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Erdogan Says Talks With Putin on Syria Will Bring 'New Hope'

By Reuters

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Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said on Monday that a joint statement on Syria due to be made after his meeting with Russia's Vladimir Putin would bring "new hope" to the region.

Erdogan was speaking to reporters before the two men met in the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi.

"The statement which we will make after the meeting in Sochi will contain new hope for the region," Erdogan said through an interpreter. He gave no indication of what would be in the statement.

Turkey, which supports Syrian rebels opposed to President Bashar al-Assad, has been holding talks with his allies Russiaand Iran over the fate of Syria's rebel-held Idlib and surrounding districts which Assad has vowed to recapture.

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Russia's military support for the Syrian government has helped reverse years of rebel gains.

Ahead of the trip to Russia, Erdogan said Turkey's calls for a ceasefire in Idlib region were bearing fruit after days of relative calm but that more work needed to be done.

Putin this month publicly rebuffed a proposal from Erdogan for a ceasefire there when the two met along with Iran's president for a three-way summit in Tehran.

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