

افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نیاشد تن من مباد بدین بوم ویر زنده یک تن مباد
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

European Languages

زبان های اروپایی

<http://www.unz.com/pcockburn/turkey-elections-a-coalition-looks-likely/>

Turkey-Elections-A-Coalition Looks-Likely

But what kind of coalition, and how will affect the war in Syria?

PATRICK COCKBURN

JUNE 8, 2015

The outcome of the Turkish election affects two pivotal issues facing the government in Ankara: its degree of involvement in the Syrian civil war and its relationship with Kurds, both in Turkey and Syria.

Turkey has played a central role in trying to overthrow President Bashar al-Assad since the Syrian uprising of 2011. The 510-mile Turkish border with Syria has never been entirely closed to armed opposition groups including Isis and Jabhat al-Nusra, the al-Qaeda affiliate.

Turkey is alleged to be giving strong backing to the latest rebel offensive in Idlib province in Syria, one that has largely driven out regime forces.

But the aggressive policy towards the Assad regime is very much the creation of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his AK party. The other three main political parties in Turkey

have opposed his Syrian venture. The leftist-Kurdish HDP party, whose success was the most striking feature of the election, will be critical of any Turkish government that appears tolerant towards Isis and that is hostile to the 2.2 million Syrian Kurds living in three enclaves on the Syrian side of the Turkish frontier.

The Syrian Kurds see Turkey as a staging area for the jihadi groups against which they are fighting, and say angrily that Turkish border crossings held by Isis are open, while those giving passage to Kurdish-held zones are closed. Turkish government equivocations about which side it was on during the four-and-a-half month siege of Kobani infuriated many Kurds. Syrian Kurdish leaders in the city of al-Qamishli told *The Independent* last week that they were worried about Turkey's proposal for a "buffer" or "no-fly zone" on the Syrian side of the border. They noted that it would allow Ankara to occupy the Kurdish cantons or enclaves.

It appears that Mr Erdogan's power must be diluted by AK's loss of a parliamentary majority, but it not clear by how much. A coalition or minority government is bound to be weaker than what went before, and thus less able to launch incursions into Syria or support rebels there.

Much will depend on whether a coalition is formed by AK and with whom. The HDP says so far that it will not enter a coalition, but if it does decide to do so it might prove to be the best political "fit" for the government. Although the AK has never agreed to the formal peace-making negotiations that the Kurds want, it has engaged in sporadic efforts to conciliate Turkey's Kurdish minority – an approach not shared by the other main Turkish parties. Many Kurds had previously voted for the AK for just that reason: the HDP's success at the polls comes mainly from persuading those Kurds to give their votes to it instead.

If, on the other hand, Mr Erdogan were to do a deal with the far right Nationalist Action Party, which also did well in the election, this would alienate the Kurds and reverse AK's previous grudging moves towards satisfying their grievances.

Before the election, Turkey looked increasingly like a one-party state with the media intimidated or brought on side and events like the recent bombing of HDP offices referred to only glancingly. This might now change, though governments which have become accustomed to authoritarian rule do not give it up swiftly or easily.

There will be the question of an AK counter-attack to reclaim lost ground and to re-establish its political dominance – which had been growing since its first electoral victory in 2002. AK has the advantage that there is no alternative government that could conceivably be formed from among the three opposition parties. There could be another general election if no government is formed within 45 days.

Overall, however, the image of President Erdogan and the AK part as an unstoppable juggernaut has been damaged, and Turkey will be a weaker and more inward looking state that it was before.