

Syrian troops mass at Turkish border after reaching deal with Kurds



Damascus, October 14 (RHC)-- Syrian troops are massing near the Turkish border, after Bashar al-Assad's government reached a deal to help protect the Kurds from Turkey's deadly air and ground assault. The Kurds had been allied with the United States up until last week, when President Trump abruptly pulled U.S. troops from northern Syria, paving the way for Turkey's assault.

More than 130,000 people have already been displaced over the past five days since Turkey invaded northern Syria. The death toll is unknown. Turkey says over 500 "terrorists" have been "neutralized." Turkey frequently refers to Kurdish groups as "terrorists."

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights is reporting Turkish-backed proxies have shot dead nine Kurdish civilians, including a prominent political leader, Hevrin Khalaf, who was killed along with her driver on Saturday. She was the secretary-general of the Future Syria Party.

Kurdish authorities are reporting 785 people affiliated with the Islamic State, including women and children, escaped from a Kurdish-controlled displacement camp in northern Syria. The New York Times is reporting U.S. forces failed to transfer five dozen "high value" Islamic State prisoners out of the country.

Turkey is facing increasing international condemnation for invading northern Syria. France and Germany have halted arms exports to Turkey as calls grow for an EU-wide arms embargo. Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan is slated to visit the United States next month.

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