Pentagon Tries to Pretend that it's Engaged in "Harmless Activities" in Syria

At the behest of the new White House administration, the Pentagon, in the face of growing criticism of American military interventionism in the Middle East in recent years, has decided to adjust its image.

This has become especially important for Washington now that public opinion not only in the United States, in Syria, but also in the UN, after repeated appeals by the Syrian authorities to this international body, has intensified its official accusations of blatant theft of Syrian oil by the US occupation forces. Thirty million dollars a month — that's how much, according to incomplete expert estimates, the US earns from stealing oil in Syria. The schemes of its supply have long been fine-tuned: the largest deposits are guarded by soldiers of private US military companies and Kurdish militias under the control of the Pentagon. Since the time of illegal exports by terrorists of Daesh (banned in the Russian Federation), Syrian oil has been exported either by the "western route" to Turkish ports on the Mediterranean Sea, or by the "northern route" to the Batman refinery, or by the "eastern route" to the large transshipment base in the settlement of Jizra.

As Syria was liberated from Daesh terrorists, most of the fields east of the Euphrates went under the control of the Syrian Democratic Forces and their US handlers, which gave the Kurds control of the fields near the town of al-Haseke and then the Kurds began to share the dividends of this "business" with the Americans. Today, the major
fields of Al-Omr and Conoco remain under US and SDF protection.

Continuing to get its hands on Syrian hydrocarbons, at the end of 2020 the US concluded another agreement with Kurdish units controlling areas east of the Euphrates to upgrade the oil fields, which drew criticism not only from Damascus, but also from Turkey. In particular, the Syrian Foreign Ministry called these agreements “theft of Syrian oil under the patronage and support of the US administration.” By and large, the new arrangements were another, but unfortunately not the first blow by Washington to Syrian sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the country. The signing of the agreement to modernize the oil fields was announced by US Senator Lindsey Graham, speaking before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the upper house of Congress. According to Al-Monitor, the work will be carried out by Delta Crescent Energy LLC, a Delaware-based company incorporated in February 2019, whose partners include former diplomats, military officers, and oil field entrepreneurs.

To circumvent its own sanctions, the US delivered oil production equipment to the Kurds itself in Syria. Oil exports are carried out by the US-controlled Sadkab company, created under the so-called Autonomous Administration of Eastern Syria. Proceeds from the smuggling of Syrian oil through the brokerage companies cooperating with Sadkab go to the numbered accounts of PMCs and the US intelligence agencies. So it is not surprising that, earning over $30 million a month without any official American government oversight or taxes, the Pentagon and CIA leadership selflessly guarded and defended oil wells in Syria against the mythical “hidden cells of Daesh.”

Until recently, Washington did not deny the direct involvement of American troops in the protection of oil rigs in the northeastern part of the Arab republic. Moreover, this US mission in the region was cited as one of the most important, along with the completion of the defeat of the remnants of Daesh in this part of the SAR.

So it is not surprising that despite Donald Trump's previous administration's statements about the withdrawal of US troops from Syria, the Pentagon was in no hurry to permanently leave its oil-bearing areas, citing the need to supposedly “secure the oil fields from Daesh terrorists.” Moreover, the US has repeatedly moved hundreds of additional US troops from Iraq to Deir ez-Zor province, and recently began building its new air base near that Syrian population center near the Al-Omar oil field. This new project will be the largest US air base in the Arab republic and will house military aviation forces, including heavy transport aircraft. It is quite obvious that with the construction of this air base, the Americans clearly intend to strengthen their military presence not just in Syria, but primarily in its oil-bearing areas.

Amid these circumstances, Syria recently sent a personal message to Joe Biden, calling on the new US President to withdraw troops from the Arab republic and to abandon attempts to illegally exploit its oil resources. Bashar al-Jaafari, SAR's permanent representative to the UN, voiced this message during a virtual meeting of the UN Security Council on January 20, calling on Washington to immediately change its foreign policy in Syria: “US occupation forces continue to plunder Syria's wealth of oil, gas and crops, burning and destroying what they cannot steal,” the Syrian diplomat explained. "The new US administration must stop its acts of aggression and occupation, plundering the wealth of my country, withdraw its occupation forces from it and stop supporting separatist militias, illegal entities and attempts to threaten Syrian sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity."

Given the growing dissatisfaction not only in Syria, but also in many other countries with such blatant aggressive and invasive policy of Washington in Syria, the US Department of Defense was forced to issue a statement on February 8 about the alleged adjustment of its activities in the Arab republic. In particular, it was pointed out that US forces in Syria are allegedly focused on fighting the remnants of the terrorist group Daesh (banned in Russia) and are not protecting the oil fields, as former President Donald Trump had previously ordered. According to Pentagon spokesman John Kirby, US Department of Defense personnel "are not authorized to assist any private company, including its employees or agents, seeking to develop oil resources in Syria." This is also due to the fact that last year an American company signed a contract with the Kurdish administration in northern Syria "to help develop the oil reserves" of the northeastern part of the Arab republic.

However, it is quite obvious that, apart from declarations, Washington does not intend to change its policy in Syria in the near future and withdraw its military contingent deployed in that country without UN sanctions. In addition to the illegal use of Syrian oil resources, the real objectives of the US lie on a different plane: to prevent Tehran from strengthening in the region and, as a consequence, creating a threat to Israel. After all, the presence of the US military in areas east of the Euphrates makes overland deliveries from Iran through Iraqi territory to Syria and on to Lebanon (for Hezbollah) extremely difficult, to say the least.

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