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Erdogan: Turkey Killed Over 5,000 Kurdish Militants Since July

By Jason Ditz
March 28, 2016



Since abandoning his nation's ceasefire with the Kurdish PKK in July, Turkish President Recep Erdogan reports that the military has killed "more than 5,000 Kurdish militants," and that 355 security forces have been killed.

This is dramatically more than had been reported over the course of the war since July, though the Turkish government often disputes accounts from human rights groups of civilian deaths, insisting every Kurd killed is a PKK fighter.

The opposition HDP, for instance, reports at least 500 civilians have been killed in southeastern Turkey since December, mostly the result of military curfews imposed on Kurdish towns and cities. Erdogan is in the process of getting the HDP outlawed as “terrorists.”

The Erdogan-reported death toll likely includes not just Kurds killed within southeastern Turkey, but also those killed in airstrikes against northern Iraq, an increasingly common part of the Turkish war, and one which often produces unclear, but significant, death tolls.