

Iran calls on Turkey to end offensive in northern Syria



Tehran, October 11 (RHC)-- Iran has called on Turkey to "immediately" end its military operation in northeastern Syria and withdraw its forces from the Arab country's territory. In a statement on Thursday, the Iranian Foreign Ministry expressed concern over Turkey's military offensive which has put civilian lives at risk.

The statement stressed that "the dire humanitarian situation and the dangers posed to civilians in the conflict area" necessitate "the immediate cessation of attacks and the withdrawal of Turkish troops from Syria."

While understanding Turkey's security concerns, the statement said, Iran does not consider military action as a mean to address the woes, expressing Tehran's opposition to the offensive which would bring about "widespread human and material damage".

The statement further read that the current chaotic situation in the region is the result of "interference of extra-regional" countries, the US in particular. It expressed the Islamic Republic's readiness to play the role of a mediator to deescalate tensions between Turkey and Syria. The ministry underscored "peaceful measures and respecting Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity" as the sole way to ease tensions.

In a post on its Twitter account early Thursday, the Turkish Defense Ministry said the troops participating in Operation Peace Spring were advancing east of the Euphrates River following a ground offensive.

Turkey's Vice President, Fuat Oktay, also took to Twitter to stress the army's resolve to keep fighting the Kurdish militants in Syria, which Ankara views as terrorists linked to local autonomy-seeking militants of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

Turkey launched the operation in northeast Syria on Wednesday; just days after the U.S. pulled forces out and abandoned its Kurdish allies there.

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