



[A Deadly Bombing in the Heart of Istanbul Kills at Least 6 People and Injures More than 80 Others](#)

A deadly explosion shook a busy street of Istanbul this past weekend, killing at least 6 people and injuring more than 80 others. The attack occurred in the Beyoglu district of Turkey's largest city on Istiklal Avenue, as the streets were, as per usual, crowded with families and tourists strolling, shopping, and watching street musicians. Particularly troubling with respect to the timing of the attack was the fact that the area was even more crowded than usual, due to a soccer match in the nearby proximity. The incident has been deemed as an act of terror by Turkish officials, with the nation's interior minister expressing the belief that Kurdish separatists from the Kurdistan Workers' Party and the Democratic Union Party were most likely behind the deadly explosion. The suspect in the case has been apprehended, with police stating that she was trained by Kurdish fighters in Syria and entered Turkey through northwest Syria's Afrin region. This recent attack has drawn flashbacks of similar suspected terror attacks in Turkey, most notably from between 2015 and 2017, when the country was plagued by a string of these during that span of time.

Security cameras saw a woman sitting on a bench for more than 40 minutes before getting up minutes prior to the explosion, leaving behind a bag. Officials commented that they believe there was the possibility that the bag had some mechanism in it, and that it could have either detonated on its own or been detonated from afar. The investigation into the attack is still ongoing, with Turkish authorities strongly suspecting that there is a link to Kurdish militant groups, but they have also not ruled out ties to ISIS as well.

Turkey's contentions with Kurdish separatist groups have spanned four decades and claimed tens of thousands of lives. The conflict began in 1984 when the Kurdish separatists began engaging in insurgency against Turkish authorities for greater cultural and political rights with the objective of establishing an independent Kurdish state. A ceasefire was established but in 2015, it was violated when a suicide bombing by suspected self-proclaimed ISIS militants killed nearly 30 Kurds near the Syrian borders. The Kurdistan Workers' Party, otherwise known as the PKK, seeks an independent state in Turkey. Syrian Kurdish fighters have also been battling ISIS as part of the alliance of Arab and Kurdish fighters backed by the United States. The PKK themselves are deemed a designated terrorist organization by Turkey, the United States, and the European Union.

The international community has rallied together to uniformly condemn the attack, with French President Emmanuel Macron being particularly vocal in sharing sympathies with Turkey. From the NATO secretary general to the European Council president, a host of entities have expressed solidarity with the Turkish people. This includes the White House press secretary sharing U.S. sentiments of condemnation for the attack, although some Turkish officials have accused the United States of complicity for it.

This recent bombing broke a five-year spell where Turkey was free from these types of deadly terror attacks, and thus, it has sparked fears among some of the potential for a re-emergence of them. As of now, no group has claimed direct responsibility for the attack, with the PKK denying involvement and claiming that they do not target civilians in any way. Despite this, Turkish officials are looking into the PKK and believe that they were involved in some capacity.