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## Erdogan: Death Penalty, Detentions to Cleanse Turkey After Failed Coup

By Jason Ditz  
July 17, 2016



The first 48 hours after Friday evening's failed coup d'état in Turkey has seen the launching of a massive crackdown on anyone even suspected of being involved, with some 6,000 from the military already detained in relation to the attempt, including the commander of the Incirlik Air Base, where US troops and a substantial number of US nuclear arms are stationed.

This appears to be just the beginning, with Erdogan openly talking about bringing back the death penalty, saying the public wants to see the coup plotters executed and that “in a democracy, whatever the people want they will get.”

Justice Minister Bekir Bozdag also hinted that the mass detentions are going to go quite a bit further, saying that the operation “is continuing” and that the number could soon surpass the 6,000 being reported.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is vowing that the entire country would be cleansed of the “virus” responsible for the coup attempt, attempting the pin the effort on former ally and current exile Fethullah Gulen.

Gulen, currently in the US, denies involvement in the coup, while US officials have said they are open to the possibility of extraditing him back to Turkey, which would obviously be contingent on actual evidence of his involvement, something we so far haven’t seen.

In the meantime, the purge is centered not just on Gulen’s reformist movement, but everyone even tangentially related to them. This has included 2,745 judges from around the country, who were removed from office over the weekend.

The judges span all the different levels of the country’s judiciary, including even some members of the Judges and Prosecutors High Council, which itself approved the purge during an emergency meeting this weekend.

Beyond removal from office, some 48 members of the administrative court and 140 members of the appeals court now have warrants out for their arrest, again all related to claims that they were affiliated with Gulen’s movement.

The purge of the military and judiciary is likely being done with an eye toward empowering those loyal to Erdogan, but at the same time is said to be raising concern about continuity in the nation’s substantial military, with concerns too broad of a purge will further fracture the force.