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## Why Is Iran Bothered by the Turkish Rise?

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## Why Is Iran Bothered by the Turkish Rise?

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The abrupt Iranian attack on Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan reveals Tehran's insistence on repeatedly exercising its opportunistic role of entering into alliances with the West against the Arabs and Turkey.

In fact, creation of a crisis at a time when Europe is rallying against the Turks is not a wise act from Tehran; and it can only be viewed as an attempt from the Iranians to court European countries and offer their services as they have used to do.

By reading a folkloric poem, composed by Azerbaijani poet Bakhtiyar Vahabzadeh, while attending a victory parade following Azerbaijan's victory over Armenia in the Nagorno-Karabakh war, President Erdogan did not mean to talk about lands occupied by Iran, but rather about the Karabakh region, as explained by Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu.

However, in the same speech the Turkish President invited Iran to participate in a regional office including six countries involved in the conflict linked to Karabakh to dispel security concerns. However, observers say the changing equilibrium in Nagorno-Karabakh and Turkey's major role in the war in favor of Baku irritated Tehran.

The Iranian statements were preceded by illogical accusations during the Azerbaijani-Armenian war, such as the presence of Syrian mercenaries allegedly brought by Turkey in the Karabakh mountains, although those mercenaries were brought in by the Armenians. In addition, the nature of the battle was technical, mostly with drones and regular forces of the Azerbaijani army, but the fabricated allegations were only aimed at causing confusion and for political intrigue.

The Iranian campaign against Erdogan, in which Foreign Minister Javad Zarif and heads of Iranian institutions in Tehran participated, reveals the Iranian discomfort with the Azerbaijani victory, and Tehran's concern about the return of relations between Turkey and the Turkish peoples in the Caucasus and Central Asia. "Tehran used to host diplomatic talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan, now they don't have any presence in Karabakh, neither militarily nor diplomatically," says Adem Yilmaz, a Turkish academic specializing on Iran, adding, "Its competitor Turkey has taken steps that

changed the balance in the region. Strong Turkish and Azerbaijani cooperation to the north of Iran is concerning for them.” However, the most important thing that annoyed the Iranian leaders were the negative consequences of the exposure of Iranian military support to Armenia against Azerbaijan with Shiite majority, in cooperation with Europe and Russia.

The Iranian position on Karabakh indicates that the Iranian policy uses the Shiite sect as a cover for pursuit of revival of the ancient Persian Empire, not caring about the Muslim or even the Shiite faith, where this Iranian behavior has created a rift that is difficult to contain within the Iranian society, and posed a threat to cohesion of the state that includes many heterogeneous races.

### Iran's extremism and aggression

Syria is considered one of the clearest example of Iran's hideous extremism and aggression, as Iranians allied with the Russian occupation against the Syrian people, and committed many bloody massacres through its regular militias such as the Quds Force and the other sectarian mercenaries it had brought from other countries. The Iranians in Syria practiced ethnic cleansing, perhaps to rates higher than the Russians, where they vandalized cities to evacuate them from Sunnis and turn them into Shiite-majority locations. This sectarian demographic shift is clearly visible in the Syrian capital, Damascus.

While operating in coordination with foreign armies in Iraq and Syria, Iran has exploited the international protection of the Houthi coup in Yemen, to practice the same brutal methods of demolishing homes, killing people, and imposing Shiism by armed force on Yemenis. Moreover, it uses the Houthi militias in launching attacks on Saudi Arabia within the framework of the American-Zionist strategy to divide the Kingdom, where missiles and drones reached up to Riyadh and Jeddah despite the declared US protection!

### Iran bothered by Turkish rise

Iran's policy on the international arena used to focus on taking advantage of the rivalry and differences between China and Russia on the one hand and the United States on the other. It also took advantage of the Arab defeat and dependency of Arab rulers on the United States, in attacking the Arab territory and participating in its occupation to revive the ancient Persian Empire. However, Tehran found itself in the end was shocked with the Turkish rise that has become a major threat to

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its expansionist project, where the Turkish role began to emerge in Syria and then extend to the north in the Caucasus, near the Iranian borders.

Although Turkey does not brandish any threat to Iranians, and although Ankara always expresses its goodwill publicly, the rise of the Turkish power and its escalating influence have been met with discomfort from the Iranians; and they even consider this rise as a future threat to Tehran, recalling history and conflict with the Ottoman Empire instead of thinking about correcting historical errors and building new bilateral relations that would be beneficial for both countries and consistent with the geostrategic transformations and developments of the new world order that is currently taking shape.

Iran has not taken a lesson from the Turkish-Azerbaijani cooperation model and how neighboring Muslim states can move away from sectarian fanaticism in the face of alliances based on ethnic and religious grounds, to achieve victory and restore rights.

The Iranians forget that the Sykes-Picot borders that were drawn a hundred years ago had resulted from colonial occupation, and were protected from Western armies.

Today, the world is witnessing widespread rebellions against these conditions that are no longer possible to continue due the disintegration of the colonial grip. if Iran continues to move against Muslim unity and insist on pursuing opportunistic policy and allying against its Muslim surroundings in the hope of restoring the bygone Persian Empire, then it must expect the rebellion of races and ethnicities, and disintegration of the Iranian state, which was formed by Britain at the beginning of the last century.

The opportunity is ripe for the Muslim world to unite and reserve its rightful place in the coming global system, where there will be no place for countries that close themselves off, and live on burglary, plunder and occupation of other countries. Finally, whoever is not aware of the size and nature of ongoing changes and make advantage of the current defining moment will never have any influence within the global blocs springing from their identities and beliefs, that are currently being formed.