

Is the PKK shifting tactics?: The PKK and lone-wolves in Europe

Terrorist organizations shift their tactics from time to time, based on geography, political environment and logistical support, yet ideology is usually kept selfsame with minor tweaks. This shift tends to come about within all organizations involved in terrorist activities, whether being left-wing, right-wing or religious based. The PKK in this regard is a left-wing, Marxist-Leninist ideology based, a terrorist organization currently situated in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria, with international representatives also present under the umbrella of the Kurdish National Congress (KNK).

The PKK with instrumentalization of its franchises, the YPG and PYD is currently in the process of creating a geopolitical 'corridor of terror' bordering Turkey, throughout Syria and Iraq. As a result of this process, the YPG has internally displaced more than 20,000 Kurdish nationals, and even more Syrians, taking over their homes, and also their livelihood. Children have also been forced to conscribe and become child soldiers, and many women and youth have also been forcibly recruited to the organization.

As every organization involved in terrorism activities possesses a modus operandi, so does the PKK. Doctrine created by the PKK with fabricated facts to legitimize its ideology states the Kurdish 'homeland' has been colonized and split into four regions. The PKK, basing its ideology on this has formed its modus operandi to act as 'savior's and join the four regions of 'Kurdistan' (these being the South East of Turkey, the North of Syria, parts of Iraq and Iran). The PKK/YPG/PYD shares a similar modus operandi of state-building compared to DAESH; a religious based terrorist organization who also wants to create an 'Islamic' homeland or Caliphate.

Current trends show the PKK is shifting tactics similar to those of DAESH. Through its digital publications, DAESH generally calls upon its sympathizers to attack those who it deems to be the enemy, calling them 'disbelievers' and 'enemies of God'. By giving directions as to how bombs are supposed to make, or how a rifle is used, DAESH 'virtually' trains its sympathizers to execute attacks upon venues whereby the organization as picked as high-level targets. The PKK/YPG, on the other hand, is using a similar narrative, thus calling those who are against its activities 'enemies of the Kurds', 'imperialists', 'fascists' and 'colonizers'

The initiation of Operation Olive Branch by the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) and the Free Syrian Army (FSA) has sliced through the YPG corridor, cutting off supplies, logistics, and minimizing recruitment. The populations of Jinderes, Rajo and Shaikh al-Hadeed who have been deprived of their most basic rights including sugar have been relieved of the terror they have been facing as YPG militia are being neutralized.

As a result of ongoing clashes, the PKK/YPG has been losing many foot-soldiers. In addition to these, so-called 'ministers' of the YPG have also tried to flee the region of Afrin. As a result of its current losses, the YPG, like DAESH has also publically started to call upon its 'comrades' to perform protests internationally. The YPG has aggregated its narratives stating 'the means and execution of the protests does not matter, as long as it's done now'. The statement also states the objectives of the YPG is to teach with 'excruciating pain that they (the Turks and FSA) cannot operate easily'. As a result of this press release and 'call for action', Turkish mosques in Germany have been attacked attacked, Molotov cocktails were thrown, and venues of worship were put on fire. Embassies, consulates and Turkish governmental venues have also been shown as clear targets, close to narratives of ISIS stating 'kill the unbeliever wherever you seem them'.

Will this 'call for action' by the YPG cause lone-wolf terrorist attacks is still yet unknown, but such a leap in aggression can rule it to being highly possible. PKK affiliated foundations and centers in Europe may act as echo-chambers to magnify the call of action by the YPG in attacking Turkish diplomatic venues and Turks as well. Youth who have already been radicalized with PKK nationalist dogma can also be used for lone-wolf attacks in Europe, Canada and Australia. This echo-chamber will thus result in home-grown radicalization of PKK sympathizers, pushing them over, and causing national security problems for both the host nation, and Turkey as well.

Home-grown radicalization at this stage not encompassing the PKK will result in representative heuristics

and confirmation bias, thus resulting in analysis to being made in regards to DAESH alone. Such a swift leap in aggression within two days should ring alarm bells to national security authorities in Europe, and measures should be taken accordingly.