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Turkey Airstrikes Target 17 Kurdish Positions

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Following the attacks, Turkish President Erdogan said he would “bury” the PKK and fight until the “end” of the organization.

Turkish warplanes carried out airstrikes against 17 Kurdish positions in the southeast of the country Tuesday, the Turkish military said in a statement.

According to the military, the attacks targeted the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) in Hakkari province, which borders both Iraq and Iran.

The Turkish military has been bombarding PKK positions in the south of the country as well as in northern Iraq since late July, after it announced a new “anti-terror” initiative. The military measure was originally started under the guise of fighting the Islamic State group militants in Iraq, with the help of the United States military, but they quickly started targeting PKK positions.

The two sides have been engaged in a three decade long war that has claimed the lives of over 40,000 people, namely the country's Kurdish minority. The war began as a Kurdish movement for independence, but has since morphed into a fight for cultural and political rights within the country.

The PKK and Turkish officials had been engaged in a ceasefire since 2013 as part of a larger peace process, but this was officially called off in July when the Kurdish resistance group accused the government of using the time of relative calm to recalibrate their military.

Tuesday's attack came after deadly airstrikes hit Istanbul and the neighboring province of Sirnak Monday killing nine people – what the government blamed on PKK militants.

Following the airstrikes Tuesday, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan vowed that his country would continue

its “comprehensive” operation against the Kurdish Worker's Party until the “end” of the organization.

Erdogan said that the PKK should not only lay down arms, but “bury” them under concrete until the group is no longer a threat to the Turkish state.

“Arms should be buried rather than dropped until terrorist organizations that brandish weapons against our people no longer pose threat to our country,” Erdogan said during a ceremony held to honor the incumbent chief of the General Staff Necdet Ozel Tuesday.

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