

## **Ready to discuss cleric Fethullah Gulen's extradition, US tells Turkey**

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**Ankara:** The United States has said that it was ready to discuss with Turkey the extradition of Muslim cleric Fethullah Gulen, blamed by President Tayyip Erdogan for failed coup.

### **Fethullah Gulen**

"With regard to the question of possible involvement in the coup attempt by persons residing in the United States -- we have been clear that the US would be willing to provide assistance to Turkish authorities conducting their investigation into the coup attempt," US Ambassador to Ankara John Bass said in a statement on Monday.

"If Turkey decides to submit an extradition request for anyone legally resident in the United States, it will be considered under the terms of the US-Turkey extradition agreement," Bass added.

He noted that "to that end, US government officials in the US and in Turkey, including representatives of the US Department of Justice, are prepared to work with their counterparts and to discuss what will be required to meet the legal and evidentiary standards set by our bilateral extradition treaty."

"I underscore that our extradition treaty and US laws have specific requirements that must be met before a suspect individual can be transferred to another nation's jurisdiction," the ambassador added.

Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim stepped up pressure on the United States on Monday to extradite exiled cleric Fethullah Gulen, accused by Ankara of being the mastermind of a failed military coup late on Friday which killed over 290 people.

"We would be disappointed if our (American) friends told us to present proof even though members of the assassin organisation are trying to destroy an elected government under the directions of that person," Yildirim said at a press conference in Ankara, adding, "At this stage there could even be a questioning of our friendship."

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