

Turkish coup attempt crumbles as crowds answer call to take to the streets



Istanbul, July 16 (RHC)— An attempted military coup in Turkey appeared to crumble on Saturday after crowds answered President Tayyip Erdogan's call to take to the streets and dozens of rebel soldiers abandoned their tanks in the main city of Istanbul.

At least 60 people were killed in violence that erupted on Friday after a faction of the armed forces attempted to seize power, officials said.

A successful overthrow of Erdogan, who has ruled Turkey since 2003, would have marked one of the biggest shifts in the Middle East in years.

Erdogan, who had been holidaying on the southwest coast when the coup was launched, flew into Istanbul before dawn on Saturday and was shown on TV among a crowd of supporters outside Ataturk Airport.

The uprising was an "act of treason", and those responsible would pay a heavy price, he told reporters at a hastily arranged news conference. Arrests of officers were under way and it would go higher up the

ranks, culminating in the cleansing of the military, he said.

On Saturday morning, the Turkish National Intelligence Organization (MIT) said the coup attempt in the country had been “repelled” and that domestically things had gone back to normal. It was also announced in the early hours of Saturday morning that the situation is largely under control and that a no-fly zone was imposed over Ankara.

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