

Turkey Begins New Wave of Airstrikes against PKK



Ankara, July 27 (RHC)-- Turkish warplanes have launched a new wave of air raids in northern Iraq to target the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) group.

F-16 fighter jets took off from a base in Diyarbakir in southern Turkey on Sunday evening to pound PKK's rear positions at Mount Qandil, in the far-flung mountains of Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan region, Turkish language media reported on Sunday.

"At around 9:00 pm (1800 GMT), Turkish planes started bombing some of our positions in two areas" north of Dohuk and north of Arbil, Bakhtiar Dogan, a spokesman for the PKK in Iraq told AFP. There were no immediate reports on the extent of the damage or the number of casualties.

The hasty scrambling of Turkish jets into Iraq and Syria, which started late on Friday, came after at least 32 people were killed in a massive "terrorist" explosion in the southwestern Turkish town of Suruç earlier in the week. The attack was attributed to the ISIL, a terrorist group which controls parts of Iraq and Syria.

Ankara blames PKK for a string of attacks against its security forces in recent days. Turkey's military campaign is against what it purports to be ISIL positions in Syria and PKK targets in northern Iraq.

The Turkish government is believed to be one of the main supporters of the terrorist groups fighting against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad since 2011, with reports showing that Ankara actively trains

and arms the militants operating in Syria, and also facilitates safe passage of would-be foreign terrorists into crisis-hit areas.

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