

TURKEY'S FIGHT AGAINST DEASH/ISIL

Turkey's efforts to secure its border with Syria and counter oil smuggling

- Turkey has 911 kilometers land border with Syria and 331 kilometres with Iraq (Map 1). Turkey conducts a zero-tolerance policy regarding illegal cross-border activities. It employs effective and robust measures to prevent smuggling activities all over Turkey, particularly oil, with a focus in the border areas.

(Map.1)



- Allegations of oil trade with DEASH and other terrorist organizations in Iraq and Syria are baseless and we reject them. It is not surprising that there is no evidence in support of these allegations.
- Oil smuggling along Turkey's south-eastern borders is not a new phenomenon. Turkey has been victimized by this phenomenon for decades, losing millions in tax revenue, and the Government has been actively fighting oil smuggling and the use of smuggled oil in gas stations all around the country through inspections and enhanced legislation, in particular since the beginning of the 2000s. In this context, the Anti-Smuggling Law was adopted in 2003, and a Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry was set up in 2005 to investigate oil smuggling, which led to the revision of the Petroleum Market Law in 2006. In 2012, the Action Plan on Countering Oil Smuggling was revised. A Circular Order (2012/19) by Prime Ministry for enhanced measures were introduced. A legislation was passed on April 11, 2013, which increased the penalties for smuggling of oil as well as the sale of smuggled oil in gas stations in the country.

- After the beginning of the Syrian crisis, in response to increasing lawlessness at the other side of the borders, Turkish law enforcement and security forces stepped up their efforts to counter all threats to our security including smuggling activities stemming from Syria.
- These enhanced measures targeting smuggling networks were introduced in 2012, and preceded the capture of two major oil fields in Syria and Iraq by DEASH/ ISIL in June and July 2014 and months before the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2170 in August 2014 and 2199 in February 2015 respectively.

(Pic.1)

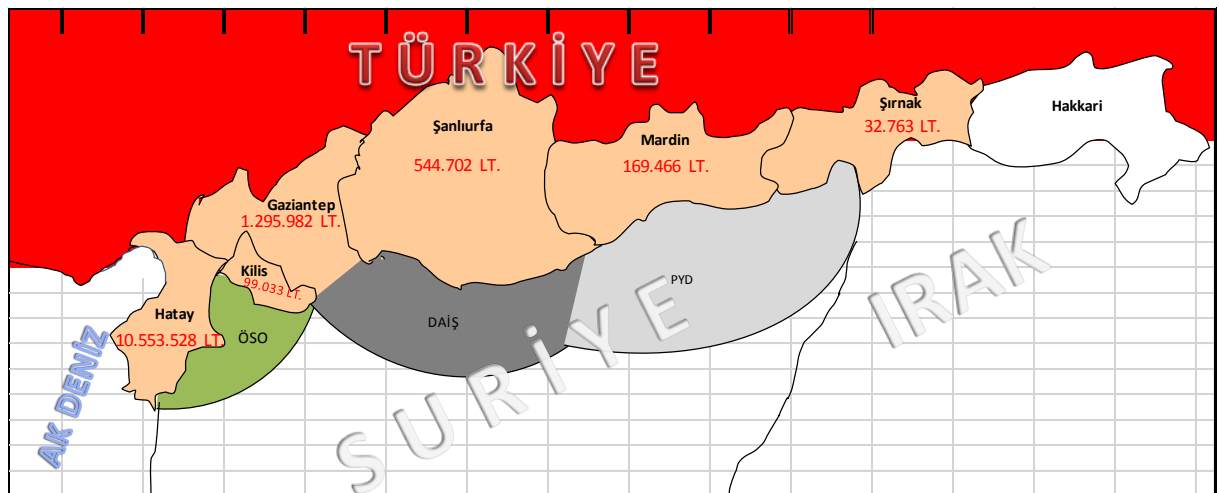


(Pic.2)

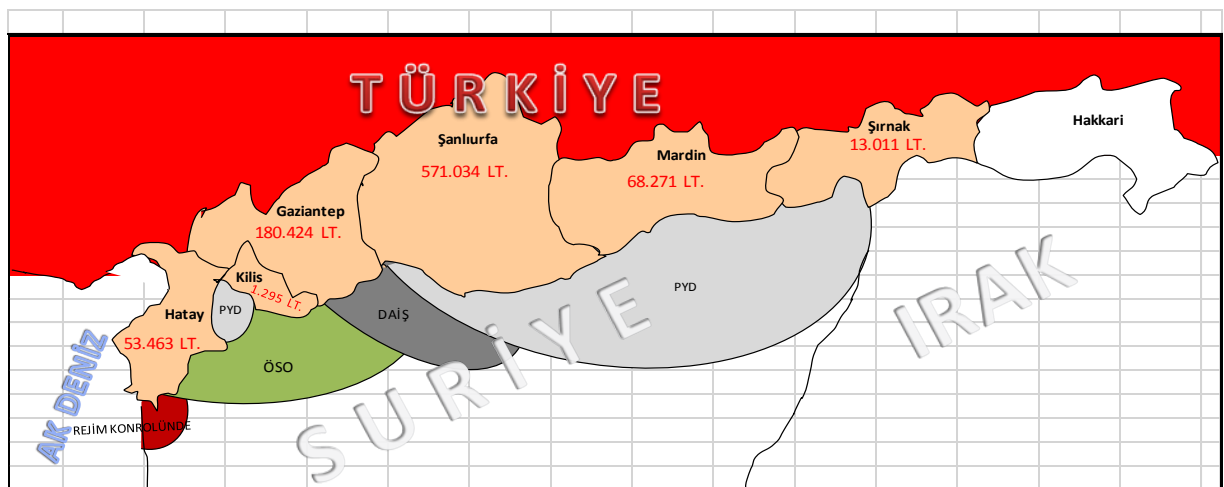


- Turkey, in accordance with UN Security Council resolution 2199 (2015) regularly provides information to the UN Security Council Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee about the incidents of smuggled oil and amount of oil seized in the border area with Syria and Iraq although the link between material seized and DESAH/ISIL or ANF terrorist groups cannot be established. Due to enhanced and effective border security measures amount of smuggled oil is decreased considerably. This is clear indication of Turkey's determination to fight any illicit trade activity across our borders. Amount of oil seized at Syrian border cities in 2014 and 2015 is indicated below. (Map.2, 3)
- While in 2014, 79 million liters (21 million gallons) of smuggled oil was intercepted by the Turkish law enforcement and customs authorities, in the first ten month of 2015 this amount decreased to 1.220 cubic meters (1,22 million litres-322,289 gallons) 300 kilometers of illegal pipelines, which are often little more than hoses used for oil smuggling across the Syrian border, were destroyed (Pic.1 and 2).

(Map.2, 2014)



(Map.3, 2015)



Enhanced measures for border security

- Only two border gates are operating at Syrian border area and no vehicle transit is allowed. Goods, not subject to UN sanctions, are unloaded at zero point and delivered to the other side of the border after customs check.
- Measures at the Turkish-Syria and Turkish-Iraq borders are enhanced by additional personnel, patrols and equipment.
- Overall land borders of Turkey (with Iran, Bulgaria, Greece, Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Iraq and Syria) are secured by 50.000 military personnel. Within the framework of enhanced security measures at Syrian border, number of the personnel of the existing 12 Border Battalions which was 12.000 in 2104, has been increased to 20.000.
- New units of air defense and reconnaissance have been added to the battalions.
- 90 percent of the operations of unmanned air vehicles are focused in Syrian border area to detect illegal crossing and smuggling activities.
- Turkey has also strengthened physical security measures along its 911 kilometers border with Syria. More specifically, the number of border patrol stations are increased, 375,6 kilometers length of trenches are dug, 153,3 kilometers barbed wire installed, 3,3 kilometers security wall and 19,8 kilometers of movable concrete wall formed, 26,3 kilometers of accordion barrier systems positioned, 422.630 border illumination poles installed, 79,5 kilometers embankment (3x3 m.) formed, 1,217 kilometers length of border patrol path improved and 7,8 kilometers road constructed (Pic. 3, 4).

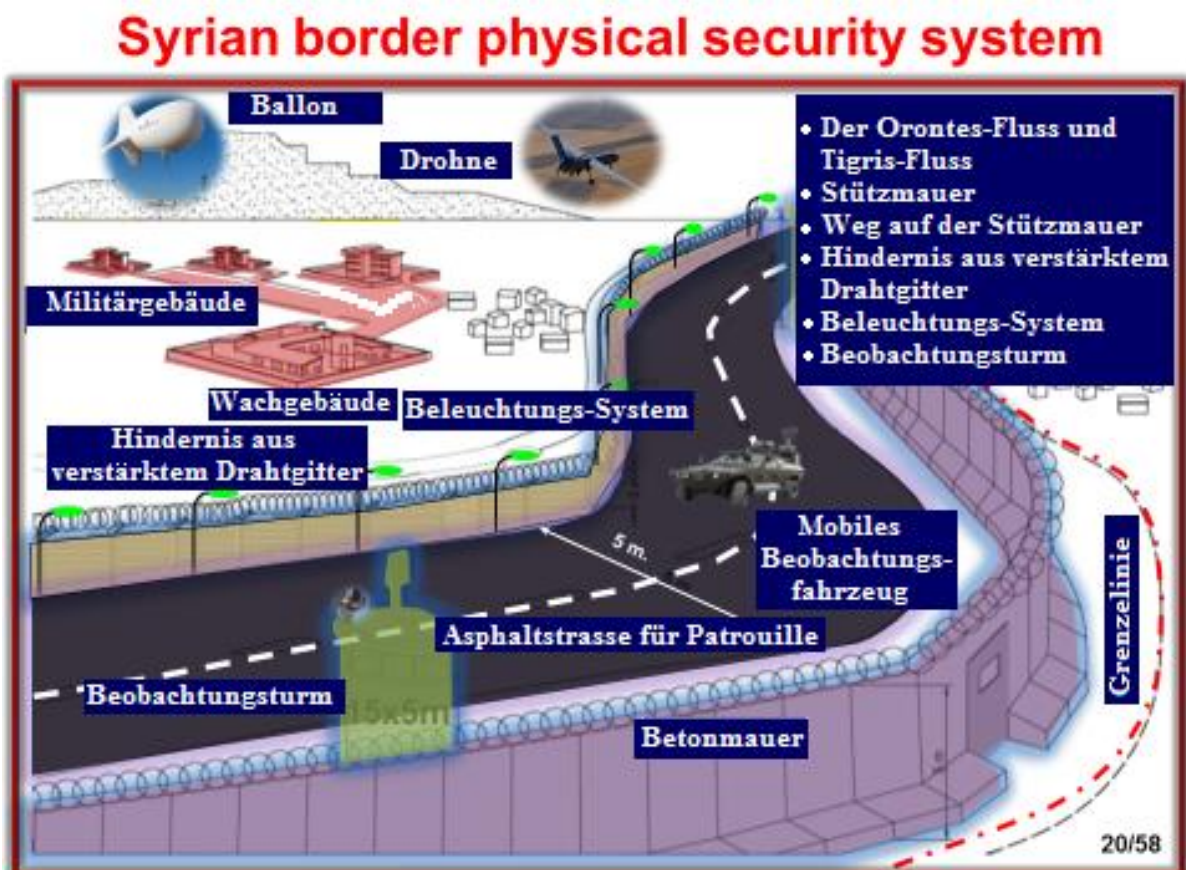
(Pic.3)



(Pic. 4)

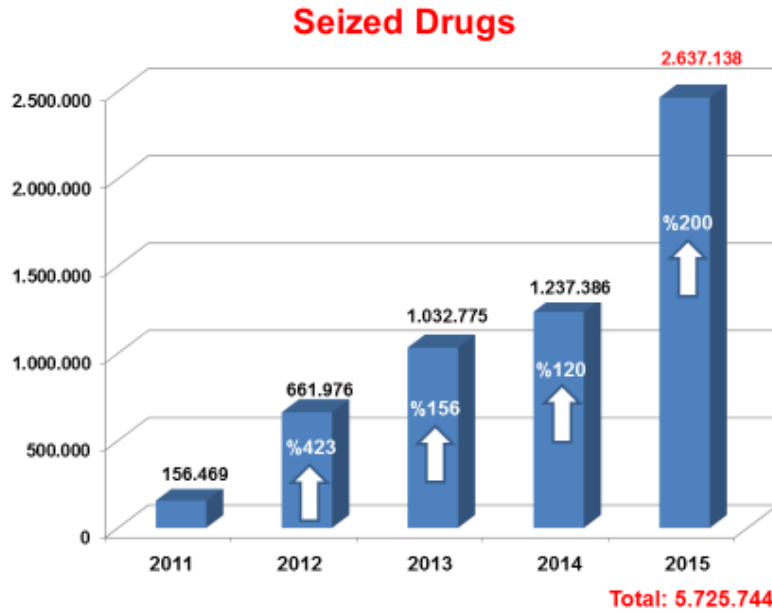


- Furthermore, Turkey is in the process of establishment of “Syrian border physical security system” which includes construction of 151 kilometers of wall and it is expected to cost 81 million US Dollars (Fig.1).



- Turkish security forces also employs effective measures to prevent drug and cigarette smuggling across Syrian borders. Amount of seized drugs and cigarettes is shown in graphs below in graph 1 and 2.

(Graph.1)



49/58

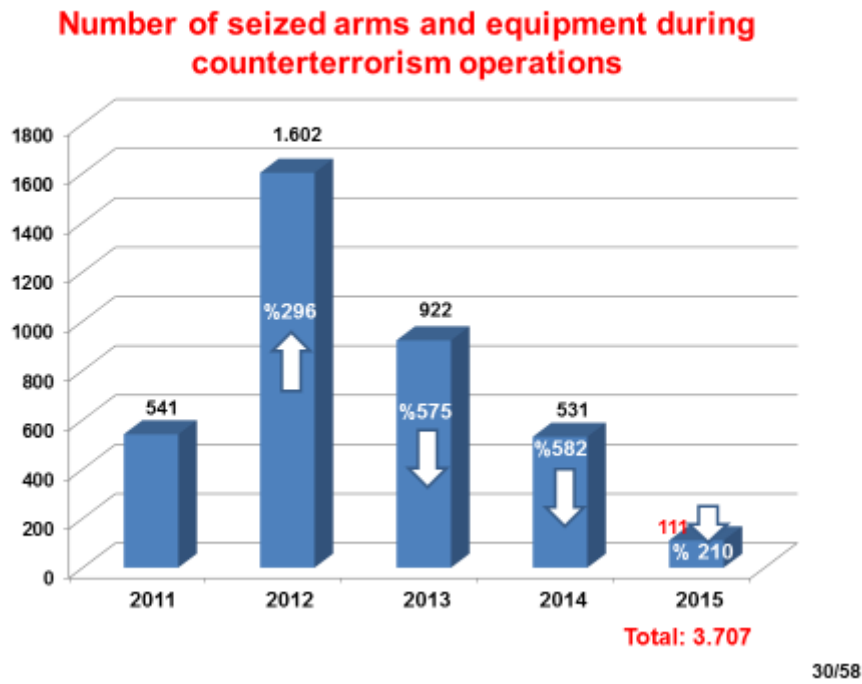
(Graph.2)



53/58

- Number of seized arms and equipment during counterterrorism operations against PKK is listed in Graph 3 and in Table 1. At the same time transfer of such arms from conflict zones to Turkey poses a great security risk to Turkey. In this vein 30 suicide bomber vest seized in Turkey which were brought from Syria confirms level of this threat. Number of intercepted persons while illegal crossing at Syrian border is reflected in Table 2.

(Graph.3)



(Table.1)

MATERIALS SEIZED FROM TERRORIST GROUPS (pkk, daesh,dhkp/c, mlkp)	
SINCE 6 OCTOBER 2014	
PLASTIC and CHEMICAL EXPLOSIVE	11.087,4 KG.
IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICES (Molotov, Hand Grenade, etc.)	9.459
GUNS	1.600
HEAVY WEAPONS	787
BULLETS	212.261

(Table.2)

**INTERCEPTED PERSONS ON TURKISH – SYRIAN BORDER
WHILE ILLEGAL CROSSING
(Between 15 June – 29 December 2015)**

Syrian Citizens	Third Country Citizens	Total
114.084	1.949	116.033

Notes:

-- **Peak:** 14-28 September 2015 (12.275 persons were intercepted)

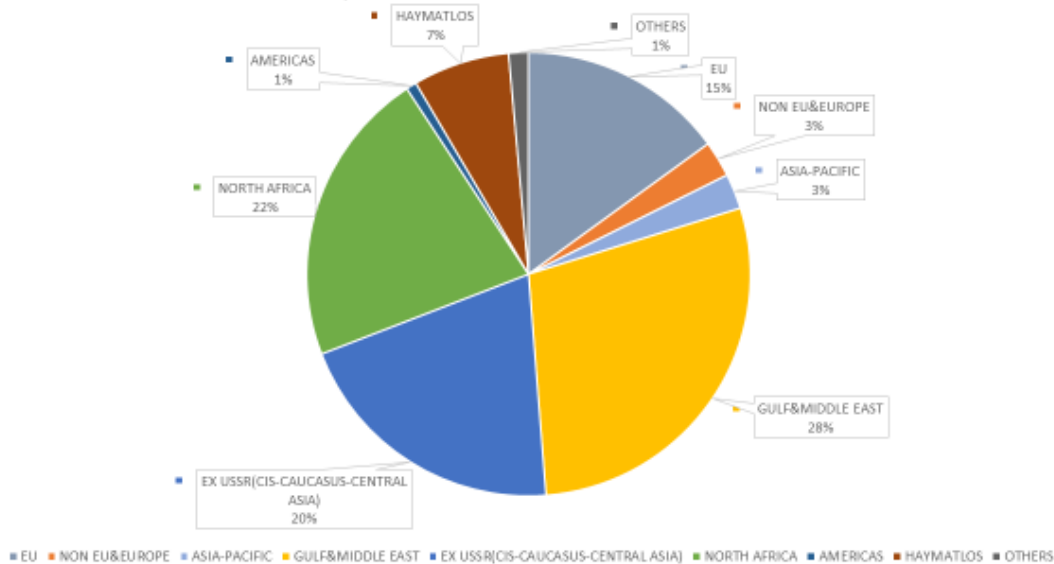
-- **Low:** 20-29 November 2015 (3.069 persons were intercepted)

Prevention of Foreign Terrorist Fighters' (FTF) travel

- Turkey has begun to counter threat of foreign terrorist fighters since 2011 and called for source countries to take necessary legal and administrative measures to prevent departure and travel of FTFs from their countries. In this regard, Turkey has included more than 35.500 (35.970) foreigners in the no-entry list since the Syrian crisis erupted. More than 2.800 (2.896) foreigners were deported since 2011 in the context of measures against foreign fighters. Regional distribution of suspected FTFs in Turkey's no-entry list is shown below (Chart.1).

(Chart.1)

NO ENTRY LIST (Distribution by Regions-2011-Dec 2015)



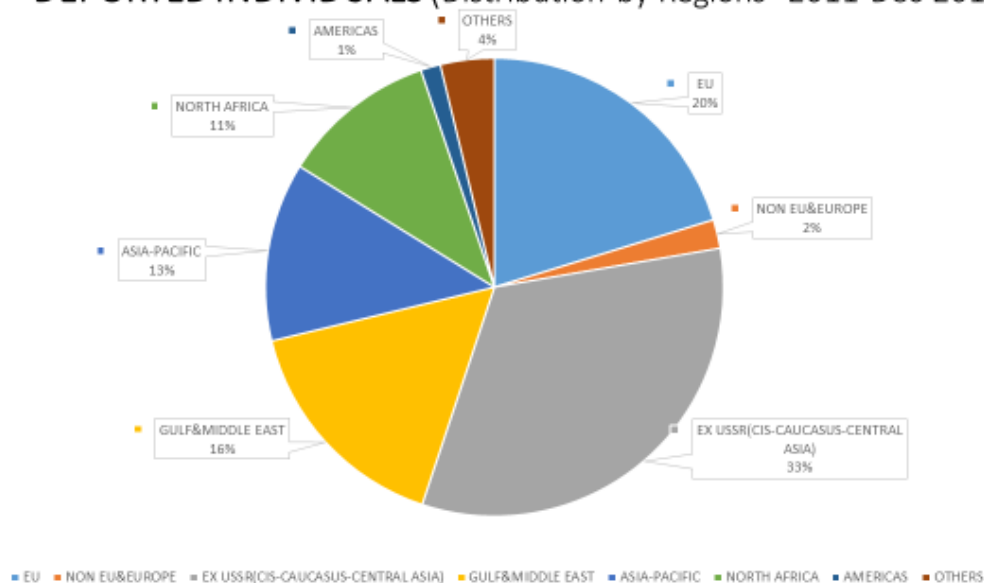
- Turkey informs the Embassies in Ankara by Note Verbal about travel plans of foreigners placed under detention due to their affiliation with DEASH/ISIL or other terrorist groups in Syria and Iraq. MFA requested e mail addresses from Embassies in Ankara for urgent notification
- In order to prevent FTFs from reaching the conflict areas via Turkey, security measures have been reinforced, including new risk analysis units at the airports and enhanced passenger screening and security checks in regions adjacent to the Syrian border. Risk Analysis Units (RAU) have also been deployed to major bus terminals. Until now, around **7.500** people were checked by these Units and more than **1.700** of them were denied entry to Turkey (Table.3). Regional distribution of deported FTFs from Turkey is shown below (Chart.2).

Table.3

Denied entry at the airports by RAU April 2014- 14 January 2016	1.745
Intercepted by RAU after entering Turkey	551
Third Country citizens intercepted while illegal border crossing at the Syrian border (15.06.2015-29.12.2015)	1.949
Total	4.245

(Chart.2)

DEPORTED INDIVIDUALS (Distribution by Regions- 2011-Dec 2015)



- Since the beginning of 2015, (as of 14 January 2016) 1,709 individuals, including 556 foreign nationals, have been detained and 474 persons under arrest due to their affiliation with DEASH/ISIL.
- In accordance with UNSCR 2178(2014), the source countries have the primary obligation to prevent movements of such persons travelling to join terrorist organizations in the first place. All transited countries until FTFs reach their destinations have responsibility to prevent their travel. International efforts should also be focusing on destruction of recruiting and facilitation networks that operate throughout the source countries and prevent dissemination of extremism propaganda.
- Therefore, priority should be spotting and stopping foreign fighters travelling to conflict zones, including Syria and Iraq, at their country of departure. If that fails, than our priority is to stop them at the first port of entry. For that, we need timely, concrete, actionable and full information sharing from source countries about suspected persons of terrorism.
- Several different sample cases are listed below regarding FTFs travel to conflict zones:

FTFs reaching Turkey after travelling through transit countries

In December 2015, The Tajikistan Interpol NCB sent bulletins and diffusion messages for the use of Turkish Interpol NCB regarding 22 Tajik citizens who were suspected to have travelled to Syria for joining DEASH/ISIL. The information about the subjects revealed that in this sample of 22 persons, 21 had been reported to have travelled to or resided in Russian Federation before allegedly travelling to Turkey.

In the case of one individual his travel date to Russia was reported for 2008 and his travel to Turkey with the purpose of travelling to Syria is reported as 2014. In another cases, two individuals are reported to have travelled to Russia as a migrant workers in 2012 and 2013, with no specific date for their travels to Turkey.

The 21 cases indicate that the FTFs from Tajikistan have been using Russian Federation as a hub with short and long term residence before their alleged travels to Turkey. The details about possible links and communication among these persons and their process of radicalization before their travel to Russian Federation

FTFs who have been intercepted after entry to Turkey

- Swedish Interpol Unit have notified their Turkish counterparts on 14.01.2013 at 22:15 that individual "A"- a Bosnian citizen living in Sweden- was believed to be travelling to Syria. After investigation, it was established that "A" was currently in Gaziantep. He was arrested on 15.01.2013 at 00:30, merely 2 hours later than the notification of the Swedish authorities.

- After the terrorist attacks that took place in Paris on 13-14 November 2015, French Interpol Unit have notified all countries that Individual "B"- a Moroccan citizen- is believed to have connections with the terrorist attack. After the investigation, it was found out that "B" entered to Turkey on 14 November 2015 just after the Paris attacks took place. He was arrested in Antalya on 16 November 2015

Individuals who have been denied entry due to timely info shared by departure country

- On 29 April 2015 USA authorities informed the Turkish authorities that a USA citizen named "A" is flying to İstanbul and that he intends to cross over to Syria. He was intercepted in İstanbul Atatürk Airport the same day and interviewed by Risk Analysis Units (RAU). During the interview "A" stated that he was in Turkey as a tourist, he plans to travel to Batman and does not have a return ticket and no hotel reservation. Risk Analysis Units declared the person as inadmissible and sent him back to Canada on 1 May 2015.

- On 4 May 2015 Swedish authorities informed Turkish counterparts that Swedish citizens "A" and "B" would be arriving to Istanbul and that they had the intention to cross to Syria. When they arrived to Istanbul Ataturk Airport RAU detected another prospective FTF named "C" was in the same plane. Their luggage contained camouflage gear. Swedish authorities were informed about the three FTFs who were sent back from İstanbul to Stockholm on 5th of May. However they tried to re-enter Turkey from Greece through sea border gate in Bodrum on the 12th of May, and they were denied entry.

- Turkish security officials, while countering a number of terrorist organizations based in Iraq and Syria, are also responsible for providing law and order for 2.5 millions Syrians and more than 300 thousand Iraqis who are under our temporary protection.
- FTF challenge creates a huge burden on our security and administrative structures who are already facing the challenge of PKK and DHKP/C terrorism. Furthermore, Turkey has been targeted by the terrorist entities commissioned by Syrian regime. Two years ago in the town of Reyhanlı, 52 people were killed by such a group (Mihraç Ural is the leader of terrorist group named Mukavemi Es-Suriyyi/THKPC/Acilciler).