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'No limits': U.S.-Greek military ties threaten region

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The foreign military presence in Greece



Graphic: Global Campaign Against U.S./NATO Military Bases

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Communist Forces on May 9, 2021.

This year's commemoration of the Nazi's defeat by the anti-fascist struggle of the people is increasingly important, because U.S. imperialism is again recruiting its reactionary-fascist proxies as part of a new phase of aggression.

Among other things, the aggression takes place through the escalation of military intervention in Europe to restore the doctrine of imperialist encirclement of Russia. The primary aim is restricting Russian Gazprom's pipeline (Nord Stream 2), unipolar control of Europe's energy market by U.S. transnational companies, and the gradual conquest of former Soviet markets.

In this context, the strengthening of the U.S. presence in the southeast section of NATO is particularly important.

When Russia incorporated Crimea in response to pogroms following the Maidan coup in Ukraine, the U.S. strengthened NATO's eastern and central wing, sending heavy weapons to the Baltic countries, Germany and Bulgaria, and launching North Macedonia's accession in the Euro-Atlantic bloc.

The restriction of intervention in Europe by the Trump administration, because of other priorities such as the escalation against Iran, led the southern strategy to be held back, as NATO's deputy secretary acknowledged in 2019.

On the other hand, one of Biden's first moves was to renew the U.S. commitment to NATO at the Munich Conference and to extend the alliance to the former Soviet area, namely Ukraine and Georgia. (["NATO 2030: United for a New Era"](#))

Growing U.S. presence

In the eastern Mediterranean, we have a gradual and growing U.S. presence.

Turkey, despite tensions with the U.S., remains an (undisciplined) NATO agent in the region.

According to an article of the Atlantic Council, the regional potential of Turkey could be exploited by the Euro-Atlantic bloc. The article urges Ukraine to copy how Turkey restricted Russia in Nagorno-Karabakh, where Moscow was forced to accept a NATO country as a watchdog in the former Soviet territories.

In Syria, the U.S. military and mercenaries organize the pillaging of Syrian oil together with Kurdish militias. They do so while giving the appearance of no longer supporting right-wing Islamist factions, leaving this role to Turkey, which imposed a control zone on Syria.

The U.S. plans to build a NATO center on the Black Sea, where Turkey has a role as the regulator of military transit (under the Montreux Convention). The Erdogan administration uses this as a bargaining chip with the West.

The Turkish government also entered into agreements with the Ukrainian regime concerning drone sales, the establishment of the Crimean Platform, and according to reports, the transportation of pro-Turkish mercenaries from Syria to Ukraine. Let's not forget that Turkey has a special relationship with the National Endowment for Democracy (NED)-funded Tatar movements, which supported the Maidan fascist coup.

Similarly, in 2014, former Chechen battalions and ISIS terrorists fought by the side of Ukraine's Right Sector, using U.S. weapons.

'No limits' to U.S.-Greek military relationship

In Greece, the U.S. presence takes place in two ways.

First, through the ExxonMobil-Total-Hellenic Oil cartel and what this promises for a

status upgrade for the Greek bourgeoisie. Even though Greek capitalists do not take the lion's share.

At the same time, the Greek-Egyptian-Israeli alliance is planned, along with the Ukrainian "Naftogaz" in the Black Sea, as a gas gateway to Europe, against Russia's Gazprom.

There are a number of traps behind this. It is not at present a question of environmental costs. I'll say only that according to ExxonMobil's leaked documents, the company plans to increase its annual carbon dioxide emissions with the aim of doubling its profits by 2025.

We've had the largest U.S. troop landing since the Cold War during the Defender Europe 2021 military exercise. Thousands of troops and military resources from 26 countries are moving to the Black Sea, based from the port of Alexandroupolis, in a literal war rehearsal against Russia.

Greece is participating in this exercise together with Turkey, and I clarify this so that we do not have any illusion that the U.S. presence has anything to do with defense of the country.

We recently had the Iniohos Exercise, during which the Greek air force was flying with planes from the U.S., Israel, United Arab Emirates, France, Spain and Cyprus, with the aim of gathering forces in the eastern Mediterranean region and restricting Russia to the south.

Between April 19-23, on the upgraded military base of Souda in Crete, training of snipers from Greece, Belgium, Italy, the U.S., Netherlands and Malta took place. At the same time, U.S. Lockheed spy planes carried out missions from Libya to Crimea and the Black Sea.

During eastern Ukraine's military crisis, U.S. drones flew from an Italian base to the

Black Sea via Greece, while the U.S. missile destroyers Donald Cook and Roosevelt were in the Aegean Sea (also supported by the Souda base).

On May 5, the giant vehicle carrier called Liberty Promise docked in Alexandroupolis, and we are waiting for the Green Ridge.

At the 110 Combat Wing base in Larissa, twelve U.S. Eagle F-15 fighters landed, with plans to remain in Greece for two weeks to participate in joint exercises with all air force divisions.

This is the transformation of our country into a base of operation for the imperialist powers against the peoples of the region.

This echoes U.S. Ambassador to Greece Geoffrey Payatt's recent statement, "There is no limit to the Greek-U.S. military relationship."

This is true. Greek governments have no limit to their allegiance to the murderers of the people. We must impose the limits, standing with peoples in our region who are attacked by imperialism, such as the people of eastern Ukraine, Syria, Libya and Palestine.

Daily struggles and imperialist intervention

An anti-war movement can only be anti-imperialist, because war prevention and peace in the region depends on the defeat of the imperialist plans of the Euro-Atlantic Axis and the crash of its war structure in our country.

For that reason, a few years ago we founded the Pan-Hellenic Anti-War Kinematic Coordination (PAKC), when the anti-war, anti-imperialist movement was starting to lift its head again.

Today, the struggles against the health crisis, for labor and democratic rights, and

other social demands are overriding the internationalist agenda. But we must not let the struggle for peace take second place. We have to make clear that the problems of daily life are intertwined with imperialist intervention in the region.

The money for people's needs lacking from public funds is going to feed the war machine, through outrageous armaments programs that have nothing to do with defense of the country.

The Greek shipping of U.S. Patriot surface-to-air missile (SAM) systems to help the obscurantist Saudi petro-monarchy against the Yemeni people has nothing to do with defense of the country.

Greek armed forces have no place in the Strait of Hormuz near Iran or standing behind France's imperialist war in Mali.

The disestablishment of university asylum is connected to imperialist pressure. Wikileaks revealed the U.S. pressure campaign, because of the anti-imperialist mood in Greek universities.

At the same time, what we need to say is that by transforming the country into a war base, these troops are a potential occupying army as NATO's doctrine of the "internal enemy" implies, if our people choose a different path than that of subordination to imperialism.

For all of these reasons, the struggle against this military complex, which stamps its feet on our country, is a matter of life and death for any progressive alternative, independent of imperialism, for our people and the peoples of the region.

Only a massive, unifying anti-war movement has the potential to block the way of these war plans.

Panagiotis Papadomanolakis is editor of [GuernicaEu](#) (Greece) and a member of the

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