

Ortadoğu'nun sükûneti için güvenli bölge şart

Buffer zone in ME can help save lives



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KEEPING in view the current turmoil that the Middle East has plunged into it is imperative to take drastic but simultaneous actions to control the situation and restore peace to this region. Airstrikes and other military methods alone cannot ensure peace and security. We have much more to do to save the lives of thousands of innocent people caught in the cross-fire.

Turkey, being a key regional power, has much work to do in this regard. President Recep Teyyip Erdogan's commitment for Turkey's active role in the coalition against the self-ascribed Islamic State (IS) has made many heave a huge sigh of relief and also surprised many others.

Turkish interest in the anti-IS efforts has the mainstream western media buzzing with analyses and impact of Ankara's involvement in this renewed war on terror.

Seemingly, Ankara's statement has been misconstrued. The western media has, somehow, missed the point. Supporting the coalition was one thing and taking active part in the fighting is something else.

In last week's column, this writer highlighted Turkey's approach toward regional issues. Unlike



It should not be forgotten that secure zones have always been successful and produced good results wherever they have been adopted.

the rules enshrined after the World War II, needs a major overhaul.

Since the UN Security Council's approval is uncertain, a second option under consideration is to set up a secure zone with various coalition countries. It is expected that with the backing of the coalition forces, an approximately 25-km strip or secure pockets can be established along the Iraqi and Syrian border. Although a lack of UN mandate would leave the region relatively open to external aggression, a number of coalition countries would inevitably represent a deterrent force.

This strip that Turkish officials keep referring to will not be a zone of occupation, but a peace line established to protect the defenseless people there and prevent terror organizations moving across the borders. The first condition for making the region secure is the clearing of mines and removal of armed elements. It is exceedingly important to declare the area a no-fly zone. Thus the region will be protected against aerial attacks, terror organizations will be prevented from being able to move forward in shelled areas and local people will not have to leave their places of residence and turn into refugees.

The 9,000 Turkish troops in the region will be there solely for security purposes. It is thought that the number can be made up to 20-25,000 with smaller contingents from other coalition countries. That is important for Russia and China, because these will not back the coalition if US troops are in control of the area. However, the area being under the protection of Turkish troops will represent a security guarantee for Russia.

Due to the turmoil in Syria and Iraq, Turkey has admitted some 2 million refugees. It is an honor for us, the Turkish people, to embrace our suffering brothers and a medal

Ortadoğu'da şu an, konumu nedeniyle **kilit** ülke statüsünde olan **Türkiye'nin** bu talebi ivedilikle hayata geçirilmeli, vakit kaybedilmemelidir. **ABD**, bu konuda harcanacak tek bir günün bile büyük bir **risk** teşkil ettiğini dikkate almalıdır. **Rusya** açısından ise **Türkiye** mutlaka **garantör** olmalı, **Rusya'nın** bölge ve **Suriye** ile ilgili tedirginliklerini bertaraf edecek bir politika izlemelidir. Türkiye **NATO** üyesi olduğu kadar **Rusya'nın** da **müttefikidir** ve **Rusya'ya** yönelik **yalnızlaştırma** politikasının hiçbir zaman içinde yer almamıştır. Dolayısıyla **Rusya'yı** iknada **Türkiye'nin** özel bir görevi vardır.

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