* militants.

Israel's Terrorists

Turkey also supports the Muslim Brotherhood's Palestinian arm Hamas⁵ whose charter calls for the destruction of Israel.

In early 2015 amid reports Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal would be expelled from Qatar, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu declared⁶ he would be welcome in Turkey whenever he wants.

¹ Avaneesh Pandey, "Turkey Accuses BBC of Promoting and Glorifying Terrorism Over Report on PKK Female Fighters," *International Business Times*, 21 August 2015, <http://www.ibtimes.com/turkey-accuses-bbc-promoting-glorifying-terrorism-over-report-pkk-female-fighters-2063044>

² "The Kurdish and Yazidi Women taking up arms against IS", BBC, 19 August 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33997748>

³ Umar Farooq, "Turkey Nurtures Egypt's 'Terrorist' Muslim Brothers", *The Daily Beast*, 15 April 2015, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/04/15/turkey-nurtures-egypt-s-terrorist-muslim-brothers.html>

⁴ Jacob Wirtschafter and Muhamed Sabry, "Turkey-Egypt feud undercuts U.S. hopes for Middle East", *The Washington Times*, 29 July 2015, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jul/29/turkey-egypt-feud-undercuts-us-hopes-for-middle-ea/?page=all>

⁵ Jonathan Schanzer, David Andrew Weinberg, "The Turkey-Hamas Nexus: How a NATO member became Hamas' biggest backer", *The National Interest*, 16 January 2015, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-turkey-hamas-nexus-12044>



This prompted then State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki to warn “ Hamas is a designated foreign terrorist organization...we continue to raise our concerns about the relationship between Hamas and Turkey with senior Turkish officials, including after learning of Mashaal’s recent visit there”—in reference to Turkey hosting Mashaal’s December visit⁷ to an AKP congress in Konya and was seen holding hands with Prime Minister Davutoglu.

German politician Volker Beck (The Alliance 90/The Green Party)⁸ also warned that “a Turkey that sees itself as a partner of Hamas is not a partner of D [Germany] or the EU” and likely an increasingly illegitimate NATO member, as Israel lodged a complaint to NATO⁹ on Turkey providing a base for Hamas to set up headquarters and coordinate attacks against the Jewish state from there.

US/EU’s Terrorists

Ankara also supports al-Qaeda affiliates in Syria. On 24 August Syrian rebels revealed Turkish intelligence tipped al Nusra¹⁰ to US trained fighters when they entered Syria, and enabled Nusra to snatch many of the 54 graduates of the \$500 million programme on 29 July.

An unnamed officer of Division 30, the rebel group the captured unit was supposed to join, revealed “only the Americans and the Turks knew about the plans for the train-and-equip fighters to enter Syria.” Captain Ammar al Wawi, spokesman for Division 30, refused to say Turkey had betrayed the operation though he corroborated that only Turkey and the U.S. were aware of the details of the plan to enter Syria.

An official¹¹ from southern Turkey said Ankara leaked the information to Nusra to sabotage the train-and-equip programme, hoping the rapid disintegration of the programme would force the Americans into expanding the training and arming of Turkey’s rebel groups focused on toppling Assad rather than ISIS.

Turkey’s anti-Assad rebel groups, called the Army of Conquest, is a jihadi witches brew of al Qaeda affiliates and other Islamic extremists responsible for the massacring of other religious and ethnic minorities in the region.

Ankara also seems to dismiss the fact that Al Qaeda has the blood on its hands of over 3,000 Americans in 9/11, almost 5,000 American troops in Iraq and over 2,000 US troops in Afghanistan, as well as being a designated terrorist organization in US, EU and various other countries.

⁶ „US condemns Turkey-Hamas ties“, *Jerusalem Post*, 9 January 2015, <http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/US-condemns-Turkey-Hamas-ties-387226>

⁷ „Davutoglu meets with Hamas leader, vows support for Palestinians“, *Today’s Zaman*, 28 December 2014,

http://www.todayszaman.com/anasayfa_davutoglu-meets-with-hamas-leader-vows-support-for-palestinians_368218.html

⁸ Benjamin Weinthal, „Top German MP: Merkel should condemn Turkey for hosting Hamas“, *The Jerusalem Post*, 31 December 2014, <http://www.jpost.com/International/Top-German-MP-Merkel-should-condemn-Turkey-for-hosting-Hamas-official-386205>

⁹ Herb Keinon, „Israel slams Ankara: This is no way for a NATO state to act“, *The Jerusalem Post*, 28 November 2014, <http://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Israel-slams-Ankara-This-is-no-way-for-a-NATO-state-to-act-383083>

¹⁰ „Syrian rebels: Turkey tipped al Qaida group to U.S.-trained fighters“, *McClatchy DC*, 24 August 2015, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/nation-world/world/middle-east/article32206167.html>

¹¹ „Syrian rebels claim Turkey tipped off al Qaeda against US trained fighters“, *BGN News*, 25 August 2015, <http://diplomacy.bgnnews.com/syrian-rebels-claim-turkey-tipped-off-al-qaeda-against-us-trained-fighters-haberi/8842>



China's Terrorists

The Chinese are also angry at Turkey's support for Uyghur militants, as Ankara's anti-Assad jihadi coalition Jaysh al Fatah, or Army of Conquest, includes the al-Qaeda affiliated Chinese Uyghur group Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP).¹²

TIP has claimed responsibility for a number of high-profile terrorist attacks in China, including the Kunming train station attack that China dubs its 9/11.¹³

On 24 August Chinese communist mouthpiece *Global Times*¹⁴ accused Turkey of harboring the Uyghur terrorist group ETIM and its front ETEMA for recruiting Chinese Uyghurs¹⁵ via an illegal passport scheme¹⁶ to then wage jihad in Syria and Iraq, before turning on China.

Turkey decides who is/is not a terrorist for other countries?

On observing Turkey's insistence that Kurdish groups such as PKK, YPG and others are unpalatable allies for the US anti-ISIS coalition and attempting to replace them with anti-Assad Army of Conquest rebel groups, Pat Buchanan¹⁷ warned the Obama administration that "We must stop allowing our friends to choose our enemies in the Middle East."

"Turkey's actions demonstrate, as do those of other allies in the region, that their enemies are not always our enemies, and that, as they single-mindedly pursue their national goals, so should we."

Buchanan noted the Iraqi Kurds have been loyal friends of the U.S. since Desert Storm and the Syrian Kurds, the YPG, have been effective fighting boots on the ground against ISIS, rendering them "de facto allies no matter what the Turks say," while "our enemies are al-Qaida, which slaughtered 3,000 of our people, and its progeny. Our enemies are ISIS, which has beheaded Americans, and threatens us, our allies and friends."

Getting back to Turkey's fury over the BBC documentary while supporting so many of other countries' terrorist groups, one wonders if perhaps Ankara should first modify its own behaviour before accusing others of supporting terrorism.

Remarks: Opinions expressed in this contribution are those of the author.

¹² Caleb Weiss, „Turkistan Islamic Party in Syria takes part in battle for the Al Ghab plain“, *The Long War Journal*, 9 August 2015, <http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2015/08/turkistan-islamic-party-in-syria-assists-jihadist-coalition-in-battle-for-the-al-ghab-plain.php>

¹³ „Nothing justifies civilian slaughter in China's ‚9-11‘“, *Global Times*, 2 March 2014, http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/845570.shtml#UxKm_s6xfX4

¹⁴ „Uyghurs travel to Turkey to connect with local culture, religion, but fail to find what they hoped“, *Global Times*, 24 August 2015, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/938731.shtml>

¹⁵ „China accuses Turkey of aiding Uyghurs“, *Financial Times*, <http://www.ft.com/home/europe>

¹⁶ Peter Lee, „Another Shoe Drops in the Turkish ‚Passports for Uyghurs‘ Case“, *China Matters*, 20 July 2015, <http://chinamatters.blogspot.de/2015/07/another-shoe-drops-in-turkish-passports.html>

¹⁷ Pat Buchanan, „Now the Turks are all in“, 31 July 2015, <http://buchanan.org/blog/now-the-turks-are-all-in-16313>



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