

# *U.S. Arming 'Nonexistent Groups' in Syria*

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Damascus, June 6 (RHC)-- The U.S. has teamed up with Turkey to arm “moderate” militants in Syria, which have been destroyed by al-Qaeda, says Middle East expert Danny Makki. Speaking with Press TV from Syria, Makki said that the United States’ policy of arming and training “moderate” militants in Syria signifies “hypocrisy” of the Obama administration toward the Arab nation.

“Since 2014, the United States has embarked on a policy which aims to arm a group of ‘moderate rebels’ in Syria... but these groups have been eliminated and destroyed by the al-Qaeda group,” Danny Makki said in an interview with Press TV.

Washington has now “teamed up” with the Turkish government to train more militant groups, which up until now have been “nonexistent,” he added. An American official said last week that the U.S. military has begun training foreign-backed militants fighting in Syria in neighboring Turkey.

The new initiative is part of a Pentagon plan to train and equip more than 5,000 militants a year for Syria, where a foreign-sponsored militancy has left more than 220,000 people dead and a third of the population homeless. On February 19th, Washington and Ankara inked an agreement to train and arm “moderate” militants in Syria.

Makki said the notion that “moderate” militant groups exist in Syria seems to be a “mere figment of the imagination of the U.S. administration and lawmakers.” He said: “The United States seems to be acting just for the sake of acting. Its actual policy on the ground lacks substance and significance.”

“We can argue that moderate groups control just about 0.5 percent to 2 percent of the entire Syria,” he explained. U.S. officials claim the so-called train-and-equip program aims only to target ISIL terrorists, but critics say it actually aims to create more chaos in Syria and weaken the government of President Bashar al-Assad.

Danny Makki said: “The United States has a policy based on contradictions and hypocrisy because it is planning to arm groups which don’t exist to fight against other groups which they are aiding in other areas of Syria.”

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