

Erdo?an welcomes al-Sisi to Turkey for the first time in the shadow of the Gaza genocide

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Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi's visit to Turkey on Wednesday was the Butcher of Cairo's first official trip to the country since his bloody 2013 coup. He and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdo?an met for the first time in over a decade in February this year in Cairo.

Until recently, Erdo?an had condemned the coup that ousted Egypt's elected president Mohamed Morsi, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, and refused to meet with al-Sisi. Morsi was ousted in July 2013 in a coup led by al-Sisi, who was then chief of general staff. Erdo?an, who had a close relationship with Morsi, was one of the leaders who reacted most strongly to the coup, and relations between Ankara and Cairo reached breaking point.

Now Erdo?an and al-Sisi are taking steps to strengthen their ties amid Israel's US-NATO-backed genocide in Gaza, which is spreading to the West Bank, and preparations for war against Iran.

Erdo?an and al-Sisi discussed tensions over Gaza, Libya and energy resources in the eastern Mediterranean. Erdo?an said, "Turkey and Egypt have a common stance on the Palestinian issue. The termination of the genocide that has been going on for 11 months, the immediate establishment of a permanent ceasefire, and the unimpeded flow of humanitarian aid continue to be our priorities."

He added, "We are determined to strengthen our consultations with Egypt, with which we hold similar approaches and goals on a wide range of issues. We will, inshallah, be in closer cooperation in the period ahead. We will enhance our multifaceted relations in a win-win manner."

Al-Sisi stressed "the unity of Egypt and T?rkiye's positions regarding the demand for an immediate ceasefire, the rejection of the current Israeli escalation

in the West Bank, and the call to start a path that achieves the aspirations of the Palestinian people to establish their independent state on the borders of 1967, with 'East Jerusalem' as its capital."

In reality, despite their hypocritical rhetorical statements, the regimes of Turkey, a member of NATO, and Egypt, which has close military and strategic ties with US imperialism, are complicit in Israel's genocidal war against the Palestinian people.

The Erdo?an government continues to mediate Azerbaijan's supply of oil, which feeds Israel's war machine, and to authorise the operation of US-NATO bases in Turkey, which provide Israel with intelligence.

Al-Sisi, who has close ties with Israel, is playing a crucial role in trapping the people of Gaza and depriving them of food, medical supplies, electricity, water and fuel by closing the Rafah border crossing.

However, there is also concern within the ruling class in both countries that their interests could be harmed by the spread of the genocidal war to the whole Middle East. At the same time, they are under pressure from the anti-imperialist and anti-Zionist sentiments that are widespread among the people in Turkey and Egypt.

Meanwhile, the USS Wasp (LHD-1), a United States amphibious assault ship, docked at the port of Izmir on Monday. The USS Wasp is one of two American amphibious assault ships sent to the region by the Biden administration to protect Israel. The ship has been in the eastern Mediterranean since June 1 and recently conducted joint transit training with Turkish naval vessels.

While this development, which reveals the complicity of the Erdo?an government in the genocide, was causing anger among the people, on Monday, a US soldier in civilian clothing was confronted in Izmir. A group surrounded him and briefly put a sack over his

head. Ten members of the Turkish Youth Union (TGB), which is affiliated to the Maoist, Turkish nationalist Vatan Party that de facto supports Erdoğan for his so-called “anti-imperialist” policies, were arrested for this action.

The scene was intended as revenge for an event that took place on July 4, 2003 in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. On that day, American soldiers raided the headquarters of the Turkish Special Forces Command and took Turkish soldiers to Baghdad for interrogation. The incident took place after the Turkish parliament rejected the use of Turkish territory for the US invasion of Iraq.

Turkey and Egypt were also at odds over Libya and maritime borders in the eastern Mediterranean. They supported rival factions in the civil war that erupted after the imperialist offensive that toppled the regime of President Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, and finally came to the brink of direct military confrontation in 2020.

Ankara’s agreement with the Government of National Accord in Tripoli in 2019 played an important role in this. As the *World Socialist Web Site* explained at the time, “el-Sisi’s plans for Egypt to become an export hub for Europe, after signing an agreement with Cyprus in 2018 to construct a pipeline to its Aphrodite field, have been stymied by Turkey’s November 2019 agreement with the GNA in Tripoli. That agreement, in return for Ankara’s military support, demarcated the maritime borders between the two countries, vastly expanding Turkey’s territorial waters—also claimed by Greece and Cyprus—and denying the claims of Crete, Rhodes and other islands.”

The drive to advance the interests of the Turkish bourgeoisie in the oil and gas reserves of the eastern Mediterranean has forced Erdoğan to take steps towards normalising relations with Israel, which he has repeatedly described as a “terrorist state”, and with al-Sisi’s Egypt, which he has strongly condemned. The October 7 uprising and the Israeli genocide in Gaza undermined this process to some extent, but efforts to improve relations between Egypt and Turkey have continued.

The Turkish and Egyptian regimes advocate a so-called “two-state solution” in Palestine based on the 1967 borders and regard the corrupt Palestinian Authority, led by the hated Mahmoud Abbas, as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The complicity of Ankara and Cairo, like other

regimes in the region, in the Gaza genocide and their close collaboration with the US and NATO underlines that the struggle against imperialism and Zionism is only possible through the independent political mobilisation of the Middle Eastern and international working class on the basis of an anti-war socialist programme.



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