

Turkey begins operation against Kurdish forces in Syria



Ankara, October 9 (RHC)-- Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced on Wednesday that the Turkish Army and its Syrian rebel allies have launched their military operation into northeastern Syria.

Erdogan said the offensive, dubbed “Operation Peace Spring”, would aim to eliminate threats from the Syrian Kurdish YPG militia and the Islamic State militants, and enable the return of Syrian refugees in Turkey after the formation of a “safe zone” in the area.

“Our mission is to prevent the creation of a terror corridor across our southern border, and to bring peace to the area,” Erdogan said on Twitter. “We will preserve Syria’s territorial integrity and liberate local communities from terrorists.”

The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) said Turkish warplanes struck its region in the northeast, sparking “huge panic among people” on Wednesday. “Turkish warplanes have started to carry out air strikes on civilian areas,” SDF spokesman Mustafa Bali said on Twitter.

Syrian state media and a Kurdish official separately said bombing hit the town of Ras al-Ain in the northeast along the Turkish border.

Ras al-Ain is one of the largest cities in Syria's Al-Hasakah province; it has been under the control of the Syrian Democratic Forces and their allies from the People's Protection Units (YPG) since 2012.

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