

# Erdogan warns Europe to expect millions of migrants



Refugees and migrants gather on the Turkish side of the closed Kastanies border crossing, on the borderline between Greece and Turkey, near the Evros River, in an attempt to cross into Greece, 02 March 2020. Thousands of refugees and migrants are gathering on the Turkish side of the border with Greece with the intent to cross into the European Union following the Turkish government's decision to loosen controls on migrant flows after the death of 33 Turkish soldiers killed in an attack in Idlib, Syria on 27 February. - EPA-EFE/DIMITRIS TOSIDIS

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Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan warned on Monday that "millions" of migrants would soon head for Europe.

He was accused by EU leaders that he is trying to pressure them into backing his operations into Syria, where government forces backed by Russian airpower are advancing into the last rebel stronghold.

On Friday, Turkey opened the borders for migrants and refugees to leave for the EU. Since then, thousands have gathered at the border with Greece, creating chaos and clashing with security forces.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel described Turkey's move as "unacceptable". EU migration commissioner Margaritis Schinas said nobody could "blackmail or intimidate the EU".

Erdogan also said he had turned down an EU offer of €1 billion in extra aid for migrants, adding to a €6 billion deal agreed in 2016: "We don't want this money", he told the media, adding that "There will be more. Soon, this number will be expressed in millions".

He also said he hoped for a ceasefire in Syria when he meets his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin later this week.

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Source:

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