

WORLD REACTION

NATO CHIEF JENS STOLTENBERG
"I welcome the strong support shown by the people and all political parties to democracy and to the democratically elected government of Turkey."

WHITE HOUSE
"All parties in Turkey should support the democratically-elected government of Turkey, show restraint, and avoid any violence or bloodshed."

UN CHIEF BAN-KI-MOON
"Military interference in the affairs of any state is unacceptable."

IRANIAN FM JAVAD ZARIF
"Turkish people's brave defense of democracy and their elected government proves that coups have no place in our region and are doomed to fail."

EUROPEAN COUNCIL PRESIDENT DONALD TUSK
"The tensions in and challenges for Turkey cannot be solved with guns."

RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY
"The flare-up of the domestic political situation against the backdrop of the existing terrorist threats in this country and the armed conflict in the region brings a heightened risk to international and regional stability."

FRENCH FM JEAN-MARC AYRAULT
"The Turkish population showed its maturity and courage by committing to the respect of its institutions... France hopes that Turkish democracy will emerge strengthened from this test and that fundamental freedoms will be fully respected."

BRITISH FM BORIS JOHNSON
"Just spoken to (Turkey's) foreign minister (Mevlut Cavusoglu). I underlined (Britain's) support for the democratic elected government and institutions."

QATAR
Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani "congratuated (Erdogan) on the support of the people of Turkey on his rule against the failed military coup."

HILLARY CLINTON
"We should all urge calm and respect for laws, institutions, and basic human rights and freedoms, and support for the democratically elected civilian government"

SOURCE: AFP



FAILED COUP BID IN TURKEY



(From top left, clockwise) People rally on a tank after they take over a military position on the Bosphorus bridge; a woman helps a wounded man after clashes with Turkish military there; a man stands in front of a Turkish army tank in front of Ataturk airport; anti-coup protesters beat surrendered soldiers; and uniforms and arms rest on a street after the failed coup bid in Istanbul, yesterday.

Defiant Turks stood firm

AGENCIES

Troops filed into Taksim Square uncertain of how they would be received. Before long, angry crowds had gathered to denounce them.

In the famous square where anti-government protests took hold in 2013, a huge crowd chanted against the putsch, draped with Turkish flags across their shoulders.

The scenes were reminiscent of the mass demonstrations three years ago against President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who was then prime minister.

But this time, the crowds were on his side -- and it was the military, badly outnumbered at a hundred against a thousand, who were the target of their ire.

"Military get out," they chanted, crowding around a monument that marks the birth of the Turkish republic almost a century ago.

"The people are afraid of a military government," said Dogan, 38. "Most of them have been in military service -- they know what a military government would mean."

As a helicopter flew overhead the crowd began to boo, shaking their fists at the night sky.

Then there was horror as the soldiers opened fire.

At least three people were hit. One man lay bloodied on the ground. Ambulances arrived, their blue lights illuminating the angry faces of the crowd.

"The military, they did this! Murderers!" screamed one man above the shouts of the crowd.

Minutes later riot police poured out of trucks, brandishing their shields and clearing the space. Smatterings of gunfire

Turkey's President Tayyip Erdogan speaks via Facetime to address the nation during the attempted coup, in Marmaris, Turkey, yesterday.



PHOTO: REUTERS

echoed across the almost empty square.

Soldiers also opened fire at thousands of civilians trying to cross the Fatih Sultan Mehmet Bridge across the Bosphorus by foot, leaving tens of people injured.

Shops had closed hurriedly as news of the coup attempt broke. Parts of Istanbul were left looking like a ghost town, and it was not until hours later that the crowds took to the streets, possibly heeding a call by Erdogan for the public to come out and resist the coup.

But at one bar at least, a group of young men stayed defiantly in their seats, saying they would not leave their tables or their drinks. No military coup would stop them enjoying a Friday night in Besiktas, a neighbourhood on Istanbul's European side. As helicopters flew above and eyes darted nervously upwards, proud Besiktas resident Ali said he did not want his country to suffer the latest in a string of coups since 1960.

"This country has seen so many coups, I am against them. It will not work," he said as he showed off his Ataturk tattoo, expressing his love for the secularist founder of modern Turkey.

It was a dark night but it brought a bright new morning for democracy in Turkey.

The people of Turkey proved courageous. They came out on to the streets and demanded that political disputes be settled through political means and democratic procedures.

The vast majority of people of all political persuasions rejected this violent campaign, and all of the political parties represented in parliament opposed it.

The call from a divisive Erdogan, met with people's response. As a result, the coup attempt hasn't survived even for a day.

Failed coup threatens US fight against Islamic State

Russia says move increases threat to regional stability

AGENCIES

The attempted military coup in Turkey could hamper the United States in its war against Islamic State in Syria and undermine other US goals in the Middle East by weakening democracy and sparking prolonged instability in the Nato pact's only Muslim member.

Russia also said the failed bid may destabilise the whole region.

"The flare-up of the domestic political situation against the backdrop of the existing terrorist threats in this country and the armed conflict in the region brings a heightened risk to international and regional stability," Russian foreign ministry said in a statement.

With the Turkish military and security services apparently split as gunfire and explosions rocked both Istanbul and the capital Ankara on Friday night, the United States made clear it was siding with the government of President Tayyip Erdogan.

Relations between Erdogan and the US administration have been rocky, but he has broadly cooperated in the fight against IS.

Whatever the outcome, analysts said, the US ally now faces a period of political and economic instability. That could divert the Turkish military and security services from stemming a recent series of attacks blamed on Islamic State, fighting a Kurdish insurrection and shutting off the flow of foreign militants across its border to and from Syria.

"From the US perspective, the worst case scenario might be an ineffective coup that pitches Turkey into a prolonged power struggle," said Blaize Misztal, the national security director at the Bipartisan Policy Center.

"Even a quickly executed coup which met little resistance would be destabilising, but a partial or unsuccessful coup would lead to much more instability ahead."

"This could be one of the most critical challenges of the Obama administration. A stable Turkey is crucial to American interests in the Middle East, the Balkans and the Caucasus," said Bruce Riedel, of the Brookings Institution and a former CIA analyst. "A democratic Turkey, even if flawed, is essential to any hopes of political reform in the Middle East."

Designed coup d'état!

Conspiracy theorists claim Erdogan used it to consolidate power

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Conspiracy theorists are saying the attempted military coup in Turkey was faked, after President Recep Tayyip Erdogan reportedly called it "a gift from Allah".

Social media users have compared the coup attempt in which more than 160 people are thought to have died to the Reichstag fire -- the 1933 arson attack on the German parliament building which Hitler used as an excuse to suspend civil liberties and order mass arrests of his opponents.

President Erdogan reportedly told supporters at Istanbul's international airport that the coup attempt was the work of the movement led by the exiled preacher Fethullah Gulen, which he denounced as "an armed terrorist organisation".

He was quoted as calling the attempted coup "a gift from God," reportedly saying it would help cleanse the military of "members of the gang" who would "pay a heavy price for their

treason".

This immediately led many to fear that President Erdogan, who has previously been accused of persecuting critics, will use the coup as an excuse to further crack down on his opponents. Such fears are likely to be stoked by Turkish TV reports that 2,745 judges have been removed from their offices



following the coup attempt.

Some observers have even begun speculating that the coup was stage-managed to give Erdogan an opportunity to purge the military of opponents and increase his grip on Turkey.

Ryan Heath, the senior EU corre-

spondent at Politico, used Twitter to share comments from his "Turkish source", who called the events of Friday night a "fake coup" which would help a "fake democracy warrior" [Erdogan].

The source said: "Probably we'll see an early election [in] which he'll try to guarantee an unbelievable majority of the votes. And this will probably guarantee another 10-15 years of authoritarian, elected dictatorship.

"We'll possibly see a change in the constitution for worse, which secularism will be gone and Islamist motifs will be in!"

Another Twitter user quoted "my special friend in Istanbul" as calling what happened: "Most probably a real coup attempt, which was vaguely known beforehand, and was allowed to proceed, because they knew it to be disorganised and weak.

"This means it will be followed by a real coup by Erdogan himself, and the last remnants of democracy will be lost."

Erdogan govt may restore death penalty

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

The Turkish government is considering bringing back the death penalty so it can execute those involved in the attempted military coup against President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Mehmet Muezzinoğlu, the ruling Justice and Development Party's Deputy Leader, said the government will introduce a bill calling for the execution of rebel soldiers.

"We will put forward a motion, which will demand the execution of those who have been involved in the coup attempt," Muezzinoğlu wrote on Twitter.

Following his comments, #Idamistiyorum ("I want death penalty") has become the top trend on Twitter in Turkey.

The failed coup left more than 260 dead scores injured.

At one point it looked as if the coup would succeed, with Turkey's military chief of staff General Hulusi Akar having been taken hostage and a TV news anchor forced to keep repeating: "The political administration that has lost all legitimacy and has been forced to withdraw."

President Erdogan appeared to have been caught off guard while on holiday. He had to resort to giving interviews via mobile phone and FaceTime to insist he was still in control.

But citizens took to the streets in support of the president, lying down in front of tanks or climbing on top of them in Istanbul.

As pictures emerged of soldiers involved in the coup surrendering, while being punched by civilian supporters of Erdogan, a senior Turkish official said 1,563 military personnel were now in custody across the country -- awaiting an increasingly uncertain fate.

'One day, you'll hear about me'

How a drug addict, petty criminal became Islamic State's jihadist

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

On 11 July Mohamed Lahouaiej Bouhlel rented a 19-tonne refrigerated truck, paying the required deposit. He failed to return the vehicle, using it instead as a weapon in carrying out one of the deadliest terrorist atrocities ever seen in Europe, killing 84 people, including ten children, and injuring 202 others, 52 of them critically.

The 31-year-old former delivery driver and chauffeur, the father of three children, has been described by neighbours as being a drinker.

The attack bore all the hallmarks of jihadist terror said French officials. IS has previously issued instructions to use all means possible to conduct jihad, with the use of vehicles mentioned as one of the options. The devastating toll came from him mowing through Promenade de Anglais in



Nice packed with 30,000 people celebrating Bastille Day - he travelled for just over a mile, and also fired on police using an automatic pistol.

He was known to be a petty criminal and some of his arrests were drugs- and drink-related. He had lost his job after falling asleep at the wheel of a lorry and crashing into a row of cars. In January he was found guilty of assaulting a man and given a suspended jail sentence.

Neighbours and acquaintances of the killer held that there had been no

sign of Muslim religious zeal in his behaviour; he seldom attended mosques, and consumed alcohol. He was also said to have been violent towards his wife, Hajer Khalfallah, from whom he was in the process of getting divorced.

Walid-Hamou, who said he was a cousin of Lahouaiej Bouhlel's wife, claimed her husband "mistreated her, he beat her up. He was bad, bad man. I don't understand what happened, this man drank, took drugs, he was no Muslim". Wissam, a neighbour, who came from the same town as the killer in Tunisia, said "he was even drinking just before he did this. He was heard arguing with someone who told him that he was worthless. Lahouaiej Bouhlel shouted back 'One day, you'll hear about me'".

And a day after the attack, the so called Islamic State called him a jihadist!

RELEASED PAGES ON 9/11 REPORT 'No top Saudi link' found in attacks

BBC ONLINE

The White House has said previously classified papers concerning the 9/11 attacks released on Friday show there had been no official Saudi role.

Lawmakers and victims' families campaigned for years for their publication, alleging high-level Saudis were complicit in the attacks.

According to the declassified document, "while in the United States, some of the 9/11 hijackers were in contact with, and received support or assistance from, individuals who may be connected to the Saudi government". It included a possibility that money was sent from the Saudi Royal family to the hijackers, among other alleged links.

However, White House press secretary Josh Earnest said the pages "don't shed any new light or change any of the conclusions about responsibility for the 9/11 attacks".

Fifteen of the 19 hijackers who staged the 2001 attacks were Saudi nationals. Almost 3,000 people were killed when they deliberately flew planes they had seized into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

An independent panel completed the 9/11 Commission Report a year after the attacks. But several sections were withheld from the public for 13 years.

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