

Public Call on OPCW to Immediately Investigate Turkey`s Use of Chemical Weapons in Kurdistan

The Use of Toxic Chemicals



The Turkish invasion was launched with massive air strikes starting on April 14th. Then, on the night of April 17th, the occupying Turkish army attempted to airdrop its soldiers in guerrilla areas under the cover of attack helicopters and fighter jets. Since the fourth day of the invasion, the criminal actions of the Turkish army are seen in its use of toxic chemical substances against some of the defensive positions in the resistance areas of Kurojahro,

Werxelê, Şehîd Şahîn, Kunişka and Girê Ortê in South Kurdistan (Iraq).

It was also the case that poisonous gas was repeatedly used by the Turkish state in Southern Kurdistan last year too.

The suspected gases were classified as follows:

Tabun: its neurotoxin is the oldest of the three so-called G-warfare agents, alongside soman and sarin;

Green Cross: the lung warfare agent contains chloropicrin as an active ingredient;

Mustard gas: the skin warfare agent, also known as yellow cross, belongs to the mustard gas group;

Unknown sleeping gas: another gas used by the Turkish army which makes those affected sluggish, causes memory loss and leads individuals to collapse;

Tear gas: tear gases are substances that are irritating to the eyes and mucous membranes.

Despite evidence and several reports by delegations to the area, the Association OPCW did not take any actions against the use of these weapons which has emboldened Turkey to use them once again.

- *We again remind the OPCW (Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons) and the UN of their duties and call on them to take urgent action against these Turkish war crimes.*

Why the aggressive and autocratic Turkish regime is attacking now once more

The Turkish occupying state sees the Kurdish Freedom Movement as the biggest obstacle to its dream to colonize the whole Middle East. Turkey has long had its eyes on Kirkuk and Mosul in Iraq. Under the AKP, Turkey has been blatantly pursuing a neo-Ottoman expansionist policy. And from this outlook, not only Rojava-Kurdistan but also South-Kurdistan belong to the Greater Turkish Empire. That is the rationale why Turkey is attacking the PKK, as its resistance and very existence is seen as a major obstacle to Turkish expansionism. Unfortunately, the Turkish state is receiving direct and indirect support from collaborative local forces that have been recruited into its ranks. The Turkish state is supported by the KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party) in its invasion of Southern Kurdistan.

The intensity and the impact of the attacks by the Turkish army

Many airdropping operations were conducted to launch a full-scale invasion attack, meaning that this is not an operation, but a major war. No state can launch such an invasion so easily in violation of international law with countless cross-border military offensives. The Turkish state has also used its war technology and chemical weapons before, but right now we see that it is now relying on them much more. They are using helicopters, fighter jets, reconnaissance planes flying at the same time while ground attacks are taking place and howitzers are fired from the border outposts. In short, it is aimed at a permanent bombardment and full occupation. Turkish attack helicopters did not take off to launch the attack from the Turkish side of the border, but from southern Kurdistan.

Below are just a few results of the intensity of the attacks from one week

Air strikes by Turkish fighter jets: **387**

Artillery attacks by Turkish combat helicopters and ground troops: **243**

Chemical warfare agent deployments against guerrilla positions by Turkey: **7**

Number of Turkish soldiers killed: **218**

Number of Turkish soldiers injured: **48**

Number of martyred Kurdish guerrilla fighters: **11**

In addition, **4** Turkish drones were shot down by the guerrillas

Another drone and **11** helicopters were hit and damaged.

To this there is international silence



The international community is currently remaining silent about this latest Turkish war of aggression. And silence in this context means consent. Turkey is exploiting the international focus on the Ukraine war to carry out its invasion.

Unfortunately, Turkey's war is receiving scant attention from the international media and the same Western politicians who seem able to issue round the clock commentary on the conflict in Ukraine. The Turkish Defence

Ministry claims that the offensive is being carried out in coordination with his country's "friends and allies". Is that the real reason why the Western powers remain silent?

Breaches of international law, aggressive wars, the use of chemical weapons, airstrikes and the targeted killing of civilians are all rightly condemned and criticized when it comes to the invasion of Ukraine. However, the EU and USA prefer to avert their eyes to the fact that a NATO partner, namely Turkey, is practising these same breaches in Kurdistan.

By attacking and seeking to weaken the Kurdish democratic forces in Syria, in particular, the Turkish operation is a gift to ISIS. Only two days ago, ISIS carried out attacks in Mosul, in Iraq. This war is assisting the terrorist group's resurgence and Turkey is facilitating a renewal of its menace to the people of the region and the world.

- *We once again ask the OPCW and all its member states to take seriously the reports from the affected areas in South-Kurdistan, to immediately send an expert delegation to the affected areas, to carry out onsite investigations, and thus to prevent Turkey's use of chemical weapons.*
- *Faced with this catastrophic war currently being waged by Turkey once again, makes it urgent to break the silence and take a firm stance against Turkish war crimes such as its violation of international sovereignty, its breaches of the international law and human rights infringements.*

Kurdistan National Congress (KNK)
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