

Erdo?an warns of war between Israel and Turkey

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Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdo?an warned of war between Israel and Turkey in his speech at the opening of parliament on Tuesday, saying, “The Israeli leadership, acting with the delirium of the promised land and with a purely religious fanaticism, will set its sights on our homeland after Palestine and Lebanon.”

Erdo?an said that the Zionist “Greater Israel” project includes Turkey and added, “The Netanyahu government harbors a delusional ambition, including Anatolia, and pursues a utopia, and it reveals these intentions on various occasions. Since 7 October, every development increases the dimension of this threat a little more.”

Pointing to the proximity of the borders between Turkey and Israel, Erdo?an hinted that war was imminent between the two critical allies of the United States in the Middle East: “Look, from the Syrian border in Hatay’s Yayladagi district, the Lebanese border is 170 kilometres away by road, and Turkey is only 2.5 hours away from Lebanon by car... In other words, occupation, terror and aggression are right next to us”.

Erdo?an made a similar statement last May, saying, “Do not expect that Israel will stop in Gaza. If not stopped, this ferocious, terrorist state will eventually have designs on Anatolia with the delusion of the promised land.”

Erdo?an’s latest statements come shortly after the Israeli regime launched a ground offensive in Lebanon having killed Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah. Backed by the United States and NATO, the Israeli government is trying to escalate the genocide against the Palestinians in Gaza into a regional war against Iran. After Iran fired hundreds of ballistic missiles at Israel in retaliation Tuesday night, US and Israeli officials publicly authorised a large-scale attack on

Iran.

Together with Erdo?an’s announcement last July that Turkey could intervene militarily against Israel, these developments underline the danger that Israel’s US-backed war of aggression is rapidly escalating into a conflict that can engulf the entire region.

The Turkish ruling class also fears that a US-backed Israeli war against neighbouring Iran could damage its interests. Ankara and Tehran share the concern that an independent Kurdish state backed by the US and Israel could be established in the region. Erdo?an expressed these concerns in his speech as follows: “We see very clearly how Israel wants to establish small satellite structure in the north of Iraq and Syria, using the separatist organisation [PKK/YPG] as a pawn.”

Erdo?an and the Turkish political elite before him have been complicit in the US imperialist aggression in the Middle East for more than 30 years, contributing to the dynamics of disintegration in Iraq and Syria and the danger of the outbreak of a regional war. Erdo?an, who supported the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, has been siding with the US and Israel since 2011 in the war for regime change in Syria, which aims to overthrow the Iranian and Hezbollah-backed President Bashar al-Assad.

Similarly, Erdo?an’s statement in his speech that “remaining silent, unresponsive and even neutral” towards Israel is, “to put it bluntly, complicity in the crime”, is an example of utter hypocrisy. NATO member Turkey has been complicit in Israel’s genocide in Gaza and, despite all its rhetorical criticism, has contributed to the escalation of the war.

Although Erdo?an has cut trade with Israel and toughened his rhetoric, US-NATO bases in Turkey continue to support Israel. Turkey continues to intercede for Azerbaijan’s critical oil shipments to the

country. There are even serious suspicions that Turkey is continuing to trade with Israel via Palestine after the official end of trade with Tel Aviv.

On the one hand, Ankara continues to support Israel's genocidal war and constantly reaffirms its loyalty to the US/NATO, while on the other it warns against war with Israel and criticises the US-NATO allies for the consequences this policy contributes to.

At the root of this contradiction is the bourgeoisie's deep-rooted attachment to imperialism. The main fear of the Turkish ruling class, which, far from being able to oppose imperialism, acts as its proxy in the Middle East, is that a revolutionary movement of the working class against imperialism and Zionism will develop.

Erdo?an's speech and the "atmosphere of unity" that dominated the opening of the parliament reflected the concerns of the ruling elite as a whole. Erdo?an thanked "the parliament and the political parties that have acted in full unity in defence of the Palestinian cause". Devlet Bahceli, Erdo?an's fascist ally, leader of the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), exchanged friendly speeches with the leader of the Republican People's Party (CHP) and the leaders of the Kurdish nationalist Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party), which he advocates suppressing by force.

CHP leader Özgür Özel called on Tuesday for an urgent "closed parliamentary session" following Erdo?an's comments on Israel. This is a call for Erdo?an to make critical decisions together, in secret from the public.

Explaining that he made the call because of the "importance he attaches to the seriousness of the issue", Özel said, "When the president of the country comes out and says 'Israel will attack Turkey' on the rostrum of the parliament, there is an urgent need for a closed session... where the minutes cannot be published for 10 years. Our friends will work on this issue and make the necessary contacts."

"The international community must take action" against Israel, Özel said. This was a repetition of Erdo?an's words: "The international community can no longer remain silent about this Israeli banditry that is setting the whole region on fire". These weak appeals to the US-NATO imperialist powers behind Israel's aggression are another example of the bankruptcy of the bourgeois nationalist perspective.

The spreading war in the Middle East, one front of an expanding global war, is the result of the historical crisis and internal contradictions of the capitalist nation-state system.

War and genocide cannot be stopped by appealing to the Zionist state, the imperialist powers or the international institutions under their control. The way to stop the Israeli genocide in Gaza and its escalation into a Middle East war is to unite the working class in a socialist anti-war movement to take power across the Middle East and internationally against imperialism and its regional proxies.



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