Why the West Won't Hit ISIS Where it Hurts

In the wake of the Paris attacks, the West has sought to leverage what it had hoped would be a renewed public will for expanded war abroad. To this end, the US and Turkey have announced an operation which it claims will secure the last 98 kilometers of the Turkish-Syrian border - an area roughly between the west bank of the Euphrates river near Jarabulus, to Afrin and Ad Dana further West.

Repackaging NATO's 2012 "Safe Zone"

Those familiar with the Syrian conflict would recognize this section of the Syrian-Turkish border as precisely the boundaries of the long-sought after "safe zone" the US, NATO, and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have attempted to establish since as early as 2012. The Paris attacks and several minor border incidents recently reported, seem to be only the latest in a long line of cited provocations this axis has attempted to use to implement its preconceived plans.

This region between Jarabulus and Afrin constitutes the primary corridor through which the summation of Al Qaeda's Al Nusra Front and the so-called "Islamic State" or ISIS, receive weapons, supplies, and fresh fighters. Through coordinated efforts between Syria's Kurds and the Syrian government itself, the rest of Syria's northern border with Turkey has been sealed. As this process has progressed, the desperation of the Western-led axis seeking regime change in Damascus has increased proportionally.

Endgame Approaches

In reality, regardless of the West's repetitive platitudes regarding its determination to "fight ISIS," its actions and the actions of its regional allies have fully illustrated a desire to preserve the terrorist group. Its feigned "war on ISIS" helped open the door to the recent Russian military intervention. With Russia's entry into the war, the West can no longer afford to drag out its nonexistent operations against ISIS, hoping for an opportunity to finally divide and destroy the country.

Russia and the Syrian Arab Army for whom it is providing air support, have nearly closed the Jarabulus-Afrin corridor themselves. In fact, the week before the Paris attacks, Syrian troops had established a corridor to the besieged Kweires airbase, just 40 kilometers from the Euphrates. Since then, the Syrian military has expanded its control around the surrounding area. Should it reach the Euphrates, along with taking Aleppo and moving northeast from Latakia in the west, Syria will fill the void NATO has long sought to establish its "safe zone" in.

In other words, there is a race between NATO to implement a partial occupation of Syria, and Syria and its allies racing to fill the void before this happens - and the race is nearly over.

The Unasked Question
The Paris attacks were carried out with serendipitous timing - on the very eve of the Vienna talks, and just as Syria and its allies approached the boundaries of NATO's desperately desired "safe zone." The attacks gave the West a strong hand going into the Vienna talks and will undoubtedly help justify expanding US-Turkish operations in northern Syria.

And while suggestions that the West had any connection to the Paris attacks may be brushed off as a "conspiracy theory" despite emerging evidence revealing just how much French and other Western security and law enforcement agencies knew about the attackers before they struck, the fact that the US and Turkey are seeking to secure Turkey's border with Syria from the Syrian side instead of within NATO territory itself, reveals the true nature of this unfolding conflict.

In Reuters' report, "U.S., Turkey working to finish shutting northern Syria border: Kerry," it claims:

> U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said on Tuesday the United States is starting an operation with Turkey to finish securing the northern Syrian border, an area that Islamic State militants have used as a lucrative smuggling route.

Reuters also claims (emphasis added):

> The area where the operations would take place is now controlled by the radical Islamists. The United States and Turkey hope that by sweeping Islamic State, also frequently called Daesh, from that border zone they can deprive it of a smuggling route which has seen its ranks swell with foreign fighters and its coffers boosted by illicit trade. Under a long-discussed joint U.S.-Turkish plan, moderate Syrian rebels, trained by the U.S. army, would be expected to fight Islamic State on the ground and help coordinate air strikes by the U.S. coalition, launched from Turkish air bases, under the strategy drawn up by Washington and Ankara. Diplomats familiar with the plans have said cutting off one of Islamic State's lifelines could be a game-changer in that corner of Syria's complex war. The core of the rebels, who number less than 60, would be highly equipped and be able to call in close air support when needed, they say.

The "Islamic State's lifelines" leading from where? The question is never fully answered in Reuters' report, nor in Kerry's comments, nor in any statement made by Western politicians, policymakers, or pundits since the Syrian conflict began in 2011. The answer is obvious, however. The Islamic State's lifelines run from Turkey, into Syria. Looking at any map of the conflict shows clearly that it is in no way a "civil war," but rather an invasion from NATO territory.

**Stopping ISIS at its Source - Turkey, The Persian Gulf, and NATO Itself**

All of the Paris attackers, likewise, passed through Turkey on their way to train, arm, and fight in Syria, and then through Turkey again on their way back to Europe. The tons of weapons and hundreds of fighters shipped covertly to Syria by the US in the Libyan terrorist capital of Benghazi also arrived first in Turkish ports before proceeding on, apparently with the knowledge and cooperation of the Turkish government.

This means, to cut ISIS' lifelines, one must start in Turkey itself where tons of weapons, supplies, and thousands of fighters are staging, training, and passing through on their way to Syria. For Russia, Syria, and Iran, to attempt to interdict these supply lines within NATO territory would be considered an act of war. For NATO itself to fail in interdicting these supply lines, for years as this conflict raged, is a concerted, intentional campaign of state-sponsored terrorism.
It can likewise be argued that in addition to Turkey, and to a lesser extent Jordan to Syria’s south, the Persian Gulf
dictatorships of Saudi Arabia and Qatar also constitute the "source" of ISIS and other terror groups waging war
inside Syria. Instead of putting pressure on these regimes, or placing sanctions on them, let alone carrying out
military operations within their borders to stem the tide of cash and weapons flowing to ISIS and other terrorist
groups in Syria and Iraq, the West, including the United States and France itself, have signed lucrative weapon deals
worth billions of dollars.

For Saudi Arabia, it has received munitions from the US to continue its little-talked-about war in Yemen, in which its
soldiers are fighting alongside Al Qaeda and ISIS fighters who appear to be serving the role as auxiliaries - holding
territory cleared by heavily mechanized Saudi and United Arab Emirate troops.

Fighting ISIS at its source, for the West, means putting the blade to its own throat. It is clearly responsible for the
rise and perpetuation of this terrorist group - not through the mere consequences of its actions, but through an
intentional, concerted effort to create a formidable proxy army to wage its wars in the Middle East and North Africa
with.

If Westerners are wondering why, despite attacks on Western soil, and alleged military campaigns predicated on
these provocations setting out to eradicate ISIS, the terrorist organization not only still survives, but is thriving, the
answer is - the West has no intention of eradicating it.

ISIS is not only destined to divide and destroy Syria and Iraq. If the West has its way, the terrorist organization is
destined to move into Iran, the Caucasus region of southern Russia, and Central Asia next. It is a proxy army built
atop of what the United States and Saudi Arabia accomplished with Al Qaeda starting in the 1980's, which itself was
merely a continuation of the British Empire's use of Wahabbi fanatics to overthrow its Ottoman rivals over a century
ago.

When the West calls this a "long war," they mean it. And it will be longer still until the people of the West realize
their governments aren't waging a "War on Terror," they are waging a "War of Terror."

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magazine"New Eastern Outlook".