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Press TV

Turkey deploys 250 tanks near Syrian border amid escalating tensions

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Turkey has deployed 250 tanks along its southern border with Syria amid rising tensions with the Damascus government over the past few days.

The tanks along with military vehicles of the Turkish Armed Forces, artillery units and a large number of military personnel, were dispatched to the southeastern provinces of Sanliurfa, Gaziantep and Mardin at the Turkish-Syrian border, Turkey's *Hurriyet* newspaper reported.

Turkey has beefed up its military defenses on its border with Syria over the past weeks, stationing tanks, anti-aircraft missiles, and additional troops in the area.

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan warned on October 9 that Turkey's armed forces would not hesitate to strike back in response to any strike on Turkish soil.

He also vowed to take any measure necessary to respond to Syrian threats to Turkish national security and said, "The requirement of being a state means we must take any measure and be prepared for any possibility."

Also on October 5, Erdogan said Ankara was not far from war with Syria due to the cross-border attacks.

"We are not interested in war, but we're not far from it either."

"Those who attempt to test Turkey's deterrence, its decisiveness, its capacity; I say here they are making a fatal mistake," he warned.

On October 4, the Turkish parliament authorized cross-border military action against Syria "when deemed right."

Tensions have been running high between Syria and Turkey, with Damascus accusing Turkey -- along with Saudi Arabia and Qatar -- of backing a deadly insurgency that has claimed the lives of many Syrians, including security and army personnel.

In an interview with the Turkish daily *Cumhuriyet* in July, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad said Ankara "has supplied all logistic support to the terrorists who have killed our people."