

## Answer to Question

### What is behind the Turkish Operation "Olive Branch" in the North of Syria?

(Translated)

#### Question:

It has been noted that Erdogan's movements in Syria have calmed down relatively after Operation Shield of the Euphrates and Erdogan's abandonment of Aleppo, and allowing the regime to take control over Aleppo, but he resumed the operation in the name of Olive Branch heading towards Afrin since Saturday, 20/01/2018, through artillery and air shelling. According to the statement issued by the Turkish Chief of Staff on Sunday 21/01/2018: The Olive Branch Operation, which started on Saturday according to the plan drawn for it, and the ground operation began on Sunday morning. (Turk Press, 21/01/2018) and it is ongoing, so what is behind this operation "Olive Branch"? May Allah reward you with the good.

#### Answer:

1- Before starting to analyze what took place, we must draw attention to a very important matter that forms the basis of the current Turkish policy, that will shed light on the movements of Erdogan and his actions and statements, as Turkey's Erdogan is clearly pro-American, he does so in exchange for America's support to stay in power as it brought him into power. The evidence for this is what the pro-Turkish government As-Sabah Newspaper stated on 18/4/2017: "The US president telephoned the Turkish President Erdogan last night to congratulate him on the outcome of the April 16 referendum on constitutional reforms and the presidential system". Erdogan mentioned to him that "he launched a good campaign for it and that he observed it personally". He said to Erdogan: "I give attention to our friendship and there are very important things that we will do together." Hence Erdogan's policy in Syria was in fact assisting America's plans to install the regime and pressure the factions to withdraw from vital areas of the regime. The example for that is the recent order to surrender Aleppo, and the empowerment of the regime, he made up issues and pulled out factions to fight instead of fighting in their areas to prevent the regime from entering them under the pretext of the battle of the Euphrates Shield. At a time when the regime went to Aleppo and focused its attack there, knowing that the battle of the Euphrates Shield was originally given the American blessing, Turkey has entered Jarabulus region in 2016 with America's encouragement when former US Vice President Joseph Biden came to Ankara and announced from there his open support for the entry of the Turkish army on 24/8/2016 and asked the forces of the units of protection of the Kurdish people to withdraw from the Turkish forces under the name of the Euphrates Shield. We mentioned in the Answer to Question on 25/9/2016 that: *"In order to make the American plans work, that focused on Aleppo, the Turkish troops had to be re-imposed blockade, and here America worked on two axes to restore the siege on Aleppo: **First:** the introduction of the Turkish army to in northern Syria, starting with the area of Jarabulus meanwhile Turkey announced operation "Euphrates Shield" and calling the pro-Turkish rebels from southern Aleppo to fight ISIS, that is, weakening the real points of clashes in Aleppo! And creating new infighting points and pushing away as many opposition from fighting in Aleppo! etc."* This is how Erdogan withdrew the factions loyal to him to fight in the areas of Al-Bab and leave Aleppo almost empty of resistance, except for a few believers who stood firm. Meanwhile most factions responded to Erdogan's call to the Euphrates Shield and he is repeating this betrayal again.

2- These movements are still in place and the latest is not the last to enable the Syrian regime to control the important areas in Idlib and to remove the loyal fighting factions to the orders of Turkey to focus on Afrin and forget its homeland Idlib; that the criminal regime is advancing towards in coordination with America, but under a guise of tensions between Turkey and America to prevent the preparation of new forces linked to America! Note that America is advancing from Turkey towards Syria and arming its puppet organizations, including the protection units of the Kurdish people, which have a majority within the Syrian Democratic Forces linked to America, where Erdogan opened Incirlik Base ... Thus Erdogan repeats the scenario of the Euphrates Shield to facilitate the entry of the regime in Idlib. Operation Olive Branch was devised to facilitate the entry of the regime in Idlib. The Syrian regime while moving towards Idlib and surrounding Abu al-Duhur Airport, Erdogan pushed the fight towards Afrin!

About 25 thousand of the opposition are participating in this operation as confirmed by the military commander in the Sham Legion, Yasser Abdul Rahim, that about 25 thousand armed men from the Free Syrian Army are participating in the Turkish military operation in Afrin (Russia Today, 23/1/2018), known to America along with its approval. The Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu stated that he discussed the Syrian crisis and the issue of border security units with US Secretary of Defense James Mattis on Monday evening (15/1/2018) in Canada. He stated that he met with US Secretary of State Tillerson also on Tuesday evening (16/1/2018) on the sidelines of the Foreign Ministers' Meeting on Security and Stability on the Korean Peninsula in Vancouver, Canada. Çavuşoğlu said that Mattis said: "We have been asked not to believe the news that is being published about (the formation of a new army in northern Syria)," adding that he was "following up the matter himself and would remain in contact with us." (Anadolu news agency 17/1/2018)

3- This confirms the American statements in the past two days. They confirm that Olive Branch, the issue of Afrin and the movements of the Turkish army and the Free Syrian Army is with the full approval of America and Russia, which entered Syria in coordination with America, here are some of these statements:

- The Turkish military campaign in Afrin began yesterday on Friday, with the first stages of the bombing of certain areas of Afrin at a high rate since Thursday/Friday night, with the start of the withdrawal of the Russian military police from Afrin and its environs. Nurettin Canikli considered it "the beginning of the attack on the ground," according to Al Jazeera Channel ... Al-Araby Al-Jadeed learned from a Turkish source that:

"Another offer was made, to control of the city in exchange for the consensus between Ankara and Moscow on the way of its management. The Turkish government is ensuring by a large proportion the reconstruction similar to the Euphrates Shield, and by pressuring the Syrian opposition to attend the Sochi conference, while the Russians insisted on handing over the city after its control by the Syrian regime and the absence of any opposition forces in it and also allowing the regime to make further progress in the province of Idlib. Meanwhile, Turkish Defense Minister Nurettin Canikli in a television interview yesterday confirmed, "We know that Russia supports the regime greatly" ..." As for the Turkish expectations of the operation, the Turkish source said to Al-Araby Al-Jadeed "The operation is expected to continue for a maximum of five to six months .. The source pointed out "the diplomatic channels did not break with Washington." (Al-Araby Al-Jadeed, 20/01/2018)

"On 20 January, Turkey resorted to its armed forces near Afrin in north-west Syria ... Moscow is concerned about this information," the Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement, noting that it was "closely following the development of the situation." "Russia remains committed to its position regarding the search for solutions to the conflict in Syria, based on the

preservation of the territorial integrity of this country and respect for its sovereignty," the ministry said). (Rudaw, 20/01/2018)

The United States wants the Turkish military operation to remain limited in time and scope, and it urged "self-restraint" and to ensure that the rest of the military operations are limited in scope and duration, to minimise the damages to civilian lives." State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said, "We urge Turkey to exercise restraint and ensure that its military operations remain limited in scope and duration and scrupulous to avoid civilian casualties." US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said on Sunday that Turkey informed the United States before the move, noting that Washington is communicating with Ankara on developments in the situation. She said that Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and his US counterpart, Rex Tillerson, have discussed "measures in order to ensure the preservation of stability north of the country". The Turkish foreign minister discussed the military operation with his US counterpart, but did not yet reveal what took place between the two parties. (BBC Arabic, 22/01/2018)

US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said his country hopes to work with Turkey to establish a safe area in northwestern Syria to meet Ankara's security needs... The head of the US Central Command, General Joseph Votel, confirmed that Turkey briefed his country on its military operation in Afrin, pointing out that the city does not fall within the scope of American military operations. The Department of Defense calls for "not to escalate tension," noting that it understands Turkey's security concerns in the region. (Russia Today, 23/01/2018)

- The Central Command of the US army said Turkey briefed them on the military operation in the Syrian city, Afrin, stressing at the same time that the city does not fall within the scope of US military operations. General Joseph Votel, Commander of the Central Command, in a press statement on Sunday said that his country does not pay particular attention to the Turkish operations area. (Quds Press, 21/01/2018)

- US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said that his country hopes to work with Turkey to establish a safe area in north-west Syria to meet Turkey's security needs; this was on the third day of Operation Olive Branch launched by the Turkish armed forces and the Free Syrian Army. The region of the Syrian city of Afrin, the US Secretary of State, "let us see if we can work with you to create the kind of security zone you might need... So we're in discussions with the Turks and some of the forces on the ground as well as to how we can stabilize this situation and meet Turkey's legitimate concerns for their security." (Turk Press, 23/01/2018)

- And the statements of US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson on the announcement of his country's intention to form an army of 30 thousand fighters, whose task is "guarding the border," which angered Ankara and made Tillerson comment to reporters on board a US government plane, "The country does not intend to establish any border force in Syria". Adding that according to Anatolia, his country is clarifying to Turkey the news agencies' reports of the United States' intention to establish a border security force in Syria, on this, Nauert said, "You take the fight off of ISIS, and that is exactly why we are there, and that's one of the things that the Secretary and others with the State Department have highlighted to Turkish officials." (Orient, 19/01/2018)

- Last Tuesday, US Defense Department spokesman Eric Bahon said his country understood Turkey's concerns about the border security force it plans to build in Syria, citing the issue with Turkish officials.

Bahon pointed out that his country is in regular and close contact with Turkey; its partner in NATO. Bahon used the phrase "**supposed border security force**" in his answer ... Today, Thursday, US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson came out to announce that the United States had no plans to establish any border force in Syria, commenting on news reports on this issue. He added in a press statement: "This issue is perceived and defined in the wrong way, and

some people spoke in the wrong way, we are not creating any border force". (Yenisafak Arabic, 17/01/2018)

**It is clear from previous statements that Olive Branch is a branch carried by Turkey in coordination with America and Russia ... and that America's statements at the beginning of establishing a 30 thousand border force are only to give the justification for the Afrin operation, America then changed the statement to a kind of an open denial after its goal has been achieved!**

4- Therefore, the Turkish moves in Syria are to serve American projects by instilling the secular system in Syria. The loud statements from Erdogan are just to deceive the naive of the people with fiery words and statements that do not translate into actions, like the time when he said, we will not allow another Hama; but the regime committed in every city and town more than what took place in Hama ... as well as artificial movements that do not produce honest deeds. He deceives people with misleading statements that fool the naive as he said about Trump's decision to recognize al-Quds (Jerusalem) as the capital of the Jewish entity. Erdogan threatened that he could sever his relationship with the Jewish entity if Jerusalem was recognized as a capital of this entity. But he didn't cut his ties with America that took this decision, but rather it supports the Jewish entity and provides it with all means to maintain its survival. He also called for a two-state American solution, which includes the transfer of 80% of Palestine to the Jews, and he called for East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine, surrendering the west of Jerusalem to the Jews. This is in addition to what he did and still is carrying out in Syria, and even his betrayals, which have reinforced the presence of the Russian and American enemies and the Syrian regime, whether by handing over Aleppo or opening American bases to intervene in Syria or to open the Turkish airspace for Russian aviation or the meetings of Astana, in which he pressured the leaders of the armed factions to accept their decisions and bring calm to the battle fronts and deescalate and withdraw from areas and surrender them to the regime and then surrounded Idlib and many more areas. Then comes this new chapter the "Olive Branch" to facilitate the entry of the regime to Idlib!

**Finally**, we address all factions and say do not be fooled by Erdogan's actions, and not to surrender Idlib to the regime ... and not to forget what happened to them in Aleppo, but to remember the Hadith narrated by Bukhari from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) from the Prophet (saw) who said: « لَا يُلْدَعُ الْمُؤْمِنُ مِنْ جُحْرٍ وَاحِدٍ مَرَّتَيْنِ » **"A believer is not bitten from the same whole twice"**. So how then if he is bitten many times?

﴿إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَذِكْرَى لِمَنْ كَانَ لَهُ قَلْبٌ أَوْ أَلْقَى السَّمْعَ وَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ﴾

**"Indeed in that is a reminder for whoever has a heart or who listens while he is present [in mind]." [Qaf: 37]**

**7 Jumada I 1439 AH**

**24/1/2018 CE**