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FLAME.HOTLINE

December 31, 2024



Turkey's Islamist president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, nurtures ambitions for greater power and influence in the Middle East. He openly supports Hamas and has threatened Israel and U.S. interests in the region. His assistance to Syria's new Islamist rulers only strengthens his hand.

Amidst Middle East power upheaval, Turkey emerges as threat to Israel and U.S. interests

Dear Friend of Israel, Friend of FLAME:

With the overthrow of Syria's government, Turkey, under Islamist President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, is set to replace Iran as the Middle East's new chief belligerent. As such, it presents a growing threat to Israel and U.S. interests in the region.

Yet unlike the paper tiger Iran has turned out to be, Turkey is strong economically, militarily and, as a NATO member, politically. Erdogan also has ambitious designs to expand Turkey's power and will likely prove one of the West's greatest challenges in coming months and years.

Whereas Turkey was once a staunch ally of Israel and the West, Erdogan has taken it on a reckless path of Islamization and imperialism. He seems aiming to reburnish Ottoman Empire glory, in which Turkey ruled the Middle East and North Africa for centuries, including what is now Israel.

Though embedded in NATO, Turkey is technically still an ally of the West, yet many of its actions betray that relationship. For starters, Turkey has seized about 3,500 sq. miles of Syrian territory—15% of the country—a *bona fide* occupation. Yet, the media, most Western

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Israel's War Is America's War

While Islamic terrorists attack American interests here and abroad daily, our ally Israel fights, back and forth, why does the U.S. object?

How Israel successfully fights Middle East terrorism

How Israel successfully fights Middle East terrorism is the result of a combination of factors: Israel's military strength, its intelligence capabilities, and its diplomatic relations with the United States. Israel has a long history of military strength against Middle East terrorism, and the United States has provided extensive support to the Israeli military. This support includes advanced military equipment, intelligence sharing, and diplomatic backing. Israel's military is one of the most advanced in the world, and its intelligence capabilities are top-notch. The United States has provided Israel with billions of dollars in military aid over the years, and this support has been crucial to Israel's success in fighting terrorism. Israel's intelligence capabilities are also a key factor in its success. The country has a long history of intelligence gathering, and it has developed a sophisticated network of spies and informants. This network has provided Israel with valuable information about its enemies, and this information has been used to prevent attacks and to capture terrorists. Finally, Israel's diplomatic relations with the United States are another key factor in its success. The United States has provided Israel with strong diplomatic support, and this support has been crucial to Israel's success in fighting terrorism. The United States has provided Israel with a strong voice in the international community, and this voice has been used to condemn terrorism and to support Israel's efforts to fight it. In conclusion, Israel's success in fighting Middle East terrorism is the result of a combination of factors: its military strength, its intelligence capabilities, and its diplomatic relations with the United States. These factors have worked together to provide Israel with the resources and support it needs to fight terrorism effectively.

U.S. Mideast diplomacy has consistently failed

U.S. Mideast diplomacy has consistently failed to address the root causes of terrorism in the region. The United States has focused on military aid and intelligence sharing, but it has failed to address the political and economic issues that drive terrorism. The United States has also failed to support Israel's efforts to build a peaceful and prosperous society in the Middle East. Instead, the United States has supported Israel's efforts to maintain its status as a Jewish state, which has led to the displacement of millions of Palestinians and the creation of a humanitarian crisis. The United States has also failed to support Israel's efforts to improve its human rights record. Israel's human rights record is a major concern, and the United States has failed to take any meaningful steps to address it. In conclusion, U.S. Mideast diplomacy has consistently failed to address the root causes of terrorism in the region. The United States has focused on military aid and intelligence sharing, but it has failed to address the political and economic issues that drive terrorism. The United States has also failed to support Israel's efforts to build a peaceful and prosperous society in the Middle East. Instead, the United States has supported Israel's efforts to maintain its status as a Jewish state, which has led to the displacement of millions of Palestinians and the creation of a humanitarian crisis. The United States has also failed to support Israel's efforts to improve its human rights record. Israel's human rights record is a major concern, and the United States has failed to take any meaningful steps to address it.

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nations and the UN are silent on this [illegal land seizure](#).

Instead, world attention has focused on Israel's presence in a tiny buffer zone separating it from Syria. Israel took this temporary measure after Syria's recent coup, with the aim of preserving its 1974 disengagement agreement with Syria following the Yom Kippur War—an act of aggression on Syria's part.

Turkey, on the other hand, harms U.S. interests in Syria by attacking American-backed Kurdish forces. What's more, Erdogan's government is the main supporter of Islamist rebels who recently overthrew the regime of Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad. Turkey also plays [host to Hamas leadership](#), and Erdogan has long supported the Palestinian terrorist group.

Turkey's presence in Syria could potentially be dangerous for Israel, should Erdogan use his Islamist allies in the country to attack the Jewish state. The Turkish president has also consistently made inflammatory remarks regarding Israel. He's even threatened to [invade the Jewish state](#).

In short, Turkey can no longer be treated as an ally of the West. It is an enemy and should be treated as such—with caution, utmost suspicion and, depending on Erdogan's behavior, punishment.

Turkey occupies Syrian territory, in violation of international law. Turkish-backed forces control a wide swathe of territory adjacent to the Turkish-Syrian border. This is [genuine occupation](#) of a foreign state, unlike Israel's presence in Judea and Samaria.

This occupation has displaced 600,000 people and included the use of ethnic cleansing. In 2018, for example, Turkey's invasion of Afrin, in northwest Syria, displaced the town's Kurdish population and replaced them with Arabs and Turkmen. Ethnic cleansing and forcible transfer are clear violations of international law. But no, the UN has passed [no resolutions condemning Turkey](#) or demanding it withdraw its forces. Nor have any charges been filed against Turkey before international courts.

Turkey claims its actions in Syria target terrorists from the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which is indeed listed as a terror organization by the U.S., UK and European Union. However, the Turkish government has for decades also [ruthlessly persecuted](#) Turkey's Kurds, who now number some 25 million—about 20% of the country's population—and who seek autonomy. It's clear that Erdogan's primary aim is to squelch the Kurds' bid for self-determination wherever it is promoted.

The media ignore Turkey's belligerence, focussing instead on Israel's defensive actions. For example, CNN published a headline reading, "Watching with trepidation and glee, Netanyahu orders military to seize Syria buffer zone," while a *Wall Street Journal* headline read, "Israel's expanded perch on Syria's border puts Damascus in its sights." No mention is made of Turkey's occupation of northern Syria or its atrocities against the Kurds, because of course, neither can be [blamed on Jews](#).

Turkey harms American interests in Syria. Turkish forces frequently attack the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), a U.S.-backed militia in Syria's north and east. The SDF, supported by 2,000 U.S. military personnel in Syria, was instrumental in defeating ISIS and still vital to preventing its resurgence. Recently, Turkish-backed forces seized control of two SDF-held towns and are [poised to attack](#) the Kurdish-majority city of Kobani, on the Turkish-Syrian border.

Erdogan may use Syria to attack Israel. Turkey is the primary sponsor of the Syrian rebels. The Syrian rebels' leader, Abu Mohammad Al-Jolani, formerly of Al-Qaeda, is now the country's de facto ruler. Videos show his men declaring their intent to [march on Jerusalem](#). In one clip, they announce, "From here to Jerusalem. We're coming for Jerusalem." Nevertheless, the Biden Administration has decided to trust Al-Jolani and his Islamist bunch, even removing the \$10 million bounty the U.S. placed on his head.

It is easy to imagine Erdogan's using Syria and its new rulers to attack Israel at some point, though rebel leaders assert they want peace with Israel. Nonetheless, Erdogan has sufficient leverage and resources to [precipitate hostilities](#) against Israel if he finds it advantageous.

Erdogan persists in belligerence toward Israel. The Turkish strongman is an avid supporter of Hamas, calling them freedom fighters. He has maintained an open relationship with the terrorist group since 2006, supplying them diplomatic, logistical, and even military support. In fact, back in July, Israel foiled a Hamas terrorist attack orchestrated from Turkey, capturing

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five terrorists who attested to receiving Turkish military training, weaponry, and cash. Turkey now [hosts Hamas's leaders](#), after they were expelled from Qatar.

Erdogan even threatened to invade the Jewish state, saying, "Just as we entered Karabakh (enclave in Azerbaijan), just as we entered Libya, we might do the same to them (Israel)." He has made [similar threats](#) against Greece and Cyprus, the former of which is a member of NATO. Both are also EU members.

Turkey abandons its staunch pro-Western, pro-Israel, and anti-Islamist past. Erdogan has transformed his country into an ally of Islamists, and he seems determined to [restore the caliphate](#) of centuries past at the expense of Israel, the U.S. and the rest of the Western world.

Please make the point when speaking with family, friends, colleagues—or in letters to the editor—that if Turkey continues to [thwart U.S. interests](#) and threaten our allies, Congress and the President should consider economic sanctions, increased U.S. military presence and stepped-up diplomatic pressure through NATO allies.

While Israel has fewer options, it must aggressively defend its position and options on the border with Syria, as well as attack any attempts by Iran, Hezbollah or the new Syria leaders that jeopardize the Jewish state's security.

If you agree we need to spread this truth, please use your email browser to forward this Hotline issue to fellow lovers of Israel—and encourage them to join us by subscribing to the Hotline [at no charge](#).

Best regards,

James Sinkinson, President

Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)

P.S. Too often, American citizens take comfort in their insulation from Islamist violence roiling the Middle East, as well as cities in Europe. But the jihadists are clear that fighting Jews and Israel is just the beginning. At rallies in Iran—and increasingly in the U.S.—the crowds scream, "Death to Israel, Death to America." They understand that Israel is just the tip of the spear of Western Civilization—because Israel was the birthplace of so many Western values. Today the Jewish state stands as one of the strongest democracies in the world—a defender of liberty and enemy of oppressive Middle East dictatorships and terrorism. I hope you'll agree that we supporters of the Israel-U.S. relationship need to speak out. FLAME's new *hasbarah*—explanatory message—"[Israel's War Is America's War](#)"—describes how Israel massively defends United States interests in the Middle East and how Israel represents a roadblock to Islamic expansion worldwide. Finally, it explains why the recent U.S. foreign policy of soft diplomacy and appeasement of Iran has failed consistently. Please review this convincing, fact-based editorial, which FLAME intends to publish to millions—in leading social media, as well as in the *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Tampa Bay Times*, *Denver Post* and *Los Angeles Times*. This piece will also be sent to all members of Congress, the President and Vice President. If you agree that this kind of public relations effort on Israel's behalf is critical, I urge you to [support us](#) with a donation.

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