

THE İMRALI POST

YOU HEARD HIS NAME. LEARN HIS STORY. DEMAND HIS FREEDOM.

Issue № 20 / 23 September 2022 ★ Contact: imralipost@freeocalan.org

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Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

Thousands demand freedom for Kurdish people's leader

Abdullah Öcalan in Marseille

ANF | MARSEILLE | 19 SEPTEMBER 2022

The 2nd Sinan Dersim Kurdish Culture Festival was celebrated in the city of Marseille with the participation of more than ten thousand Kurds and their friends. The guerrilla resistance was greeted at the festival, where activists also demanded freedom for Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan.

People living in Draguignan, Montpellier, Avignon, Toulouse and Bordeaux attended the festival, which took place in Park la Roze.

The festival program started with a minute's silence in memory of the martyrs of the Kurdistan revolution.

Afterwards, Marseille Democratic Society Center co-chairs greeted the public and thanked the festival organization committee for their efforts.

Koma Aram, Hozan Menal, Hozan Rêber, Hozan Canê and Şivan Perwer took the stage at the festival.

KONGRA-GEL co-chair Remzi Kartal said: "The guerrillas are putting up a tremendous resistance. What we need to do is to be worthy of that resistance, to support it, and to liberate Leader Apo."



Spectacular concert for Öcalan and the Kurds in Rome

ANF | EREM KANSOY/RONI RIHA | ROME | 19 SEPTEMBER 2022

On Sunday, 18 September, at the Schuster Park, in Ostiense, in Rome, several Italian artists and a Kurdish musical group played, in support of the history, tradition and social model that the population of Kurdistan preserves and proposes.

Daniele Silvestri, Fiorella Mannoia, Elio Germano, Giacomo Bevilacqua and Michele Zerocalcare (+ special guest), Pierpaolo Capovilla and the Bad Masters, Hani Mojtahedy & the Moon, Punkreas, The Andre, Anna Favella took the stage.

A day of celebration, of aggregation, of culture and music which, however, had to denounce, once again, the injustices, carried out by nation states as well as terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State, against the populations living in Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria.

The participants demanded that Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan and the other PKK prisoners be released after more than 20 years of imprisonment, convinced that a dialogue of peace can be opened in an area where war has been present for too long.

The concert was organized by the Committee for Freedom of Abdullah Öcalan, the Rete Kurdistan, the Kurdistan Information Office and the Ararat Kurdish Cultural Centre.

Thousands of people attended the concert dubbed "Time of Hope and Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan", where the opening speech was delivered by Amedeo Ciaccheri, mayor of the eighth district of Rome.

Amedeo commemorated those who lost their lives in Europe during the ISIS attacks, praised the struggle of the Kurdish people and called for freedom for the Kurdish leader Öcalan.

Renowned actor Anna Favella read out passages from the plea of Öcalan on the stage. Favella put emphasis on the parts where women's struggle is addressed.

The father of YPG martyr Lorenza Forseretti said in a speech that his son had fought for and dreamt about another world.

A live performance by famous cartoonist Zero Calcare attracted great attention. Artist Jacomo accompanied Calcare while the cartoons were drawn on the stage. Calcare animated the organization of the concert with his cartoons.

Award-winning actor Elio Germano read out passages about Öcalan and the Kurdish freedom struggle.

The Kurdish musical group Hani Mojtahedy & the Moon drew intense interest from the audience.

In a speech, Kurdistan Information Office Coordinator Yılmaz Orkan emphasized the importance of Öcalan's freedom for the Kurds and the entire region.

Famous singer Fiorella Mannoia, musical band Punkreas and artist The Andre also took the stage during the concert.

The organizers of the concert demanded the immediate release of Öcalan at the end of the event.



756 lawyers from the Middle East and North Africa request to visit Öcalan

ANF | 19 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Asrın Law Office released a statement on its Twitter account announcing that lawyers from the Middle East and North Africa have submitted a request to visit their client, Abdullah Öcalan. The Kurdish leader has been held in aggravated isolation since his capture and forced departure to Turkey as a result of an international conspiracy in 1999.

"A total of 756 colleagues from Morocco, Palestine, Federal Kurdistan Region, Iraq, Lebanon, Egypt, Rojava, Syria and Jordan applied to the Ministry of Justice to meet Mr. Öcalan, Mr. Yildirim, Mr. Konar and Mr. Aktaş from whom we have received no information for a long time," the statement said.

"A press statement organised by our colleagues in Sulaymaniyah was prevented by the Sulaymaniyah Asayish," the Asrın Law Office noted, adding, "This incident reveals the international dimension of the isolation of Öcalan in prison and the reason why it needs to be addressed."

“We would like to thank all our colleagues who have shown solidarity with us by organising press statements and conferences and highlighting the fact that Öcalan’s views and philosophy have exceeded the borders of Kurdistan, that he offered the most reliable solution to overcome the crisis in the Middle East, and that his isolation should be lifted and his freedom should be secured,” the Office said.

On September 14, 350 lawyers from 22 different countries announced at a press conference in Brussels that they had applied to the Ministry of Justice to meet with Öcalan. The lawyers described the practices in the Imrali prison as “a special and discriminatory isolation”.

In the meantime, another campaign demanding access to Öcalan was launched in South Kurdistan. The preparatory committee for the campaign was prevented by the Asayish from making a statement to the press in front of the Sulaymaniyah Court.

According to the committee, 44 lawyers from different parts of South Kurdistan signed a petition to go to the Imrali prison.

The committee is planning to hold a press conference at another place concerning the campaign in the coming days.



Activists from Oldenburg take over Freedom for Öcalan Vigil in Strasbourg

AYHAN TAYFUR | STRASBOURG | 23 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan Vigil was launched on 25 June 25 2012 in Strasbourg to ensure the physical freedom of the Kurdish people’s leader and to break the isolation imposed on him. The vigil has entered its 536th week.

The action, which is held at the point where European institutions meet and is carried out by a different group of Kurds living in Europe every week, was taken over by the members of the Democratic Kurdistan Community Center from Oldenburg, Germany.

The group includes Tori Akan, Selahattin Ege and Xelef Akyüz.

Speaking on behalf of the group, Tori Akan said: “We came here on behalf of the Oldenburg People’s Democratic Assembly. Our leader has been in isolation for 23 years. We have been carrying out this action for his freedom for 10 years. So far, no one has come from international circles to ask us what our problem was. This is why we criticize the European Union. They say they are a democracy, but they are not. If there were, they would have asked us what our problem was. Unless our Leader is free, unless our lands are liberated, we are not free either. We send our greetings to the Leader, to the friends who are resisting in the

mountains, to those who gave their lives for us against the invading Turkish state. The Kurdish community should also be on the streets. They need to protect their leaders, guerrillas, martyrs and lands.”



Prisons in Turkey

Prisoners in Bafra T-Type jail expose violations of rights

ANF | ADANA | 13 SEPTEMBER 2022

Torture practices against political prisoners continue in Samsun Bafra T Type Prison. Selami Keleş, a prisoner suffering from epilepsy, talked about the violations he was subjected to with his family during a weekly phone call.

Keleş said that they were subjected to intense pressure and added: “There is heavy psychological pressure on us. The new head guard makes arbitrary deportations. The head guard threatens us by saying they do what they want in prison. They provoke us. All our belongings are taken and they are not returned to us. We are not transferred to the hospital. Our friends whose sentences have expired are not released.”

Isolation and deportation to intimidate prisoners

Agit Tufan, who is also in Bafra T-Type Prison, said in a phone call with his family on 10 September that 6 prisoners were put into solitary cells and 6 prisoners were deported to another prison.

Stating that the guards raided his wards at midnight and confiscated all his belongings, Tufan said: “When we asked why, they threatened us with death and gave us a 15-day prison sentence. Six of our friends were deported. We have no idea what they did to our friends. They constantly insult me and threaten to deport me. We are especially threatened by the head guard. Please hear our voices.”



Women prisoners in Diyarbakır Women's Closed jail go on hunger strike against rights violations

ANF | AMED | 13 SEPTEMBER 2022

Political prisoners held in Diyarbakır Women's Closed Prison said during their meeting with their families that they started a 5-day hunger strike against rights violations. The prisoners said that their hunger strike was a "warning".

The prisoners said that their rights to sports, conversation and courses were violated. They added that releases are delayed in an arbitrary manner, probation is prevented, and there are degrading practices such as mouth searches and strip searches. They said that there are cameras on at all times, which is a violation of privacy, and that ill prisoners are not released, in open violation of the right to health.

The detainees continued: "Visiting and telephone hours are restricted, healthy eating conditions are not provided, freedom of belief and expression is not respected, publications in one's mother tongue are not allowed, there is a quota of books we can receive, we are threatened with disciplinary punishment every other day."



Three prisoners go on hunger strike in Kilis L Type Closed jail to protest torture

ANF | KILIS - 13 SEPTEMBER 2022

Uğur Taşdeviren is a prisoner in Kilis L Type Closed jail. He talked about the torture they were subjected to in a weekly phone call with his family living in Viranşehir, in the province of Urfa. He said that he and prisoners Hüseyin Osmanpur and Hüseyin Aydın, had gone on hunger strike on Monday.

Taşdeviren said that there were only 4 political prisoners in Kilis jail and added that a "standing count" was imposed on them. He said that they were threatened a month ago by the guards when they refused this type of imposition and added that a prisoner called Ihsan Iyınç, who was deported from Van Prison to Kilis a month ago, was put in a solitary cell 5 days ago without any justification.

"The other 3 prisoners did not speak up, but they have been claiming rights since he arrived," said Taşdeviren, adding that the hunger strikes will continue until his friend Ihsan Iyınç is brought back to the ward and the imposition of the "standing count" comes to an end.

Taşdeviren also said that Hüseyin Osmanpur, Hüseyin Aydın and himself were taken to solitary cells after the decision to go on a hunger strike, and that their protest continued now as a “death fast” because their necessary needs were not met by the administration.

Calling on the Human Rights Association (IHD) and solidarity associations with prisoners, Taşdeviren said that delegations should be sent to the prison to visit the prisoners and learn about their conditions.



Prisoner reports constant raids in Van High Security Closed Prison

ANF | VAN | 14 SEPTEMBER 2022

Torture practices against political prisoners in Van High Security Closed Prison are increasing. Seyfettin Demhat, an ill prisoner suffering from FMF (Familial Mediterranean Fever), talked about the rights violations they experienced in prison with his family in a weekly phone call and called on non-governmental organizations to take action.

'We don't know where they have taken our friend'

Seyfettin Demhat called his family on 12 September, and told them about the violations of rights in the prison. “There are raids of the wards day and night. Some people in uniform and plain clothes raided our wards at all hours of the day. Because of these raids, we can't even eat anymore. They scatter everywhere in every raid. Our situation is very bad. They took a friend of ours, who was in the ward during the raid they carried out at night. We don't know where they have taken him. We have no news about him.”

Şengül Martı said that she was worried about the safety of her brother Seyfettin Demhat and other prisoners, and called for a delegation from non-governmental organizations, IHD and Van Bar Association to go to the prison as soon as possible to investigate the incident.



Families of ill-prisoners resume justice vigil in front of ATK

ANF | AMED | 14 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Justice Vigil launched in Diyarbakır (Amed) city by the families of ill and other prisoners who are supposed to be released has today marked its 302nd day. The families came together in front of the Diyarbakır ATK. Today's vigil was attended by the representatives of the Democratic Regions Party (DBP), the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), the Association for Assistance and Solidarity with the Families of

Detainees and Convicts (TUHAY-DER), the Association for Assistance, Culture and Solidarity with the Families that Lost Their Relatives in the Cradle of Civilizations (MEBYA-DER), the Mesopotamia Language and Culture Research Association (MED-DER) and the Med Federation of Legal and Solidarity Associations of the Families of Detainees and Convicts (MED TUHAD-FED).

A relative of a ill-prisoner, Herdem Mervanî, said that none of their demands had been met by the Turkish authorities. “We have requested the release of ill-prisoners and other prisoners who have completed their sentences multiple times. However, no ill-prisoner has been released so far and prisoners who are supposed to be released are still kept in prisons. Even our right to talk on phone calls, which is the only right that we can enjoy, is violated. Detainees are held in cities far from their families. Here we ask the authorities to resolve these issues. Families are also punished.”



Prisoners on hunger strike in Kırıklar jail quickly losing weight, say lawyers

ANF | İZMİR | 17 SEPTEMBER 2022

The indefinite non-alternating hunger strike started by writers Zeki Bayhan, Ramazan Çelik and Yücel Kızmaz, who are seriously ill, against the torture carried out in Kırıklar No. 2 F Type Prison, continues. On 5 September, Ibrahim Tikan, Behram Sağdiki and Mehmet Faruk Ayaz also joined the hunger strike.

Lawyers from the Association of Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD) said that during their visit to the prison on Saturday, prisoners Halis Dağhan, Remzi Özhan and Hakkı Turgay also went on hunger strike.

Prisoners losing weight

The ÖHD lawyers said that their clients confirmed that the prison director did not accept their demands. The lawyers said that the prisoners are losing weight, and added that Zeki Bayhan lost 10 kilos, Ibrahim Tikan 6 and Ramazan Çerik 6. The prisoners have been on hunger strike since 29 August and a lawyer said that the prisoners could not meet their needs due to their serious illnesses.

Prisoners' demands

The demands put forward by the ill prisoners on hunger strike are as follows: “Ill prisoners should not be kept in the same cell, the upper part of the ventilation should be closed with wires, and the restrictions on sports and social activities should be ended.”



Another prisoner dies in jail

ANF | MALATYA - 19 SEPTEMBER 2022

Bariş Keve (25), who was in Malatya Akçadağ T Type Closed Prison, died in a solitary cell.

The prison administration called Keve's family, who lives in the Çatak district of Van, at 10 pm, and claimed that Barış Keve committed suicide.

Upon the news of his death, his family set out from Çatak to Malatya.

Ilkkan Keve, Keve's older brother, stated that they last talked to Barış Keve on Friday, 16 September, and they did not sense anything negative.

Keve, who was sentenced to 6 years and 3 months in prison, was detained in Edirne. It was learned that Keve, who was transferred to Malatya Akçadağ Prison 5 days ago, has been kept in a solitary cell for a week as a "disciplinary punishment".



Prisoner suffering from cancer not receiving treatment

ANF | ISTANBUL | 20 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Struggle Union held a press conference at the Human Rights Association (IHD) Istanbul Branch regarding the situation of seriously ill prisoner Hüseyin Durmaz in Kırıklar No. 2 F Type Prison. Durmaz's sister, Şerife Taşkın, attended the meeting, which was supported by the Solidarity with Prisoners Initiative (TDI) and IHD.

Fatma Yıldırım from the Struggle Union read the letter Durmaz sent.

Yıldırım said that Durmaz wrote in his letter that he knew that he would go through a difficult process and said: "I think I have started a new war that I will win."

Durmaz's sister, Şerife Taşkın, said that her brother called her two weeks ago and told her that he was sick. Taşkın said: "There is a need to take food supplements from outside. He is at risk of getting an infection because he comes and goes from the prison."

'There is no possibility of treatment in prison'

Durmaz's lawyer, Seher Dursun, said that they applied for a postponement of the execution right after the cancer diagnosis and they still have not received an answer. Dursun emphasized that it would not be possible for Durmaz to be treated in prison, and called for solidarity with all ill prisoners.

Muhammet Servisci from the Struggle Union, said: “In order for Huseyin to cope with this difficult disease, the treatment must be continued in a healthy and clean environment and he should be protected from complications.” Emphasizing that these conditions cannot be met in prison and that he should be released as soon as possible.



Barış Keve laid to rest in Çatak

ANF | VAN | 20 SEPTEMBER 2022

Political prisoner Barış Keve, who died under suspicious circumstances in an isolation cell in Malatya prison on Sunday night, was buried in his hometown of Çatak in Van province.

The funeral at Çatak Central Cemetery was attended by hundreds of people, including board members of the provincial and district federation executives of the Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP) and the Party of Democratic Regions (DBP), as well as representatives of the women’s movement TJA and various civil society organizations.

Despite threats from the police to break up the funeral procession, the participants kept shouting slogans like “Long live the prison resistance”.

Barış Keve was arrested for membership in an “armed terrorist organization” and sentenced to six years and three months in prison. A few days ago he was taken into solitary confinement for a “disciplinary punishment” and died under unclear circumstances.



Turkey’s prisons continue to be centre of torture and death

ANF | ANKARA | 20 SEPTEMBER 2022

HDP’s Co-spokespersons for Foreign Affairs, Feleknas Uca and Hişyar Özsoy, released a statement pointing to the ever-worsening conditions in Turkey’s prisons where more people die every day.

“With each passing day, news comes of new deaths in Turkey’s prisons. These are the result of failure to respect the right to adequate living conditions and health care, and also of suspicious circumstances. We have already noted the statement made by the Turkish Human Rights Association (İHD) on 29 April 2022 that, as of April 2022, there were 1517 ill prisoners, 651 of whom were seriously ill. And, in our statement of 4 May 2022, we recorded that the number of prisoners who had lost their lives in Turkey’s prisons had increased by thirteen since December 2021. The number of deaths continues to rise,” said the HDP statement.

On 15 August 2022, Mehmet Candemir (60), Former Provincial Co-Chair of the Democratic Regions Party (DBP) in Batman and Party Assembly Member, died in Giresun Espiye L Type Closed Prison, where he was detained. The prison administration informed his family that he died of a heart attack. Candemir, who had been under arrest since 2016 on charges of “being a member of a terrorist organization”, was sentenced to 17 years and 6 months in prison on 17 January 2021.

On 14 August 2022, İbrahim Yıldırım (68), who had been kept in prison despite five years of serious medical reports, lost his life in Elazığ No. 1 High-Security Prison ten days before he was due for release. The prison administration claimed that he died due to a fall resulting from a heart attack. Yıldırım had a brain tumour and surgeries caused him to lose his right eye and half of his vision in his left eye.

On 18 August 2022, another seriously ill prisoner, Bazo Yılmaz (67), lost his life due to a lack of health care and the prison conditions in Urfa no. 2 T-type prison. Yılmaz had already been taken to the coroner’s office on 8 February 2021 due to his health problems. Despite severe Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and the need for constant artificial oxygen supply, the doctor examining him reported that he could stay in prison. A complaint before the Constitutional Court against the decision was also rejected. Yılmaz was permanently dependent on an oxygen machine and was practically unable to look after himself alone. Bazo Yılmaz was the former mayor of Yukarı Göklü district of Urfa province and a member of the Halfeti City Council. He was arrested on 11 December 2016 for being a member of the Democratic Society Congress (DTK). In 2018, he was sentenced to nine years in prison for “being a member of a terrorist organization”.

On 30 August 2022, Nevzat Çapkın, who was released from Trabzon Beşikdüzü T Type Closed Prison about 8 months ago, lost his life in a hospital in Diyarbakır, where he was treated. Çapkın, who was imprisoned for 29 years, had laryngeal cancer and was released in the last stage of his illness.

HDP pointed out that, “In addition to the ill prisoners who have lost their lives in Turkey’s prisons, there are a significant number of prisoners who are recorded as having committed suicide or whose deaths are suspicious. According to data from the Ministry of Justice, a total of 544 prisoners were recorded to have committed suicide in Turkish prisons between 1997 and 2014. And, according to data from the Civil Society Association in the Penal Execution System (CISST), the number of people recorded as having committed suicide since 2014 is 97. The Turkish Human Rights Association (IHD) reported that 13 prisoners died by suicide, 5 prisoners died suspiciously, and the cause of death of a further prisoner was not disclosed in 2021. It has also been reported that 6 prisoners committed suicide in 2022, and 12 prisoners died suspiciously.”

The most recent incidents of suspicious deaths are the following: On 21 July 2022, Kadri Ekici (25) was found dead in a solitary cell in Diyarbakır No. 2 High Security Closed Prison. Ekici, who had been imprisoned for five years, had been kept in a solitary cell for the past year. On 19 September 2022, Barış Keve (25) died suspiciously in the solitary cell in Malatya Akçadağ T Type Closed Prison. Keve, who was transferred to Malatya Akçadağ Prison 5 months ago, has been kept in a solitary cell for a week on the grounds of “disciplinary crimes.”

The HDP statement concluded, “We, once again, call on the international community - first and foremost the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) and other relevant organs of the Council of Europe (CoE), human rights commissioners of the CoE and the UN, and other human rights organizations - to

take action against torture and inhumane conditions in Turkish prisons before even more people lose their health or lives.”



Four prisoners deported in haste

ANF | ISTANBUL | 23 SEPTEMBER 2022

Mehmet Aytunç Altay, Hasan Yıldız, Suat Incedere and Eren Yıldız, who were imprisoned in Edirne F-Type Prison and were in the same cell, were hastily deported to other prisons at midnight on Wednesday.

Mehmet Aytunç Altay was sent to İzmir Kırıklar No. 2 F-Type Prison, Hasan Yıldız to Kırıklar No. 1 F-Type Prison, Eren Yıldız to Antalya High Security Prison, and Suat Incedere to Antalya S-Type Prison.

Speaking about the deportation, Eren Yıldız’s guardian, lawyer Gülizar Tuncer, said that the prisoners did not demand to be transferred. “All four of the detainees were staying in the same cell. There was a cell raid last week. During the raid, all their belongings were dispersed, handwritten notes and books were confiscated. These 4 detainees have been convicted for nearly 30 years. Their trials are over, their sentences have been finalized, and they no longer have to be in court. These people are not sent to prisons close to where their families are, but to prisons as far away as possible, thousands of kilometres away. But this is not enough. They aggravate the isolation of these prisoners by blocking family and lawyer’s visits, by making them more difficult.”

The state wants to “socialize” torture

Pointing out that the state wants to “socialize” the oppression and torture experienced by the prisoners by including their families in it, Tuncer said: “Most importantly, recently, the state has been torturing both during the detention process and in prisons. Unfortunately, the opposition is silent. The sentence of deported Aytunç Altay and other deported prisoners is ending, but even though they have completed their tariff they are not released. They were tried and punished for crimes. And they are not released because of those sentences. These 4 detainees are constantly given disciplinary punishments so as to extend their sentences. At the moment, we do not have any information about what they were exposed to on the way during this deportation process.”



Military Aggression and Occupation

KDP builds military positions for the Turkish army in guerrilla areas

ANF | HEVIDAR CEYLAN | 13 SEPTEMBER 2022

South Kurdistan's ruling party, KDP, is notorious for its collaboration with Turkish fascism. It lays ambushes, builds roads and now also positions for the Turkish army. ANF footage from 28 August from the Girê Amêdî and Girê Hekarî resistance areas in the Metîna region of Medya Defense Zones has already shown KDP units building a road for the Turkish army. The KDP and the Turkish troops are counting on the fact that the guerrillas want to avoid an inner-Kurdish civil war and have therefore not taken action against the KDP troops so far. However, the People's Defence Centre (HSM) warned the KDP against interfering in the strategic war for democracy. Despite widespread protests among the Kurdish public, however, the corrupt Barzani government continues its support.

Positions built in the resistance area

Now, ANF has received video footage taken on 12 September in the vicinity of Amadiya. The images were recorded in the resistance areas around Girê Amêdî and Girê Hekarî above the town of Amadiya. The footage shows the road construction work that has been in progress since 27 August.

A source said: "We would like to point out another fact to you. It seems that the KDP has built this road into the guerrilla resistance areas in order to protect the Turkish state and its soldiers. It is already known that all these areas are controlled by the guerrillas. The guerrillas are resisting in these mountains, in this area. But the KDP forces continue to collaborate with the Turkish state. The KDP is building these roads and positions to defend the Turkish troops. And they are doing it with the help of Turkish soldiers. We see it every day with our eyes, and we want to show it to you with these photographs. Turkish soldiers have established themselves in visible places. We see that Turkish soldiers and KDP forces are building positions together. Because the Turkish army is stuck in the face of the guerrilla resistance and struggle. In Girê Sêdarê, Girê Amêdî, Girê Şehîd Pîrdoxan, Girê Hekarî and the command area, the guerrillas have been resisting the occupation by the Turkish state for more than four years. There is a fierce war going on here. But unfortunately, the forces of the KDP continue to practice betrayal and collaboration in order to achieve a breakthrough for the Turkish soldiers after all."

KDP supplies the Turkish army

The position being built there is apparently for the Turkish army. The ANF source further said: "We also see that the KDP forces are transporting water, supplies and vehicles for the Turkish state every day. We see how the war is really being conducted and how the KDP is cooperating with the Turkish state. The Turkish state and the KDP forces are intertwined. Together they are building positions against the guerrillas.

The guerrillas organise actions and fight every day against the troops that want to occupy Kurdistan. The Turkish state wants to overcome this blockade with the help of the KDP.”



13-year-old injured in Turkish attack on Shehba dies

ANF | SHEHBA | 13 SEPTEMBER 2022

On 19 August, the Turkish army attacked the villages of Qeramil, Hasin, Eyn Deqnê and Belûniyê in Shehba Canton with over 65 artillery shells. At the same time, the city centre of Tel Rifat was also attacked. In the course of the aggression, 55-year-old Xedîce Welo and 13-year-old Emîre Hisên Xelef were injured. As Dr. Azad Reşo told ANHA today, Emîre died after weeks of treatment at Avrîn Hospital.

The autonomous areas of northern and eastern Syria are shelled daily with Turkish artillery or attacked with drones. Attacks of this kind constitute a war crime but are not punished internationally and go largely unnoticed. The day before the attack on Shehba, four schoolgirls at a UN-sponsored education centre near Til Temir were killed in a Turkish drone strike, and eleven other girls were injured. One of the students later succumbed to her injuries. Turkey’s attacks in August killed at least nine children and young people in northern Syria.



Five-months balance of war in South Kurdistan: 2132 soldiers killed, ten helicopters shot down

ANF | BEHDINAN | 15 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Press Center of the People’s Defence Forces (HPG) published a five-month balance sheet of the war in the guerrilla-held Medya Defence Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq). The Turkish state had declared in advance that it would be able to successfully complete the invasion of the regions of Zap, Avaşîn and Metîna within a short time. However, it is facing fierce resistance and its operation seems to be stuck. In particular, the shooting down of ten helicopters also puts the supply of troops in question. Meanwhile, the guerrillas are fighting a tunnel war as well as in the field with small mobile units that combine to form larger operations. Most importantly, the guerrillas combine various war tactics such as surprise assaults on occupying forces, sabotage actions and the use of heavy weapons and snipers. This form of guerrilla warfare leads to massive losses for the Turkish army.

The statement issued by the HPG Press Centre on the balance sheet of the Turkish army’s invasion launched in April and the resistance of the guerrillas said: “The comprehensive attacks of the Turkish colonial fascism have been going on for five months now. The Turkish army, which thought that it would

achieve its aims according to plan within the shortest possible time, came up against the walls of the Apoist resistance of the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla. The guerrillas had prepared for this resistance in the long term and are making the tactics of the new era the basis of their struggle. The fact that our forces effectively combine the form of tunnel warfare and that of mobile units, implement them creatively and do not give the enemy any breathing space with their daily actions, made all the plans of the Turkish army fail. The Turkish army thought that it could achieve results within a few weeks. For this reason, the invasion operation was extended and when the Turkish army extended the scale of the attacks in order to break the deadlock, it had the opposite effect. It is only stuck deeper in a quagmire.” The HPG alluded, among other things, to the expansion of the Turkish invasion to areas west of the Zap. This expansion is seen by the HPG as an increase in the guerrillas’ targets.

2004 war crimes documented

The HPG further stated: “In order to achieve its goals, the Turkish state ruthlessly used all the technology at its disposal against the resistance areas: from fighter jets to unmanned aerial vehicles, from attack helicopters to all kinds of tanks, artillery and armoured vehicles. The Turkish state had the resistance areas bombed hundreds of times every day and mobilised all official and paramilitary forces, from contract soldiers to commando units, from mercenaries to counter-guerrillas, from elite units to special forces. When the Turkish state could not achieve success with these, it used internationally outlawed bombs and chemical weapons, from poison gas to phosphorus bombs, from thermobaric weapons to tactical nuclear weapons. These were used especially against positions and tunnels. The Turkish state committed war crimes in 2004 to achieve its goals and these crimes were documented by our forces. Despite all these measures, the invading forces could not prevail. In these five months, the Turkish state suffered the biggest losses in its history in the war against the guerrillas. If we look at the results of the five-month war, it is obvious that it is not a success for the Turkish state, but a clear defeat.”

105 guerrillas have fallen

Regarding the number of fallen guerrilla fighters, HPG said, “It was not easy to stop the Turkish state’s comprehensive occupation operation, which was openly supported by the international powers and the collaborating, treacherous Kurdish forces, and to prevent it from achieving its goals. The Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla have put everything on the line at great sacrifice, and our comrades have carried out this epic resistance with a willingness to sacrifice that history can rarely bear witness to. Our five-month resistance is based on the solidarity with Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan], the martyrs and our oppressed people, on our Apoist will, sacrifice, belief in victory and absolute determination. This resistance, which is one of the most unjust and disproportionate wars in the history of mankind in terms of distribution of resources, numbers and war technology, could only be created through the self-sacrificing struggle of the guerrillas. Based on this spirit and consciousness, our comrades in the resistance have correctly applied the style and tactics of the guerrilla of democratic modernity and have achieved the highest war performance on a professional level. Our 105 comrades who fell in these five months have written an unprecedented epic of courage.”

Ten helicopters shot down, 2132 occupants killed

Regarding the balance of the Turkish army’s losses, the HPG stated: “1881 actions were carried out by our units in the tunnels and the mobile units. These units fought professionally and with high striking power.

Air defence force actions, revolutionary operations, infiltration, sabotage, snipers, ambushes, heavy weapons, skirmishes, shelling and other coordinated guerrilla tactics were skillfully used in combination. In these operations, as far as can be ascertained, 2132 occupants were punished and ten helicopters were shot down and destroyed. The number of invaders killed in the downed helicopters is not included in these figures as it could not be determined. The Turkish state and its special war media hid the losses and the truth about the war from the people of Turkey and the public and took refuge in ever new lies. However, the reality was documented and filmed by our forces as much as possible and every aspect of the war, including the names and equipment of punished soldiers, was made available to the public. On this basis, the footage of 43 successful guerrilla actions was broadcast on Gerıla TV.

Although the Turkish army has suffered the heaviest losses in its history, it continues to insist on the war and its occupation objective. Against this, the epic resistance of our forces continues in all its strength. Five months have passed, but the fierce war continues.

Five-month balance sheet

The balance sheet of the guerrillas from 14 April to 14 September reads:

– 1881 actions were carried out in the form of revolutionary operations, raids, infiltrations, sabotage, snipers, ambushes, heavy weapons, skirmishes, coordinated guerrilla actions and actions of the air defence forces.

Results of the actions

– A total of 2132 members of the occupation forces were killed, including 12 counter-guerrillas and 13 senior military officers; 290 members of the occupation forces were injured.

Attacks on the Medya Defence Zones

– 3274 attacks by fighter jets; 3185 attacks by combat helicopters; 2004 attacks with prohibited weapons on war tunnels and guerrilla positions. Phosphorus bombs, thermobaric bombs and explosive devices similar to tactical nuclear weapons were used.

Confiscated military equipment

– 10 MPT-55 infantry rifles; 4 AK-47 infantry rifles; 3 G-3 infantry rifles; 3 grenade launchers; 2 M-16 infantry rifles; 2 HK-416 infantry rifles; 1 BKC machine gun; 1 B-7 rocket launcher; 1 MPT-66 infantry rifle; 4 pistols; 4 grenade launcher cartridges; 848 rounds of M-16 and BKC ammunition; 18 hand grenades and numerous smoke grenades; 4 assault waistcoats (steel); 4 steel shields; 2 cartridge belts; 9 magazines; 7 day/night binoculars; 3 thermal binoculars; 3 laser pointers; 2 infrared scopes; 1 thermal imaging camera; 1 binoculars with laser pointer; 4 surveillance camera systems; 3 head-mounted cameras; 1 portable radar system; 24 kg of explosives; 4 mines; 1 remote mine detonator; 1 mine detector; 6 mobile phones; 3 radios; 1 solar energy panel; 1 compass; 4 knives (bayonet); 6 military rucksacks; 2 barrettes; 2 helmets; 9 torches; 2 UPS power converters; 1 powerbank

Destroyed military materiel

– 7 Sikorsky helicopters; 3 attack helicopters; 2 tanks; 15 armoured military vehicles; 3 excavators; 50 surveillance camera systems; 42 drones; 7 radar systems; 5 thermal imaging cameras; 2 telescopes; 3 signal jammers; 3 motion sensors; 2 audio interceptors; 1 photo trap; 1 container; 78 emplacements; 22 military tents; 1 camouflage net; 1 chemical weapons delivery system; 1 weapons cache; 5 A4 weapons; 2 BKC machine guns; 60 kg of explosives; 5 explosive devices

Damaged military materiel

– 39 Sikorsky helicopters; 31 attack helicopters; 16 emplacements; 12 drones; 9 excavators; 4 armoured military vehicles.



Turkish and Syrian Intelligence Services meet in Damascus

ANF | 16 SEPTEMBER 2022

According to Reuters, Turkish National Intelligence Organization (MIT) chief, Hakan Fidan, held talks in Damascus at the end of August.

Fidan was also received by Sunni leader Hamis Hançer, Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kazimi and President Barhem Salih in Baghdad on 11 September, causing reactions and questions among many parliamentarians.

Reuters, citing two Turkish officials and a source linked to Damascus, wrote that Fidan met with Syrian Intelligence Leader Ali Mamluk. It is stated that Russia mediated the meeting.

According to an anonymous Turkish official, Fidan's contacts set the stage for a meeting of the foreign ministers of the two countries.

The Turkish official said: "Russia wants Syria and Turkey to overcome their problems and to reach some agreements that are in the interest of everyone."

Damascus-linked regional sources, on the other hand, argued that Russia, which is busy with the occupation of Ukraine, encouraged Syria to enter negotiations.

The same source noted that the meetings held, including Fidan's two-day visit to Damascus at the end of August, aimed to lay the groundwork for higher-level talks.

It is reported that secret talks between the parties have been going on for a while.

The French Intelligence Online site, which publishes intelligence-based news, wrote that there was a meeting between Hakan Fidan and Ali Mamluk in the Russian capital, Moscow, on Wednesday, 7 September.



Turkish state threatens those who oppose it in Afrin with death penalty

ANF | ALEPPO | 16 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Turkish state, which has brought the death penalty to the agenda even though it is prohibited, is trying to perpetuate its occupation in Afrin in this way.

Using the silence of the international community, the Turkish invading state and its mercenaries are committing crimes against the people in the occupied Afrin canton.

The Turkish state has vowed to implement the death penalty in the territories it occupies, although it cannot do it in its own land.

Death sentences handed out

The “military court” in Ezaz, occupied by Turkish mercenaries, sentenced a citizen from Shiye to the death penalty and his family to prison. This happened a year after the kidnapping.

The names of the kidnapped and convicted persons are as follows: Hisên Yusif (22) was sentenced to death, his brother Izedin Yusif Hisên (20) was sentenced to 13 years in prison, their father Yusif Mistefa Hisên was sentenced to 3 years, and their cousin Mistefa Mihemed Hisên (24) was sentenced to 13 years. Zeynep Mihemed Olaşli (29) was sentenced to 12 years in prison.

Ehmed Hisên, the uncle of Hisên, Izedîn and Mistefa Hisên, and brother of Yusif Hisên, told ANHA: “The invading Turkish state and its mercenaries are attacking the citizens of occupied Afrin. They commit the most brutal acts. They are kidnapping Kurds in Afrin and demanding ransom for their release. They want to force people out of the city.”

Hisên pointed out that Turkish occupation mercenaries violate international law and agreements every day, killing dozens of Afrin people in prisons, and kidnapping hundreds.

Kurds are murdered

Hisên continued: “My brother, his children and his spouse were abducted in Afrin between 7 and 28 2021, and on July 27 of this year, a year after their abduction, the military court in the city of Ezaz convicted them.”

Ehmed Hisên said: “Kurds are being murdered in the courts set up by the illegal occupation. The invading Turkish state and its mercenaries call Afrin Kurds terrorists. They invaded and destroyed Afrin, they killed its people.”

Ehmed Hisên called on the international community to act and hold the Turkish state accountable.



Over 30 kolbars killed or injured by Iranian forces in two months

ANF | 16 SEPTEMBER 2022

Kolbars, load carriers, are murdered almost every day in the border city of Bane in East Kurdistan. The latest victim of the Iranian regime forces' attacks on kolbars was a young karate player named Hiwa Aziz Necat, a member of the Iranian Junior Karate Team and a gold medallist.

A kolbar is a worker who is employed to carry goods on his back across the borders of Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey, legally or illegally.

Hiwa Aziz Necat was a kolbar, saving money for his karate training. He was badly injured in the leg following direct fire from the Iranian forces and may not be able to take place in sportive activities anymore.

According to a report by the East Kurdistan Human Rights Organization, at least 8 kolbars were killed in different parts of the border city of Bane in the last two months. Moreover, 23 kolbars were injured as a result of direct fire by Iranian forces, and 3 kolbars were injured by mine explosions on the border.

Bordered by Sulaymaniyah in South Kurdistan, the East Kurdish city of Bane has Pêncwên and Sharbajar districts, as well as some major and minor border regions and points.

Due to the unemployment in Bane and other cities of East Kurdistan, many young people in Bane and other cities such as Seqiz, Serdeşt and Bikan are forced to work as kolbars to support their families.

Targeting and shooting of kolbars are not new phenomena. Attacks leave dozens of kolbars dead, injured or crippled each year.

During a visit to Bane at the end of August, Iranian Border Guard Commander Ehmed Eli Goderzi announced that the border between Hewtaş and Birweşkan would remain closed for two months. Following the announcement, attacks on kolbars have dramatically increased.

Goderzi said in a statement that those who cross the border without the knowledge of the Border Guard forces would face the most violent form of what he called a 'harsh response'.

The 'harsh response' of the Iranian security forces signifies the targeted killings of kolbars who work along the borders of South and East Kurdistan to support their families financially.

Parliamentarians from Bane and Seqiz in the Iranian Parliament do not only remain silent on the issue, but also make statements legitimizing the killings of kolbars.

A Bane and Seqiz parliamentarian Behzad Rahimi told Iran's Tasnimi News Agency in February 2022 that because of the bans, kolbars no longer bring cupboards and televisions to Iran, but weapons and alcohol.

Some activists and human rights organizations criticized similar statements by Kurdish parliamentarians. The Kurdistan Human Rights Association said that the parliamentarian in question spoke on behalf of the Iranian state and the Guard forces. It added that the number of kolbars who were killed or injured as a result of the systematic attacks of the Iranian forces surpassed the number of those who died in the war.

The increase in systematic targeting of kolbars, impunity for the perpetrators and the decision to close the borders caused many deaths in the border region. The crackdown on kolbars puts other kolbars into jeopardy in other border cities of East Kurdistan.

The Iranian regime is encouraged by the insensitivity and indifference of international human rights organizations to target and kill kolbars without hesitation.



Civilian injured in Turkish attack on Batufa

ANF | DUHOK | 17 SEPTEMBER 2022

A civilian was injured in an artillery attack by the Turkish army near the southern Kurdish town of Batufa on Friday evening. The 54-year-old was staying at his home in the village of Evleh when he was hit in the left arm by shrapnel from a shell. He was taken to a hospital in Zakho district, west of Batufa. His condition is stable, and after outpatient treatment in the emergency room, he was able to leave the hospital.

Batufa is located about 20 kilometres from the Turkish border and administratively belongs to the Duhok governorate in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). There are repeated attacks by the Turkish army on the region, carried out not only by border guards, but also by Turkish occupation troops in the invasion campaign that has been ongoing since April. Ankara legitimises these cross-border attacks in the KRI with a "threat to national security" by the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK). However, under the guise of "fighting terrorism", civilian settlement areas are bombed, often by targeted shelling.

In July, the Turkish army attacked the summer resort in the village of Perex (Parakh) near Zakho with four artillery shells from a base in Southern Kurdistan. Nine people were killed and more than twenty others were injured. They were Arab holidaymakers from the south of Iraq. Among the fatalities were children, the youngest being only one year old. In Batufa, two Iraqis died about a year ago as a result of the bombing of their vehicle. At the end of 2021, a woman was injured in an attack on her village in Batufa.



Turkey expands attacks on northern Syria

ANF | 18 SEPTEMBER 2022

Turkey has expanded its attacks on the autonomous region of northern and eastern Syria. After eighteen-year-old Xelîl Bedr was injured in a mortar attack in the village of Qeremox, 14 kilometres east of Kobanê, in the early morning, Turkish forces also bombed the village of Zor Mixar in the west of the city. In the vicinity of Ain Issa, seven villages were shelled with howitzers, and reconnaissance flights are taking place over the region. At the same time, villages near Girê Spî (Tal Abyad) and the town of Zirgan (Abu Rasen) were attacked. Two shells hit the village of Cîrnikê west of Amûdê. Near Qamishlo, the village of Til Zîwan and the village of Hîmo were attacked.

Due to the current wave of attacks, a demonstration planned in Kobanê for the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan has been cancelled.

Artillery attacks on Saturday targeted the village of Zor Mixar in the west of Kobanê, the village of Umm al-Khar and the area around the M4 motorway near Til Temir, as well as the area around the city of Tel Rifat and the village of Şêx Îsa in the canton of Shehba. No information is available on the consequences of the attacks.



Iranian forces attack people protesting Mahsa Amini's murder

ANF | 19 SEPTEMBER 2022

A general strike has been declared in many cities of East Kurdistan and Iran today to protest the death of a young Kurdish woman named Mahsa (Jina) Amini, who was tortured to death by Iranian forces for not wearing hijab properly. The Iranian regime forces attacked protesters and citizens' houses after people took to the streets in Diwandar and Seqiz.

In a joint statement on 17 September, the Kurdistan Free Life Party (PJAK) and the Democratic and Free Eastern Kurdistan Community (KODAR) called on the people of East Kurdistan and Iran to go on a general strike on September 19 after Amini was tortured to death by Iranian regime forces.

In the meantime, the parties affiliated to the Iranian Kurdistan Parties Cooperation Centre, the Iranian Communist Party-Kurdistan Organization and several other parties from East Kurdistan, non-governmental organizations and political activists called for participation in the general strike.

According to the images circulated through social networks, people have launched a general strike in Seqiz, Sine, Shino, Bukan and Bane. Images show that shops have been closed in the mentioned regions.

Following the announcement of a general strike, protests have started to spread in Diwander and Seqiz. Forces affiliated with the Iranian regime attacked the people. Images show the Iranian forces opening fire on citizens' houses in Seqiz.

The Iranian forces also attacked protesters in the city of Diwandar.

Students at Iran's Tehran University protested the murder of Mahsa Amini by chanting the slogan "I will kill whoever killed my sister". The Iranian regime forces attacked the students as well.

Hundreds of women protested the murder of Amini in the city of Rasht in Gilan province under the motto "Let women live their freedom".



Hengaw report on protests in Iran: 38 injured, 13 arrested

ANF | 19 SEPTEMBER 2022

The civil protests of the people in Saqqez and Sanandaj turned violent with the intervention of the security forces. According to the statistics of Hengaw, at least 38 people were injured in these two cities by direct fire and baton charges from the special forces, and 13 people were arrested.

During Saturday's protests in Saqqez, at least 33 people were injured by direct fire from special forces, 5 of whom were taken to Tabriz medical centers due to their deteriorating physical condition.

Parsa Sehat, 23, Nechirvan Maroufi, 18, and Kian Derakhshan, along with two other people who were all injured in the eye, were taken to Tabriz medical centers due to their serious physical condition.

Hengaw sources have reported that 14 injured people in Saturday's protests in Saqqez are currently hospitalized in Shafa Hospital in this city, and despite being injured and hospitalized, the security agents put pressure on them and interrogated them. Also, the reports received by Hengaw indicate that the security institutions in Saqqez have threatened hospital personnel for reporting the situation and the number of injured people.

On the other hand, in Saturday night's protests in Sanandaj, at least 5 citizens were injured, three of them were injured by shotguns, and 2 people, one of whom is a 14-year-old teenage girl, were injured by beatings and batons. They have been admitted to the hospital.

In Saqqez, at least 8 citizens have been arrested by the security agencies, and five of them, identified as Arjan Majidzadeh, 17, Midia Rahimi, 17, Ahwan Houshmand, Kamyar Heydari, and Bahram Didar have been confirmed for Hengaw till now.

Hengaw has been informed that dozens of Kurdish civil activists in the cities of Sanandaj and Saqqez have been threatened with arrest by phone calls from the security agencies over the last two days and asked them not to participate in the protests related to the murder of Mahsa Amini and to avoid publishing posts on social media related to this issue and also the general strike in the cities of Kurdistan.

With the call of Kurdish parties, a general strike is scheduled to be held in the cities of Kurdistan on Monday, September 19, as a sign of protest against the murder of Zhina Amini by Iranian security agencies.

It is worth mentioning that the security situation in the cities of Saqqez and Sanandaj is still unstable, and on Sunday, more than 70 people from the Revolutionary Guards, who are residents of Mahabad and Bukan, were sent to this city. Also, dozens of Special Unit forces of Baneh have been stationed in Saqqez Central Prison.

On Saturday night, Hengaw announced the dispatch of 130 people from Kermanshah Special Unit forces to the cities of Sanandaj and Saqqez.

Hengaw has been informed that the number of injured and arrested in the two cities is more.



Turkish drone kills two villagers near Ain Issa

ANF | AIN ISSA | 21 SEPTEMBER 2022

On the evening of 20 September, a Turkish drone attacked the village of Siwêdiyê (Suwadiyah) near Ain Issa. Two villagers were killed and three others injured in the attack on a village in Rojava. Those killed were Khaled Hanifah and Bashar Berekat.

Only on Friday were three fighters from the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and two fighters from the People's Defense Forces (YPG) killed in a drone attack by the Turkish state on Ain Issa.



Turkish army terrorises villagers in Gever

ANF | HAKKARI | 22 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Turkish army continues to terrorise the population of the villages of Memkava, Dara, Kaport and Nêbarê in Gever (tr. Yüksekova) district of Hakkari. A military operation has been taking place in the area since Sunday. Ten people were detained in Memkava and have since been released. Those affected are members of the same family, among them at least four women. They were ill-treated in state custody.

Another person, Esat Çakmak, was detained in Dara and imprisoned today as an alleged member of a terrorist organisation. Çakmak was tortured during his detention and at the police station in Gever.

Meanwhile, the military operation has been extended to the high alps of Dola Kubê, Dola Xokê, Kelega, Serê Gorangê and Mişkan. The army has installed photo traps and surveillance cameras on the paths and is blocking access. Villagers have been prevented from milking their sheep in the pastures. According to reports from Memkava, people are constantly being checked. Even for a visit to a neighbour's house, one has to show an identity card.

HPG denies Turkish media reports

The People's Defence Forces (HPG) announced on Tuesday that the guerrilla fighters Eylem and Evîn were killed in a battle with the Turkish army in the area between the villages of Kapotê, Yekmal and Darê in the Gever district. Three "counter-guerrillas" were killed in the battle. HPG also contradicted the report published in the Turkish government-controlled media that a guerrilla fighter had been captured: "This claim is not true. The Turkish state raided villages in the area after the battle and arrested many civilian people. One of the arrested civilians was tortured and portrayed in the special war media as an HPG member."

Kurdish resistance stronghold

Gever is located in the extreme south-east of Turkish territory and is known as a Kurdish resistance stronghold. The Turkish army operates a large base area in the mountainous region of Gever. To the south, the district borders the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and thus the guerrilla-controlled Medya Defence Areas, where a Turkish invasion has been ongoing since April this year.



HRE: 13 occupying troops killed in three regions

ANF | 23 SEPTEMBER 2022

The HRE (Afrin Liberation Forces) said in a written statement: "Our forces carried out actions in Shera, Sherawa and Ezaz regions between 15-20 September in order to retaliate for the increasing attacks of the invading Turkish army and their mercenaries."

The HRE added: "On 15 September, our forces targeted a Turkish military base near the Meryemîn village in the Shera district. As a result of this action, 4 invading soldiers were killed, and 3 others were injured. Plus, an armoured vehicle was hit during the action."

The HRE said: "On 19 September, our forces targeted a Turkish military base near the village of Basufanê in the Sherawa district. Two invading soldiers were killed following the action."

On 20 September, following an action against a Turkish military base in the village of Kil Cibrîn in Ezaz, 3 invading soldiers were killed, and 4 others injured.

On the same day, another action was carried out against the mercenaries of the invading Turkish army near the village of Gobelê in Afrin. The action killed 4 mercenaries and injured 5 others.

As a result of these actions cited above, a total of 9 Turkish soldiers and 4 mercenaries were killed, 7 Turkish soldiers and 5 mercenaries were injured.”



Feminicide

Man tortures and kills his wife

ANF | ADANA | 13 SEPTEMBER 2022

Ezgi Deler (25) was tortured by R.S., to whom she was married under Islamic law, in the Muradiye borough of Adana's Ceyhan district.

Deler, who was seriously injured, was brought to Ceyhan State Hospital by her neighbours, but died there.

Deler's body was sent to Adana Forensic Medicine Institute for autopsy. The woman had a child.



Story of Sewsen freed by YPJ after eight years in ISIS captivity

ANF | HESEKE | 17 SEPTEMBER 2022

In the course of the operation in Hol Camp, launched by the north-eastern Syrian security forces on 25 August, six women have been freed from ISIS captivity so far, including the Yazidis Wefa Elî Ebbas and Sewsen Hesên Heyder, who were abducted by the “Islamic State” (ISIS) in Shengal in 2014. The Women's Defence Units (YPJ) have set themselves the goal of liberating all Yazidi women. 24-year-old Sewsen Hesên Heyder told her story to the ANHA news agency.

When ISIS invaded Shengal in 2014, Sewsen was abducted along with nine relatives. Her father, a brother, several uncles and cousins have been missing ever since. Sewsen says: “That day, the fighting continued all night. In the morning, ISIS occupied Shengal. Women and men were separated from each other. The men were taken away. We didn't know where. The women and children were taken to schools in Telafer and Mosul, and I came to Telafer with my family. Then they took us to a place in Syria. The ISIS men came there to take Yazidi women as slaves. I was taken to Qaim in Iraq with my mother and aunt and handed over to the Islamists.”

There, Sewsen was separated from her mother. She was held in Anbar for almost a year. As the Iraqi army approached, she came to Mosul and, a month later, to Raqqa. Due to the liberation offensive led by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and its affiliates YPJ and YPG, the Islamists retreated further and further and Sewsen finally ended up in the last ISIS enclave, Bagouz, on the Syrian-Iraqi border. Like most of the ISIS members, Sewsen was taken to Camp Hol after the SDF's victory.

Sewsen was afraid to identify herself as a Yazidi. It was not only the fear of ISIS spreading horror stories about "the Kurds". Because of what had been done to her, she also feared social pressure. So she was registered as a foreigner in Hol Camp and lived for four more years within the ISIS structures that the current operation in the camp aims to dismantle.

"It was an unbelievable feeling of happiness"

On the twentieth day of the operation, Sewsen was freed by the YPJ. "I didn't expect that one day I would be rescued and be able to return to my family," she says. "I will never forget how the YPJ treated me. It was an unbelievable feeling of happiness." The YPJ contacted Sewsen's family and told them about her rescue. Afterwards, Sewsen was able to talk to her relatives herself for the first time in eight years. "My family was also happy and told me to come back quickly. I never thought that the YPJ were like this and that my family would accept me. I hope that all Yazidi women can return. They should not be afraid. What was done to the Yazidi women was against their will. I thank YPJ as I can now start a new life."

Sewsen forgot her mother tongue during the years of captivity; Kurdish was forbidden in ISIS. "I only sometimes spoke Kurdish secretly with other Yazidis. Since I have been in Hol, I have not spoken Kurdish once. My culture and my language have been taken away from me. However, I have not completely forgotten Kurdish and will quickly learn it again. When I was in the hands of ISIS, I once said to them that one day I would return to Shengal and no longer live under their control. They told me to forget about it. I missed Shengal very much and now I will finally see it again. I used to love reading and studying. I will continue that now."

Lastly, Sewsen says she was with many other Yazidi women in Raqqa and Mosul: "When we came together, we tried many things to save ourselves, but we never did it. The Islamists thought we wanted to escape, they locked us in and wouldn't let us out. However, the Yazidis will succeed in destroying all the locks. I will do everything I can so that all the Yazidi women will be freed."



KJK condemns the murder of Mahsa Amini, calls for self-defence

ANF | BEHDINAN | 18 SEPTEMBER 2022

Kurdish woman Jina Mahsa Amini was arrested on Tuesday during a family visit in the Iranian capital Tehran by the so-called customs and religion police because she was not wearing her hijab as prescribed. In

police custody, she was beaten and suffered a fatal brain haemorrhage. She died in a Tehran hospital on Friday.

“The patriarchal mentality continues to kill women everywhere. As the Kurdish Women’s Liberation Movement, we condemn with anger and hatred the murder of Jina Mahsa Amini by the Iranian morality police. We welcome the uprising of women in Iran and Eastern Kurdistan against this atrocity. We offer our condolences to the family of Mahsa Amini, her relatives and the Kurdish people”, said the Community of Women of Kurdistan (KJK) in a statement on Sunday.

The KJK Coordination pointed out that the murder of the young woman is only the latest example of the Iranian regime’s femicidal practices: “As the misogynist Iranian state’s torture of women in all walks of life is normalised and the inhumane practices against women are systematised and legitimised, oppression and massacres have increased. The oppressive and sexist system of rule in Iran manifests itself in the shooting of women, their murder by torture in front of the eyes of the whole world, their rape and the introduction of child marriage. The policies of the misogynist fascist states, which have their breeding ground in sexism, religious fanaticism, sectarianism, nationalism and domination, continue to massacre women, exploit them, drive them out of their homes, make them jobless and homeless.”

The culprits and perpetrators are political powers themselves

Women are systematically murdered in the male domination system all over the world, said the KJK statement, which further included the following: “While this nameless state of war is going on all over the world, the massacres of women in our country, Kurdistan, do not stop. In the four parts of Kurdistan, the colonialist states want to weaken and intimidate society with a policy of femicide. In Northern Kurdistan, sexual assault, rape, murder, prostitution and the involvement of women in drug networks are practised as a special war policy. The repression and arrest of deputies, representatives of Kurdish women’s organisations and representatives of the people working in the field of democratic politics, the intensification of torture in the prisons, the deliberate suspension of release from prison and the policy against sick prisoners aim at breaking the will of the women who resist fascism and domination. The direct action against the pioneers of the women’s liberation struggle in Rojava is an expression of the ruling system’s fear of women’s free stance. As expressed by the women who are taking their anger to the streets in the face of these brutal attacks, the real culprits and perpetrators of such killings are the political powers themselves, who are trying to entrench the male-dominated mentality in all sectors of society.

Therefore, the murders of women that occur in various forms today are not isolated cases, but part of a systematic massacre of women. The increase in feminicides is essentially an expression of the crisis of the system. In Kurdistan, we are struggling against the ruthless attacks of the colonialist, fascist and male forces that cannot bear our resistance, sociality, values, achievements and identity. Today we are confronted not only with women’s gains but also with misogynist tendencies that target women for murder.

Women need to improve their capacity for self-defence

“The only way to stop the systematic massacres of women is to develop women’s capacity for self-defence. As women, we must hold accountable this brutal power that is personally responsible for feminicides with its mentality, policies and practices.

It is necessary to strengthen the common struggle and self-defence everywhere and stand side by side. The brutal practices of the anti-women right-wing fascist regimes impose obedience on us women in all spheres of life. They want to put us in a position of obedience to the dominant man, the male system. The economic, political, ideological, social and cultural foundations are being laid for this. We need to fight more than ever against this cruel system that has made it a priority to destroy the will, speech, action and organisation of those who oppose it.

We call upon our people and especially the women of Eastern Kurdistan as well as the Baloch, Persian and Azerbaijani women to organise themselves in all fields against these anti-women policies and to strengthen their self-defence struggle. We call on all women to unite and resist these attacks. If we remain silent on this atrocity today, we invite the massacres of tomorrow.

We call on all women in all four parts of Kurdistan and abroad to step up resistance against occupation, colonialism and male-dominated politics. We declare that women's lives are precious and that women are strong when they organise. This is the only way we can stop the ruthless attacks of fascism and sexism."

The KJK also condemned the barbaric murder of Armenian fighter Anush Abetyan by the Azerbaijani army, noting that this atrocity is similar to the practice in Kurdistan: "On this basis, we once again commemorate all women who have lost their lives to violence, torture and oppression of misogynist states, and we renew our pledge that we will hold this tyrannical, male-dominated world and the system that murdered them accountable."



Jina Mahsa Amini laid to rest as protests continue

ANF | 18 SEPTEMBER 2022

"Jin, Jiyan, Azadî" —woman, life, freedom—echoed on Saturday at the Ayçi cemetery in Seqiz (Saqqez) in East Kurdistan. Shocked but determined, relatives and acquaintances said goodbye to Jina Mahsa Amini, the 22-year-old Kurdish woman who died in a Tehran hospital on Friday after being arrested by the Iranian moral squad.

Several thousand people gathered around her grave, many women tore off their headscarves and shouted: "We will not forgive. We will not forget. Death to the Dictator" – a reference to the "Supreme Leader" Ali Khamenei, Iran's political and religious leader since 1989.

Regime security forces wanted to prevent the young woman's funeral from turning into a mass demonstration and threatened her parents with repressive measures. "The authorities even demanded that the funeral be carried out without any ceremony and behind closed doors. We were able to prevent that," said Soma Rostami of Hengaw, a Kurdish human rights organization. The reason given for preventing the funeral was that they wanted to avoid "tensions".

Jina Mahsa Amini was arrested by the so-called moral and religious police on Tuesday during a family visit in the Iranian capital Tehran because she did not wear her hijab as prescribed. At a police station, “awareness and training measures” were to be carried out on the dress code. According to the police, she fainted there due to heart failure and then fell into a coma. Her death was confirmed on Friday.

However, the account of the circumstances surrounding the death of Amini’s family differs significantly from the official version. The young woman was arrested in the presence of her brother because her headscarf was not properly fixed and a few strands of hair were visible. According to further information, Jina Mahsa Amini was hit on the head after the arrest, which led to a brain haemorrhage, a coma and ultimately - already on Tuesday - to her death. The Iranian police vehemently rejected this account and tried to prove their version with unverifiable video recordings.



Skull CT scan proves Mahsa Amini was tortured to death

ANF | 19 SEPTEMBER 2022

Kurdish woman Mahsa Amini, arrested last Tuesday by the Islamic religious police, was taken to hospital two hours later after losing consciousness. She passed away on Friday afternoon at Kasra Hospital in northern Tehran. Originally from Saqqez in Kurdistan province, Amini was arrested in her brother’s car on a visit to the capital to see their relatives.

The 22-year-old woman’s death in custody by the hijab police has led to indignation among the people and several anti-regime protests in different cities.

While the Islamic Republic officials alleged that Amini’s death was caused by previous health conditions including epilepsy, hydrocephalus, and cardiovascular diseases, his father, speaking to Ham-Mihan newspaper, denied the claims.

A source from the hospital where she died told Iran International on Saturday that her brain tissue was crushed after “multiple blows” to the head, adding that Amini was taken to Kasra Hospital in the capital Tehran while she was not responsive and brain dead. The source added that her lungs were filled with blood when she was transferred to the hospital, and it was clear that she “could not be revived.”

The source emphasized that Mahsa’s condition “was such that she could not be saved nor was surgery possible because her brain tissue was seriously damaged, and it was clear that the patient was not injured by a single punch and must have received many blows to her head.”

A photo of Mahsa on the hospital bed showed her unconscious with very clear signs of bleeding from her right ear. Several doctors, including Mahdiar Saeedian, editor of a health magazine, pointed out on social media that otorrhagia (hemorrhage from ears) proves that her coma was caused by trauma to the head.

The skull CT scan of Mahsa Amini shows bone fracture, hemorrhage and brain edema, Iran International reported on Monday.

The medical documents and dozens of exclusive images sent to Iran International by a hacktivist group vividly show a skull fracture on the right side of her head caused by a severe trauma to the skull, which corroborate earlier accounts by her family and doctors about her being hit several times on the head, proving that the Iranian police's claim that she suffered a heart attack was untrue.

Images of her chest show bilateral diffuse alveolar hemorrhage and damage due to aspiration pneumonia, secretion retention and superimposed infection. Doctors say the results are compatible with acute respiratory distress syndrome due to brain trauma.



Iranian forces kill woman protester in Kermanshah

ANF | 21 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Kurdistan Human Rights Network reported on Wednesday that Iran's anti-riot forces killed a 55-year-old woman by the name of Minou Majidi during a protest rally held yesterday in Nobahar Street in Kermanshah, western Iran.

According to the report, Majidi's body has been taken to the Department of Forensic Medicine and has not yet been handed over to her family.

In an interview with the state media, the Kermanshah Public Prosecutor confirmed that two people were killed and 25 injured during the protests in the city.

According to the statistics collected by the Kurdistan Human Rights Network (KHRN), seven protestors identified as Farjad Darvishi, Mohsen Mohammadi, Fereydoun Mahmoudi, Reza Lotfi, Zakariya Khiyal, Foad Ghadimi and Minou Majidi were killed by military forces during the protests against the killing of Mahsa (Zhina) Amini.

161 demonstrators were injured during the ongoing protests, while hundreds of people were arrested. Security forces used firearms, tear gas, water cannons and truncheons. People also continued to take to the streets in Tehran and numerous other cities in Iran. Women burned their headscarves, people shouted "Death to dictatorship", "No Hajjis, no mullahs, death to Hezbollah" and "We don't want an Islamic republic" as well as "Jin Jiyan Azadi" (Woman Life Freedom).

Jina Mahsa Amini was arrested by the religious police in Tehran on Tuesday last week because of her "un-Islamic" outfit. According to consistent media reports, the 22-year-old had not worn her hijab in accordance with the rules. She was therefore taken to a police station. According to the police, she "suddenly developed heart problems" and fell into a coma. Amini's family and eyewitnesses, who were also taken to the station, rejected this account and accused the police of beating the Kurdish woman, which eventually

led to her death. Hospital records leaked by a hacker group and published by Iran International, a media outlet of the Iranian opposition in exile, with CT scans said to be of Jina Mahsa Amini, confirm the version according to which the young woman died from massive violence to the head. After her death, the Tehran clinic where Amini was treated also wrote in a post on Instagram, which has since been deleted, that she was already brain-dead when she was admitted on Tuesday.



Ecocide

Venice Climate Camp discusses Abdullah Öcalan's idea

ANF | VENICE | 16 SEPTEMBER 2022

“Let’s change the system, not the climate” was this year’s slogan of the Venice Climate Camp, which took place from the 7th until the 11th of September. Speakers and activists from around the world were gathered in Venice Lido, a town that lives under the threat of being flooded by rising tides. While the Venice Film Festival, which took place in the same week, drew global media attention, activists attended the climate camp to draw attention to the climate crisis, with the aim to collectivize action for climate justice. The central theme of this year’s 3rd edition of the climate camp was decoloniality. Together with ecofeminist author and activist Vandana Shiva, Ilham Rawoot (Friends of the Earth), and Mario Alberto Castillo (Asamblea de Pueblos Indigenas del Istmo en Defensa de la Tierra y el Territorio, afferent to the Congreso Nacional Indigena), Havin Guneser, the spokesperson of the International Initiative “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan – Peace in Kurdistan” participated in a panel on “Decolonize, Degrow, Disrupt” as a keynote speaker.

Together with Vandana Shiva, who emphasised how the earth is “our common home” and Rawoot, who defined ecology as “the relationships between all beings”, the International Initiative’s spokesperson, by way of introducing the political thought of Abdullah Öcalan, stated that “the capitalist system is trying to impose on an understanding of ecology as a very isolated case of relationships that do not include the human relations (...) but ecology is actually the science of all these relationships including the human society”.

According to Öcalan, as presented by the initiative, the struggle against colonialization is not merely a physical struggle, but also an ideological one. Against this backdrop, the initiative’s spokesperson emphasised how people have become dependent on being wage-earners to an extent that their dependency is what leads to the very reproduction of the hierarchical system.

With references to the Kurdish freedom movement’s fight against the Islamic State group ISIS and the victory of Kurdish women fighters in this struggle, the spokesperson reminded the audience that there is more behind this revolution that needs attention and one must ask how the colonization process of humanity has allowed all this to happen and what set of relations have allowed for this.

“Abdullah Öcalan and the Kurdish freedom movement go back to history and connect it to the present to be able to imagine a different life and to ask how we can bring back enchantment to life”, the spokesperson added.

Central to Öcalan’s thought is the process of questioning and re-questioning, so we do not regenerate the hierarchies and processes of enslavement in our lives.

According to the philosophy of the Kurdish freedom movement and the ideas of Abdullah Öcalan, the question, therefore, is not “how do we get a better share as workers, but how do we not become workers”, the spokesperson continued. On this note, Vandana Shiva added in agreement “first they told us you can only be workers and earn a living. Forget your land. Forget your seeds. Forget your knowledge. Whilst now we are being told that we don’t need workers because artificial intelligence will do everything for us”. That this destruction of relationships between humans and nature not only poses a risk to the environment but also to human society was central in the panel discussion. In this context, Öcalan’s term of *societycide* was introduced by the initiative, to which Vandana Shiva added “this moment where we are threatened with extinction is where we can build another world. It needs, as Guneser said, deep love, solidarity, and trust in the earth and humanity”.

“Kurds have been at a point of extinction for a long time, both their land and theirs as a cultural and linguistic group. This has made them question and re-question everything. As the site of a third world war, where Kurds are fighting for their lives, they are making revolution each and every day because they know that revolutions are not an overnight thing”, the initiative’s spokesperson emphasized. While capitalism is often defined by its destructive nature through weapons, Öcalan has put forward that the greatest weapon of capitalism is “its ability to change our mentality and to legitimize it”, as well as to “destroy our imagination of an alternative way of life,” as presented by the spokesperson of the initiative.

Taking the ways the Kurds mobilize and organize their lives in Rojava, Maxmur, Bakur, Shengal and elsewhere together with different communities as an example, the initiative’s spokesperson stated that if there is an ideological narrative that we cannot exit the cycle of capitalism, “we have to map out a philosophy and an ideological line of how this can be done”. Adding, “there must be a struggle first at the level of our mindsets to be a community together again and to set the harmony right with nature. Without doing that, the 1% is going to rule us as they are at the moment. They bet on us being scared, they bet on us not collaborating”.

Öcalan’s call to dare to imagine more and to act collectively resonated well with Alberto Castillo Quintero’s final words when he said: “We have a dream that one day we can mobilize from different parts of the world at the same time and act together in the common struggle against the system”.

Mount Cudi March kicks off in Batman

ANF | BATMAN | 17 SEPTEMBER 2022

A crowd gathered in Batman to take part in the march to Cudi Mountain in Şırnak. The march has been promoted by the Democratic Society Congress (DTK), Free Women's Movement (TJA), Democratic Regions Party (DBP), Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) and Mesopotamia Ecology Movement to protest the destruction of nature carried out by the Turkish war policy against Kurds.

Many people, including DBP co-chairs Saliha Aydeniz and Keskin Bayındır, and representatives of civil society organizations, gathered at the entrance of the city.

The crowd set out for Hasankeyf in vehicles to join the march. From here, the mass will unite with other branches and set out for Şırnak.



Turkish soldiers attack Kurdish activists marching to Mount Cudi against ecocide

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 17 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Democratic Society Congress (DTK), Free Women's Movement (TJA), Democratic Regions Party (DBP), Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) and Mesopotamia Ecology Movement are staging a march to Mount Cudi in Şırnak province to protest the destruction of nature carried out by the Turkish state as part of its all-out war against the Kurds.

Organized under the slogan 'We are marching against the destruction caused by war and the plunder of nature', the march is joined by several groups from the Kurdish region. The crowd that set out from the cities in the Serhat region merged with those coming from Van in the Gercüş district of Batman.

Hundreds of people coming from Amed and Turkish metropolises, including DTK co-chair Berdan Öztürk, DBP co-chairs Saliha Aydeniz and Keskin Bayındır and representatives of civil society organizations, met in Batman city centre. After uniting with those coming from the Serhat region, the crowd left for the İdil district of Şırnak.

On the other hand, hundreds of people coming from Urfa, Antep, Adana, Mersin and Mardin, among them HDP Spokesperson Ebru Günay, gathered in Nusaybin district of Mardin and united with other participants near the Cizre district of Şırnak to join the march to Cudi.

In an attempt to prevent the action, Turkish soldiers attacked the people with pressure water and gas bombs. The group remains resolute to continue their march and reach Mount Cudi in protest at the ecocide perpetrated by the Turkish regime.



Mesopotamian Ecology Movement vows to fight the plunder and exploitation of nature

ANF | 19 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Mesopotamian Ecology Movement released a written statement concerning the march to Mount Cudi in Şırnak staged on September 17 under the motto ‘We are marching against the destruction caused by war and the plunder of nature’.

“Our struggle will continue until the plunder and exploitation in Turkey and Kurdistan is over. The fascist system which exploits, depopulates and destroys Kurdistan and its nature in every sense is destroying the ecosystem irreversibly by cutting down trees in Şırnak province and in different parts of Kurdistan under the pretext of security for the last two years,” said the statement by the Mesopotamian Ecology Movement, which further included the following:

“Social reactions and a legal struggle have been introduced against the ongoing systematic tree cutting in Şırnak, ongoing for the last two years. The felled trees are transported through our cities to other provinces each day. The massive tree cutting by the state and village guards should not only be seen as environmental destruction. This destruction is rather an ecocide seeking for the displacement of the Kurdish people and destruction of their living quarters and nature.

Gripped by fear following the call for a march and a press briefing scheduled on September 17, the system introduced bans and restrictions in response to the developing public backlash. Yet, despite all the restrictions, we rallied together in Cizre on September 17.

Defying all the bans and restrictions, we came together with all social segments from all over Turkey and Kurdistan. We showed solidarity with our smile, faith and strength. As the sun shined in the sky, we expressed our demand for peace against war, making it clear that we would defend every single tree. While mothers who do not speak Turkish chanted slogans in Turkish, our comrades from Turkey accompanied the lament of mothers. On that day, we were one and united. We will only succeed if we unite.

We would like to thank all the institutions and associations that responded to our call and were there with us that day, as well as those who could not come but released declarations of support.”



HDP: The government is destroying and plundering nature in Mount Cudi

ANF | 20 SEPTEMBER 2022

HDP's Co-spokespersons for Foreign Affairs, Feleknas Uca and Hişyar Özsoy, released a statement regarding the destruction and plundering of nature by the government of Turkey.

"The AKP-MHP government, which employs aggressive policies to redesign the country in its own image and in line with its political interests, has been destroying and plundering the eco-system, especially in the Kurdish countryside for years. One of the most recent examples of this ecological destruction is taking place on Mount Cudi in the Kurdish province of Şırnak," says the HDP statement, which further includes the following:

"The AKP-MHP government's anti-ecological policies are having devastating consequences all over Turkey. The hydroelectric power plants on the Black Sea, the burned olive groves on the Aegean coast, and the mines destroying soil across the country are all examples of the destruction of nature. In addition to these, in the Kurdish areas, nature has been plundered for years under the pretext of "security" and "fighting terrorism." According to a report by Şırnak Bar Association, in 2021 alone, military logging destroyed approximately 8 percent of the region's forests. In the case of Mount Cudi, deforestation goes back two years. This deforestation is taking place in the restricted military areas, where villages were torched and evacuated by the government in the 1990s as part of Turkey's conflict with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Civilians are not allowed to enter the restricted military areas, and the places where logging is taking place are all depopulated. Agriculture and animal husbandry have already suffered great damage in the region due to war policies against the Kurds, and this deforestation and ecological plunder are multiplying the damage.

On September 17, a protest march led by the Democratic Society Congress (DTK), the HDP, the Free Women's Movement (TJA), the Democratic Regions Party (DBP), and the Mesopotamia Ecology Movement, started out towards Mount Cudi to protest against the government's deforestation and war policies. Hundreds of people from Turkey's metropolises, as well as representatives of non-governmental organizations, met in Şırnak province. However, the gendarmerie prevented the march by attacking the gathered protestors with water cannons and tear gas. After the attack, the protesters, including co-chairs and representatives of institutions and dozens of HDP parliamentarians, staged a sit-in.

The destruction and plundering of nature have been an integral part of Turkey's "security" policies in Kurdish provinces since the 1990s. To oppose war and militarization in the Kurdish context is therefore to oppose ecological destruction and vice versa. We hereby invite all democratic institutions, and all political parties concerned with environmental justice, especially environmental and ecological organizations, to take action against ecological destruction on Mount Cudi and all over Turkey."

Shengal Autonomous Administration re-greens areas dried up by Iraq

ANF | SHENGAL | 20 SEPTEMBER 2022

In the Yazidi town of Shengal (Sinjar) in the Kurdistan region of Iraq, the Iraqi government has built institutions affiliated to Mosul.

Numerous people have been tasked with working within these institutions. Yet, the Iraqi-affiliated municipality has conducted no single work for the local people so far and no one knows what kind of job those assigned by the Iraqi government do. The municipality affiliated to the central Iraqi government sometimes introduces projects to attract public attention. However, most of these projects remain unfinished and unclaimed.

The municipality of the Shengal Autonomous Administration has stepped into action to complete the projects in question to serve the public.

The municipality of the Iraqi government introduced a greening project for the town of Sinun. However, since the project is not completed, the planted trees have dried up.

The Sinun Municipality has now introduced an irrigation project to save these trees.

Speaking to Rojnews, a member of the Sinun People's Municipality, Berekat Kasım, said that since the Iraqi municipality irrigates the trees only once a month, they are drying. The central government municipality does not take care of its own projects, he said, adding, "As the Sinun People's Municipality, we have started an irrigation project to prevent the trees from drying. In the coming days, we will plant new trees to replace the dried ones. We will also decorate the sidewalks with flowers and roses."

"We are carrying out these projects without any support since we consider it a duty. The Iraqi government offers no assistance to us in this regard. Still, we do our duty and continue to do whatever is necessary for the public service," Kasım concluded.



Paylan: Government destroyed historic buildings, constructed prison-like buildings in Sur

ANF | AMED | 20 SEPTEMBER 2022

Garo Paylan, a deputy of the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), and his party colleagues conducted investigations in the Sur district of Amed (Diyarbakır). Paylan examined the prison-like structures recently

built on the site of the historic buildings that were demolished in 2015. The HDP Deputy defined the new structures as a betrayal to the history of the city.

‘Based on prison model’

Paylan delivered a brief speech at the site where the demolition of the historic buildings has taken place. “Most of the historical monuments here were destroyed. Unfortunately, they were covered with earth. There is only one historical monument left here. Those who said that “We will rebuild Diyarbakir like a new Toledo” have ended up with building structures that look like F-Type Prisons. This is a betrayal to Diyarbakir’s history. When we win local governments in the next elections, we will retrieve the history of Diyarbakir,” he said.

A person who has lived in Sur for 62 years stated that 88 houses, including his own, were demolished. “I am illiterate. They made me sign 5-6 different documents. They did not give me the money for my estate, which cost 925 thousand Turkish Lira (TL). Moreover, they did not give me the money for my 62 trees worth 225 thousand TL. How could I ever know that they were going to trick me? The money they gave me is just 99 thousand TL,” he said.

Paylan and his fellow party members left the area after the examinations.



Human Rights Violations

Journalist Sinan Aygöl sent to prison

ANF | BITLIS | 13 SEPTEMBER 2022

Bitlis Journalists Association President Sinan Aygöl, who wrote in 2014 that corruption stained the 450-million-dollar Geothermal Energy Project in Bitlis and was convicted for calling the then AKP Bitlis Deputy Vahit Kiler a “wolf politician”, was arrested.

In 2015, at the trial at Tatvan 2nd Criminal Court of First Instance, a judicial fine of 1,500 TL was imposed on the journalist for “insulting a person via the press”.

Journalist Sinan Aygöl, who will go to prison if he does not pay the fine, said that he would not pay and added: “To be sentenced in this case is a very painful situation in terms of freedom of press and expression. I cannot accept it.”

The journalist said: “I am exercising my right of civil disobedience against this decision. I won’t pay the judicial fine, they should arrest me and throw me in prison. I have taken this decision in order to expose the hostile attitude towards the freedom of press and expression.”

An arrest warrant was issued by the Tatvan Public Prosecutor's Office for Aygöl, who did not pay the judicial fine and did not accept alternative sanctions.

Journalist Sinan Aygöl was arrested and sent to prison.



Prison sentence for sharing Kurdish music on social media

ANF | ISTANBUL | 14 SEPTEMBER 2022

Yusuf Güneş, who was tried for sharing a Kurdish music video on his social media account, was sentenced to 1 year, 6 months and 22 days in the first hearing.

Elazığ Chief Public Prosecutor's Office launched an investigation against Güneş, who shared songs on social media on 3 different dates in 2021. As part of the investigation, Güneş was detained in Istanbul on 4 April 2022 and taken to Istanbul Courthouse in Çağlayan to testify at the Elazığ Chief Public Prosecutor's Office.

Güneş, who testified via Audio and Visual Information System (SEGBIS), denied the charges. An indictment was prepared against him on the allegation of "making propaganda for a terrorist organization" on 15 April and submitted to the Elazığ 2nd High Criminal Court.

Investigation for sharing Kurdish music

The court said that as Güneş lives in Istanbul, it had no "jurisdiction" to carry on with the file. Following the decision, the indictment was accepted by the Istanbul 32nd High Criminal Court. Güneş attended the first hearing on Tuesday alone as he did not have a lawyer.

Güneş said that he shared the posts himself and that he did not know Kurmancî, and did not know what kind of expressions were included in the lyrics. He added that he did not sing in the video.

After Güneş ended his statement, the court asked, "Are you a PKK sympathizer?". Pointing to Güneş's posts on social media, the prosecution claimed that he was carrying out "propaganda for an illegal organization" via the videos he shared.

The prosecutor, who also shared the content of the songs, said that in the songs Güneş shared on 21 June, 14 September and 27 November 2021, there were verses such as "they came through Zagros" and "The comrades of Zana Andok, the grandchildren of Sheikh Said". He also stated that the song "Apo apo apê me" contains sentences by Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan, and for this he requested the young man to be sentenced.

Güneş opposed the request, but the court sentenced him to 1 year, 6 months and 22 days in prison. Noting that there had been no investigation or prosecution against Güneş, the court decided to postpone the sentence.



Political genocide operation in Silopi: 5 detained

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 14 SEPTEMBER 2022

Special operations police raided houses in the Cudi and Başak neighbourhoods in the Silopi district of Şırnak early this morning. Nurşen Şen, Mahsun Onuk and three other people whose names could not be identified were detained following the house raids.

The detainees have been taken to the Silopi Police Department.

It is reported that the number of detentions in the district may increase.



“The Kobanê trial is directed against Kurds, women and opposition members”

ANF | ANKARA | 14 SEPTEMBER 2022

The co-spokesperson of the HDP Commission for Law and Human Rights, Nuray Özdoğan, and lawyers Cenk Yiğiter and Çiğdem Kozan gave their assessments of the course in the so-called “Kobanê trial” at a press conference at the party headquarters in Ankara on Tuesday. In the trial, 108 defendants, including the former executive committee of the Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP), are accused of terrorist offences and murder in dozens of cases in connection with the protests from 6 to 8 October 2014 during the ISIS attack on Kobanê. 21 defendants are in prison.

Özdoğan described the trial as a political show trial directed not only against the HDP, but against all circles close to the party: “The ruling government continues to imprison the politicians of the HDP, whom it considers a threat to itself, with fabricated and invented evidence. Supposed evidence continues to be fabricated. This trial is being conducted by those who feed on war and conflict against those who defend the democratic, free life that the HDP stands for and fights for politically. At the same time, we are witnessing a politically motivated mass trial that shows the character of fascist times. As you know, the investigation started with a tweet allegedly sent from HDP’s Twitter account. The tweet aimed to protect the right to life of women and children who were threatened by genocide by ISIS. This actually clearly shows which side those who are leading this process are on.”

Özdoğan continued, “The fact that people who have lost their lives have been made part of the government’s political calculations and that the true circumstances of their deaths and those responsible for their deaths have not been established is also a painful picture. It cannot be said that these proceedings, presided over by a member of the judiciary who is allegedly the head of a gang within the judiciary, are judicial proceedings. All the proceedings in this file are political and have no legal character. A trial is being conducted in which the right to defence is suspended, the defence is limited in time, evidence is discussed according to the whims of the court and the prosecutor, evidence is presented behind closed doors and lawyers try to stand up for what is right under threat and pressure. We believe that the trials conducted by those who use their robes as a cover for themselves have nothing to do with law and justice.”

Yigiter: It’s about revenge

Lawyer Cenk Yiğiter summarised his assessment as follows: “We have defined this trial as a conspiracy from the beginning. There is no doubt that it is a conspiracy against the HDP and its politicians, but that is not all. This trial is a trial in which the red lines of modern law and modern procedural law are openly and blatantly violated at every stage. The conspiracy is in fact a conspiracy against the law. It is a conspiracy against the Constitution and the idea of human rights. It is an act of revenge, and although the HDP is affected, we are in a process where the legal security of all citizens is at risk.”

Yiğiter pointed out that there is already a court ruling by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) on the HDP’s call of 6 October 2014: “The Grand Chamber of the ECtHR has given a ruling on this case. It says that these calls were entirely within the framework of political expression. It says there is no causal link between these calls and the serious acts of violence on 7 and 8 October. In order to circumvent the ECtHR’s ruling, both the prosecutor and the court state in their judgments that there is evidence that the ECtHR does not examine and is not aware of. This evidence is merely testimony, the testimony of witnesses kept secret. None of it is based on concrete information and observations. It is not even an assertion, but largely speculation. The court treats these witnesses as expert witnesses.”

Kozan: We define it as enemy criminal law

Lawyer Çiğdem Kozan pointed out that the witnesses’ testimonies were refuted during the trial and said: “The witnesses have made statements that are completely based on lies. We would also like to express that the court continues its behaviour, such as its irregular findings and not answering our questions to the witnesses. We define this as enemy criminal law. Holding a trial with witnesses whose testimony cannot be trusted is hostile law. The contradictory testimonies are used by the court to justify the remand of the accused. In doing so, the court cherry-picks the statements it wants.”

“The court is judging the HDP, the political content of the HDP, opposition members, Kurds and women. It is aware that it is conducting a political trial. In such an illegal trial, it is necessary that the trial is observed by broad circles,” said the lawyer and called for the trial to be observed.

Justice Ministry says number of jailed journalists “doesn’t concern public”

ANF | 14 SEPTEMBER 2022

Turkey’s Ministry of Justice has rejected an application for information about the number of imprisoned journalists, saying this information “does not concern the public.”

A citizen had filed the application with the Presidency Communications Center (CİMER) on September 7, Mezopotamya Agency (MA) reported. “As of September 2022, how many prisoners are there who stated their profession as journalism?” the citizen asked.

In its response, the Directorate General for Prisons and Detention Houses of the Ministry of Justice said, “The arrangements made by institutions and organizations that do not concern the public and are only about their own personnel and in-house practices are outside of the scope of the right to obtain information.”

The ministry’s response was signed by Deputy Minister Akın Gürlek, a former judge who had convicted several journalists and politicians.



DBP politician arrested in Mersin

ANF | MERSIN | 16 SEPTEMBER 2022

Kurdish local politician Metin İnci has been arrested in the southern Turkish coastal metropolis of Mersin. The representative of the provincial association of the Democratic Regions Party (DBP) is accused of having radicalised a minor in order to recruit her as a fighter for a “terrorist organisation”—meaning the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK).

İnci, who was detained on Tuesday in the course of an “anti-terrorist operation” by Turkish special forces that was accompanied by the media, denies the accusations. During questioning by an examining magistrate at the criminal court of the Mersin district court late on Thursday evening, he rejected them as “untrue”, according to his legal counsel. The court ordered pre-trial detention and İnci was transferred to the maximum security prison in Tarsus district.

Two women detained for “YPG membership”

Two women were also detained in Mersin on Friday. The women, whose names are not yet known, were reportedly taken into custody during house searches in the district of Akdeniz, apparently accused of “membership in the YPG”. Both women are being held at Mersin police headquarters and no further in-

formation is available yet. Ten employees of the Mersin Municipality are also still in custody. They were detained on Thursday on terror charges at the instigation of the far-right party MHP.



10 locals detained amidst military operation in Yüksekova

ANF | HAKKARI | 18 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Turkish army launched an operation at 4 am this morning in the villages of Memkava, Dara, Kaport and Nêbarê in Yüksekova district of Hakkâri. According to the Mezopotamya Agency (MA), fighting erupted between the Turkish state forces and guerrillas during the course of the operation in the countryside of the Kaport and Memkava villages.

After heavy clashes in the operation zone, gendarmerie special operations teams stormed the village of Memkava, forcing residents out of their homes and conducting a search.

In the wake of detailed searches of houses, ten people from the same family were reportedly taken into custody. The detainees were taken to Yüksekova Police Department, from where they were referred to the District Courthouse after having their statement taken.

In the meantime, lawyers are denied access to the detainees in the courthouse.



Court sentences journalist Hatice Şahin to 6 years and 3 months in prison

ANF | AMED | 19 SEPTEMBER 2022

The final hearing of the trial of journalist Hatice Şahin, accused of “being a member of a terrorist organization” for following the activities of the Democratic Society Congress (DTK) has been held. While Şahin did not attend the hearing at Diyarbakır 9th High Criminal Court, his lawyer Resul Timur was present.

The prosecutor claimed that Şahin had committed the crime of being a member of an illegal organisations and demanded that he be sentenced to prison. The request was made after listening to secret witnesses code named Ezel and Firar and after the prosecution claimed that the journalist was a member of Koma Jinên Azad (KJA), which was closed by decree.

Şahin's lawyer, Resul Temur, said that his client was detained in a file that had nothing to do with her and said that an operation was carried out in his client's workplace where documents seized there were alleged to prove she was working with the DTK.

Temur requested the acquittal of his client.

Announcing its decision after a pretty quick hearing, the court board sentenced Şahin to 6 years and 3 months in prison.



Şenyaşar family continues Justice Vigil on day 560

ANF | URFA | 19 SEPTEMBER 2022

On 14 June 2018, the bodyguards and relatives of AKP Urfa MP Ibrahim Halil Yıldız attacked the Şenyaşar family's shop in Suruç during the election campaign.

In the attack, brothers Celal, Adil, Mehmet, Fadıl and Ferit Şenyaşar were injured. Relatives and supporters of AKP MP Yıldız, badly injured Celal and Adil Şenyaşar, and their father Hacı Esvet Şenyaşar, when he went to the hospital to visit their sons. He was brutally murdered, being lynched in front of his wife Emine Şenyaşar.

Emine Şenyaşar and her son Ferit (who was injured in the attack), have been holding a Justice Vigil in front of the Courthouse of Urfa since 9 March 2021, demanding those responsible to be brought to account.

The family wrote on their social media account: "If there are people stronger than the law in the country, prosecutors will be helpless there. Human beings are helpless; we take refuge in Allah's unfailing justice. We ask for prayers from those who say what we can do for you."



Atabay: Right to education in Kurdish must be guaranteed by the Constitution

ANF | VAN | 19 SEPTEMBER 2022

Education Sen Van branch co-chair, Murat Atabay, said that Kurdish children started the 2022-2023 academic year within the framework of assimilation policies.

Stating that one of the main problems they have been talking about for years is that Kurdish children do not receive education in their mother tongue, Atabay told ANF: “This problem comes to the fore again at the beginning of every academic year. Kurdish children are subject to assimilation. The fact that children do not receive education in their mother tongue is a big problem in terms of their social and personal development as well as their success in education.”

Atalay said that children start school with the disadvantage of learning in a language other than their mother tongue and pointed to the psychological trauma this caused and how this affects self-confidence.

Atabay said that what needs to be done is clear and added: “Kurdish language should be guaranteed by the constitution. The first step to be taken for this is a proper education policy, an education curriculum affirming the right of Kurdish children to receive education in their mother tongue.”



Constitutional Court rejects HDP’s request for recusal of judge in closure case

ANF | ANKARA | 20 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Constitutional Court of Turkey has rejected the Peoples’ Democratic Party’s (HDP) request for the recusal of a judge in the closure case against the party.

In its application, the HDP had stated that judge İrfan Fidan took part as a prosecutor or a chief prosecutor in previous investigations against at least 47 HDP members who are facing a ban from politics in the closure case.

The party alleged that this situation constituted “comments reflecting bias,” and demanded the recusal of the judge.

The General Assembly of the top court rejected the request, giving the party 30 days for an additional defense.

Previously, the court ruled that files regarding former HDP deputy Behçet Yıldırım, who is on trial for “being a member of an illegal organization,” and MP Semra Güzel, who was stripped of legislative immunity and taken into custody in a “terrorism-related” investigation, should be included in the closure case file.

The HDP then made an application, demanding additional time for its defense.

The Constitutional Court in June 2021 accepted an indictment seeking the closure of the HDP for its alleged connections to the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK).

In the case, nearly 500 HDP members are facing a ban from politics.



Artist taken into custody for singing in Kurdish

ANF | AYDIN | 21 SEPTEMBER 2022

Artist Kadir Çat, who took the stage for the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) public meeting in Aydın, was detained for singing in Kurdish.

Çat, who was taken into custody as soon as he got off the stage, was taken to Aydın Provincial Security Directorate by order of the prosecutor's office.

On the other hand, before Çat took the stage, a group of plainclothes police came to him and said: "You will not sing political songs, will you? It will not be good for you if you sing the Kemal Pir song."



Many detained in police attack on Saturday Mothers

ANF | ISTANBUL | 21 SEPTEMBER 2022

The 5th hearing of the lawsuit against 46 people, including the relatives of the disappeared, who were battered and detained during a police attack on the 700th week of the Saturday Mothers' protest, will be held at the Istanbul 27th High Criminal Court.

The Saturday Mothers were set to make a statement to the press before the hearing in front of the courthouse along with representatives of human rights organizations, political parties and non-governmental organizations.

The group was blockaded by the police citing a one-day ban decision issued by the Kağıthane District Governor's Office.

While the activists decided to wait in front of the courthouse until the hearing in the wake of the obstruction, they were besieged and battered by the police, and many were taken into custody.

14 people, including lawyers dealing with the case, Efkan Bolaç and Meriç Eyüboğlu, Human Rights Association (IHD) İstanbul Branch Head Gülseren Yoleri, IHD İstanbul Branch Executive Leman Yurtsever, Left Party member Alper Taş were handcuffed behind their backs as they were detained by the police.



Turkey on the verge of rewarding those who killed journalist Musa Anter with impunity, says RSF

ANF | BRUSSELS | 21 SEPTEMBER 2022

Turkey is on the verge of rewarding those who committed the murder of journalist Musa Anter with impunity, says Reporters Without Borders (RSF).

Rebecca Vincent, RSF's Director of Operations and Campaigns, wrote in an article that "in the case of the well-known Kurdish intellectual and columnist of the newspaper *Özgür Gündem*, Musa Anter, who was gunned down in Diyarbakır on 20 September 1992, the Turkish judiciary has come to the brink of rewarding a brutally committed crime with impunity – after 30 years of injustice. While the statute of limitations in the case was due to be reached on 20 September, the Ankara 6th High Criminal Court refrained from making any decisions at the latest hearing on 15 September, and adjourned the case to 21 September – one day after the statute of limitations expires."

Politically influenced justice

The article continues: "In fact, in Musa Anter's murder case, the previous statute of limitations had already been bypassed in 2012. After 20 years of inaction, the authorities saved the case at the last moment, in a gesture to the Kurdish political movement at the start of historic peace talks with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). However, the judicial process has stopped progressing since peace talks were cut short in 2015.

In the ongoing trial of 18 defendants, the court constantly postpones the decision due to the lack of statements from Abdülkadir Aygan, a double agent who fled to Sweden, and Mahmut Yıldırım, a former member of the National Intelligence Organization, whose fate has not been known since 1996. Further, former auxiliary Hamit Yıldırım, the only suspect who had been arrested in 2012, was released conditionally in June 2017."

The article added: "Although the Turkish state acknowledged its involvement in Anter's murder and expressed regret in 1998, justice currently seems unlikely to be rendered. This case serves as a concrete indication that the judicial process in Turkey has been politically influenced, considering both the timing of developments in the investigation, and the timing of delays.

RSF urges the Turkish judiciary to ensure justice in the Anter case, free from the influence of any political agenda. In Turkey, where nearly 40 journalists have been killed or disappeared since the 1990s, impunity for crimes against journalists remains an alarmingly common problem.

Complete impunity still prevails in around 20 murders that occurred in southeastern Anatolia from 1990 to 1996. In other cases, the collaborators, instigators or masterminds of the murders have not been brought before the judge."

Turkey is ranked 149th out of 180 countries in RSF's 2022 World Press Freedom Index.



Health Committee in western Deir ez-Zor struggles to keep cholera outbreak under control

ANF | DEIR EZ-ZOR | 21 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Health Board of Autonomous Administration of Northern and Eastern Syria has announced that 3 people have died in Deir ez-Zor and Raqqa due to cholera, and reportedly hundreds of others have developed symptoms over the past few days.

There has been a reported lack of water sterilization and filtering at water stations over the past few months, as well as unhygienic waste disposal practices, leading to contamination of drinking water supplies.

According to the Rojava Information Centre (RIC), this situation is linked to the declining water flow in the Euphrates River. Cholera is a water-borne bacteria and reduced freshwater supply is associated with an increased risk of cholera outbreaks.

Since January 2021, the flow of water in the Euphrates River entering NES from Turkey has dropped considerably, falling below 200 m³/s, despite a 1987 Syria-Turkey agreement which stipulated that Turkey will not reduce the amount of water flowing into Syria below 400 m³/s.

Turkey has continued constructing irrigation and energy projects on the Euphrates, giving it the ability to heavily restrict the water flow into Northern and Eastern Syria and weaponize its position as an upstream state.

Turkey has also refused to sign the 1997 UN Water Convention and was one of only three countries to vote against it in the UN General Assembly. This convention requires countries to share rivers equitably and not cause significant harm to co-riparian states.

The falling level of the Euphrates has affected the operations of NES's 3 dams, with dam turbines becoming inoperable as water flow is too little. Water stations have been forced to reduce or completely stop their activity.

Fawaz Awad al-Atish, the deputy director of the Drinking Water Directorate, recently commented that 65 water stations in Deir ez-Zor have been forced to cut their operating hours due to the decreasing level of the Euphrates River.

Tishreen dam director and engineer Hammoud al-Hamadin has explained that when water flow is reduced in a river, contaminants, pollutants and waste concentrations are higher. River levels dropping also creates some stagnant pools and quagmires where bacterial pathogens can thrive.

Furthermore, when water is reduced in quantity and usual sources run dry, as has been the case with the Euphrates in NES, people are forced to revert to risky drinking behaviours, consuming unclean water.

This is not the first instance of a disease outbreak due to Turkey restricting the Euphrates' flow: cases of leishmaniasis have risen sharply, since the sandflies which spread the disease thrive around swampy, drying riverbeds.

Furthermore, in June 2021, the Chief Physician at Heseke's Public Hospital shared that they were dealing with over one hundred cases of diarrhoea and water-borne illness every day.

Walat Darwish, the co-chair of AANES' Energy Office recently commented that, "[NES'] population depends heavily on the Euphrates River in their daily lives, whether it is with drinking water, agriculture, fisheries, energy, and the lack of water negatively affects [their] lives."



Governor in Urfa bans concert by Ilkay Akkaya

ANF | 23 SEPTEMBER 2022

The concert that artist Ilkay Akkaya was going to give in Urfa on 25 September was banned by the governor's office as it was "not deemed appropriate".

Urfa Governor's Office of Legal Affairs Branch rejected the application for permission for the concert, saying: "The organization of the concert event was not deemed appropriate in terms of general security, public order and security."

Akkaya's concert in Mardin on 24 September was also banned by the Mardin Governorship on the grounds that it was "not deemed appropriate". The Mardin Governor's Office claimed that "some of the members of Akkaya's team" were "praising" Abdullah Öcalan, and that the determination was made "as a result of research conducted in the national media".

Ilkay Akkaya, reacting to the ban decision, shared the following on her social media accounts: "Another ban has been added and it will obviously increase. I have experienced this hundreds of times over 34 years. I have only sung about equality, justice, love and freedom everywhere I have been to. I tried to convey these feelings wherever I went. It will continue to be like this from now on. This is how I am and I will never give up."



Interviews

Zagros Hîwa: Turkish government is selling out the country's political, social and economic resources

ANF | 18 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Spokesperson of the Kurdistan Democratic Communities Union (KCK) Zagros Hîwa, says Turkey is selling out the country's political, social and economic resources to secure the dictatorial rule of the powerful elites at the expense of democracy, freedom and human rights.

Turkey appears militarily strong and successful in foreign policy, including within NATO. Does the guerilla resistance have a chance of success in the long term?

The Turkish military is highly dependent on NATO in strategic, tactical and technological terms. In the Middle East, Turkey acts as a proxy for NATO. Without their approval and support, it is extremely difficult for Turkey to make a move militarily as well as politically. Its interventions in Syria, Iraq, Libya, Armenia, and Ukraine are in line with the policies of the Western military alliance. It has proven to be an extremely flexible tool for NATO and uses this status to buy the silence of NATO and EU member countries. Under the cloak of this silence, it practices terror against the Kurdish people, women, youth and all democratic forces in Turkey.

What appears to many as Turkey's foreign policy success is in fact the sellout of the country's political, social and economic resources to secure the dictatorial rule of the powerful elites at the expense of democracy, freedom and human rights. What happened at the NATO summit in Madrid appeared on the surface to be a successful attempt by Turkey to impose the anti-Kurdish policy on Sweden and Finland. The dispute over the extradition of Kurds was only a sham. Sweden has always been an integral part of NATO policy against the Kurdish freedom movement. The country is the stage on which the plot surrounding the classification of the PKK as a terrorist organization after the assassination of Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme by Gladio was played out in 1986.

What happened in Madrid was, in fact, ever greater concessions by Turkey to NATO. Turkey accepted all the conditions of the Western military alliance related to regional and international politics. Turkish policy followed the motto of "repression at home and concessions in foreign policy." In order to consolidate his authoritarian and fascist power at home, Erdoğan has recently invited to his palace the man he accused of murdering Jamal Khashoggi, he has invited to his palace the Israeli president, the man he accused of murdering Palestinians, and he has accepted all the conditions of the president of the United Arab Emirates, his long-time rival. These are Erdoğan's political and economic concessions to foreign powers in order to secure his one-man rule over Turkey in foreign policy terms.

The Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla have been putting up resistance against the attacks of NATO's second largest army for 38 years. The guerrilla's war constitutes the self-defense of the Kurdish people against the genocidal policies of the Turkish state. The guerrilla resistance has exposed the true anti-democratic, fascist, sectarian, jihadist and genocidal character of the Turkish nation-state system against the Kurds and all other ethnic and religious identities living in Anatolia and Mesopotamia. This struggle has also protected the peoples of the Middle East and all humanity from the terror of the radical jihadist proxies of the Turkish state, al-Qaeda and Islamic State (IS). The attacks of Erdoğan's army and its proxies in Iraq and Syria against the Kurdish people and the self-defense forces are in fact an act of revenge against them, because they have defeated IS and thus destroyed Erdoğan's neo-Ottoman dreams. In this sense, the Kurdish freedom guerrillas have succeeded in thwarting Erdoğan's internal and regional plans. This is a legitimate struggle that stems from a just cause, the cause of freedom and democracy. Regardless of Turkish attacks, this struggle will continue and inspire all oppressed peoples of the Middle East while also protecting them from radical Salafist ideologies and their policies.

South Kurdish/North Iraqi NGOs have repeatedly pointed out the serious consequences of Turkish military attacks on civilians. What are the consequences of the war?

Since 1983, when the first cross-border occupation by Turkey into South Kurdistan/North Iraq took place, hundreds of civilians have been killed by the Turkish army. In particular, since Erdoğan announced the end of the peace process on July 24, 2015, 138 civilians have been killed and over 200 wounded by Turkish bombardments. More than 800 villages have been evacuated and tens of thousands of people have been forced to leave their homes and are now living as internally displaced persons. These villagers conduct agriculture, beekeeping, and animal husbandry, usually growing fruits, vegetables, and food on the most fertile soils of South Kurdistan and the Middle East, thus contributing greatly to the local and national economy. The attacks of the Turkish occupiers have destroyed this economic and social life. Great damage has been done to nature. These areas, now occupied, are the ecologically richest regions of the Middle East with great natural diversity, a habitat for many animals and plants.

For years, millions of trees, plants and animals have been reduced to rubble every year by Turkey's bombardments. An environmental disaster is taking place in the areas conquered by Turkey. The entire terrain is set on fire to burn the trees. Trees spared from the fire are cut down by the Turkish army, loaded onto trucks and sold in Turkey.

The use of chemical, thermobaric (vacuum bombs), and tactical nuclear weapons by the Turkish army in this area also has disastrous long-term consequences for all of Iraq and the Middle East. The effects of these weapons, chemicals and radiation, will affect the lives of generations, comparable to the effects of the chemical weapons attack on Halabja by the Saddam army.

I quote a cab driver I once spoke to in South Kurdistan: "What good is my Kurdish identity if the politicians sell the country?" Is the KDP really selling South Kurdistan to Turkey?

After the Treaty of Lausanne, a system of denial, assimilation and annihilation was imposed on Kurdistan. The Kurds were denied any national democratic rights and were left to assimilate into the four nation-states of Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria. Those who resisted against denial and assimilation became victims of massacres and genocide. The social, cultural and historical background of the Kurdish people led to ever new uprisings and resistance to the existential threats they faced. The international system found itself un-

able to contain the Kurds' never-ending struggle for their identity and for democratic rights, and a solution seemed to rely on a collaborative force within the Kurds themselves, thus dividing them socially, culturally and politically. As a consequence, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) was founded to play the role of the Trojan horse within the Kurdish people. Since its establishment, it has been used against the Kurds' struggles for freedom in the four parts of Kurdistan. It has been pitted against the Kurds fighting for their freedom in Rojhilat ["East": East Kurdistan/Northwest Iran] and collaborated with the Iranian regime in suppressing the Kurds' freedom struggle there. Many Rojhilat politicians were kidnapped, killed or extradited to Iran. In 1980-1985, the KDP became the Iranian regime's cannon fodder and collaborated with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) in the fight against the Kurds, especially Komala (Society of Revolving Toilers of Iranian Kurdistan) and HDKI (Democratic Party of Kurdistan in Iran). In Iraq, the KDP collaborated with Saddam Hussein, the butcher of Helebce and initiator of the Anfal operations, to fight the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and other political forces in Başûr ["South": South Kurdistan/North Iraq]. From 1992 to 2022, i.e., for 30 years, the KDP has cooperated with the Turkish state to suppress the Kurdish freedom struggle and the PKK in Bakur ["North": North Kurdistan/Southeast Turkey]. Since 2012, the KDP has been an integral and indispensable part of the Turkish state's attacks on Rojava ["West": West Kurdistan/Northeast Syria]. The KDP was the first to dig trenches to isolate Rojava from South Kurdistan. In an attempt to completely encircle Rojava, the KDP made a dirty deal with IS and delivered Şengal (Sinjar) to radical jihadist terrorists who perpetrated a massacre against the Yazidi population, killing more than 10,000 people and enslaving more than 5,000 women. For all these crimes against the Kurds, the KDP has never been held accountable by international forces.

While all those who collaborated with Saddam and IS have been classified as terrorists by the "international community", the KDP has never been held accountable. It was even rewarded for all the crimes it committed against the Kurds. This shows that the KDP is not a Kurdish force fighting for the freedom of the Kurds, but a collaborating force mandated by the "international community" to act against the freedom struggles of the Kurds in the four parts of Kurdistan.

Thus, the existence of the KDP depends on its collaboration with the enemies of the Kurds. The stronger the freedom struggle in one part of Kurdistan, the more clearly the true character of the KDP is revealed to the Kurdish public. In its current state, it has no relations whatsoever with the Kurdish struggle for freedom and democracy. Supported by the supporters of the Lausanne Treaty, it tries to portray itself as a representative of the Kurdish cause. But the opposite is the case. It abuses the Kurdish cause only for its own interests, especially for the interests of the Barzanî family. The KDP, which is dominated by the Barzanî family, is willing to sell Kurdish land and all Kurdish political and cultural resources without reservation, in order to ensure the family's survival. Among the people, Mulla Mustafa Barzanî is characterized with the words, "Kurdishness is as valuable as the dust on your shoes," and Idris Mustafa Barzanî with the words, "We cannot build bridges, but we can easily destroy bridges. We cannot make a revolution, but we can easily destroy revolutions."

What future does the KDP see for itself in a Kurdistan occupied by Turkey?

To ensure its own survival, the KDP relies not on the Kurdish people, but on the enemies of the Kurds. The KDP is currently the extended arm of the Turkish state's anti-Kurdish policy. Thus, it does whatever the enemies of the Kurds tell it to do, but it has acquired outstanding expertise in disguising its betrayal and breach of trust as patriotism and Kurdishness. It is ready to sacrifice the Kurdish cause in the four

parts of Kurdistan for its own survival. Turkey is using this policy of the KDP to present itself as an enemy not of the Kurds but of the PKK, YPG (People's Defense Units), PJAK (Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan), etc.

We know that Armenians were victims of genocide in the Middle East, and the survivors were awarded a small territory in present-day Armenia. Today, 106 years after this genocide, we see the same approach being pursued against the Kurds. The "international community" wants to create a small enclave in South Kurdistan under the leadership of the KDP and the Barzanî family, but at the expense of the Kurdish population in all other parts of Kurdistan, which is subjected to political, cultural and even physical genocide. The Barzanîs have no problem with the genocide against the Kurds in the other parts of Kurdistan. They are even willing to support this genocide. This is the core of the KDP's policy against North Kurdistan and Rojava. It legitimizes and whitewashes all the crimes that the Turkish state commits against the Kurds in North Kurdistan and Rojava and even in South Kurdistan. Today, the KDP is politically, economically, socially, culturally and militarily more intertwined with Turkey than with Iraq. It considers itself the "Turkish Republic of North Iraq" belonging to Turkey and sees itself in the same role as the "Turkish Republic of North Cyprus" in relation to Turkey.

In recent months, a KDP delegation held talks with parties and politicians in the German Bundestag. One focus of the talks was apparently the claim that they stand between the Turkish state and the PKK. Therefore, they argued, it was not possible for the KDP to take a stand against Turkey's attacks. In your opinion, what is the role of the KDP in the current war in South Kurdistan?

This is an argumentation developed to cover up the KDP's cooperation with the Turkish state and to whitewash the Turkish state's crimes against the Kurds and especially against the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla. Even if we assume that their argumentation is true, they should not take sides with any of the actors in the conflict between Turkey and the PKK.

But we see that they are actively cooperating with the Turkish army in its war of occupation against South Kurdistan. They have allowed it to establish more than 100 bases in the region. The Turkish army is free to move its troops to any of these bases from anywhere, by air or ground. Most of the Turkish army bases are protected and guarded by KDP forces. The KDP's intelligence service, Parastin, provides vital sensitive data to the Turkish intelligence service, MIT, and the Turkish army. This data is used for drone and air strikes on guerrilla positions. Whatever crimes the Turkish army commits against civilians, the KDP does everything it can to whitewash them, even attributing these crimes to the PKK. For example, in a resort near Barmerne, two children were killed by shelling from the Turkish base there. Despite the testimonies of civilians and the families of those killed, KDP authorities and media close to the KDP insisted that the PKK had killed these children.

In addition, 138 civilians have been killed by Turkish bombs and shells in South Kurdistan so far. The KDP-Parastin and Asayîş (security forces) interfere in the wording of autopsy reports and insist that the description of the cause of death be changed from "Turkish bombardment" to "simple explosion." They do not want Turkey to be charged with crimes against humanity and against the Kurds in the future.

How does the KDP deal with the PKK? It has imposed a complete embargo on all areas where the guerrilla forces have bases. The guerrilla fighters are not allowed to move from one area to another. They are not allowed to buy food and ammunition for themselves. When the guerrillas break this embargo and

want to move from one area to another, the KDP ambushes them and kills the fighters. Last year, two groups of guerrilla fighters were ambushed by the KDP in the Xelîfan area, and ten of them lost their lives. They were only moving from one area (Qendîl) to another (Zap) at night, using routes not frequently used by the civilian population. The KDP did not tolerate this. But Turkish soldiers are moving by the thousands and even using KDP equipment and KDP vehicles. The KDP is moving its troops into the heart of guerrilla areas under the protection of Turkish drones and warplanes. The goal is to provoke an internal Kurdish struggle and mobilize the people and the Peshmerga of South Kurdistan against the guerrilla forces.

The KDP has imposed complete censorship on media coverage about the Turkish state's attacks. No independent journalists or human rights activists are allowed to visit the combat zone. Local media have been ordered not to report on the Turkish occupation operations. On the other hand, any false news and fabricated information about the guerrillas published in the Turkish mainstream media is immediately picked up without verification by the media in South Kurdistan. The KDP has turned the media there into a tool of Turkey's psychological warfare against the Kurds, manipulating perceptions of reality.

So far, three international delegations have come to South Kurdistan to visit the areas where chemical weapons have been used. They have all called for an independent investigation. But all of these groups have been denied access to the affected areas, and members have been deported to their countries.

What is happening on the ground is the KDP's full collaboration with the Turkish army and its sinister hostility towards the Kurdistan Freedom Movement.



Ayata: Our resistance is a historical necessity

ZERDEST RUSTEM - BEHDINAN | 20 SEPTEMBER 2022

Muzaffer Ayata is a member of the Central Committee of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). He is a co-founder of the freedom movement and was arrested in 1980, a few months before the military coup, and severely tortured in the military prison of Amed (tr. Diyarbakir). He was sentenced to death for "separatism" and the death sentence was commuted to a forty-year prison term in 1991. In 2000, he was released from prison with a lifetime ban on political activity. He was imprisoned again in German exile. After his release, he immediately rejoined the freedom struggle as a leader of the PKK. In an interview with ANF, Ayata draws historical connections.

It was just the 42nd anniversary of the military coup of 12 September 1980. What consequences do these events still have today?

The coup of 12 September caused great destruction in Turkey. If you look back, you can say that it is the origin of today's fascism and Erdoğan's genocidal policies. Erdoğan and his policies are feeding off 12 September. Today, Turkey is still governed with a racist-monist constitution that denies the Kurds and legitimises the genocide against them. This conception of the state, which has its roots in the Committee for

Unity and Progress, became law in Turkey with the 1924 constitution. The constitutions in Turkey were almost all drafted by the military. The military did not allow the internal dynamics of society to develop, to fight and to organise. A lot of blood was shed for the coup on 12 September. The MHP (Nationalist Movement Party) and the commando camps were created with the help of the state, just as the massacres were implemented by the state. Without the support, approval and help of the state, such movements cannot emerge and develop in Turkey. No racist or fundamentalist movement in Turkey has ever emerged without the will and consent of the state. Hizbullah, which claimed to act on behalf of the Kurds, was also used in this way and caused the most terrible bloodshed. With 12 September, it gained the greatest power.

12 September was also the beginning of the process in which the Turkish-Islamic synthesis was made official state policy. Erdoğan is a product of this policy. He established the monist and fascist regime that the generals had not dared to implement at the time. Today, the fascist leader Erdoğan is trying to complete what the generals left unfinished. Erdoğan says: “We were against the domination of the military, we abolished it”, but this is a lie. On the contrary, he extended tutelage to all civilian sectors and religious institutions. The state could not establish such rule before. September 12 is a day of enmity against the Kurds and against all values of humanity. The current AKP/MHP government is following the same strategy as the putschists did back then. With its “defeat plan”, the AKP/MHP fascism has proclaimed the elimination of the Kurds and their freedom movement. It said: “In 2023, there will be no more Kurds, we will suppress and destroy them.” This is exactly what happened on 12 September.

When we speak of 12 September, one must also think of what happened in the prisons and the deep wounds that were inflicted there. How was the focus of the attacks chosen then?

The prisons became the scene of great struggles. Starting from the reactionary mindset and actions oriented towards militarism and the nation state, and supported by the USA and NATO, fascism turned to prisons at a certain point. Thousands of militants and cadres were put into prisons. Prisons like Mamak, Metris and Amed were the central dungeons. There were prisons of the Martial Law Command in Adana, Erzurum and Elazığ. The places where the struggle developed the most and where the most people were imprisoned were Mamak, Metris and Amed.

What was special about Amed?

The uniqueness of Amed resulted from the struggle of the PKK and the fact that Amed is the historical capital of the Kurds. For this reason, Amed was chosen as a special target. There was also repression in other prisons, but Amed was specifically targeted with a racist, destructive plan to destroy Kurdish identity and its organisations. This plan, of course, met with resistance from PKK cadres and other forces. In Amed, the PKK was to be forced into treason and confessions. It was thought that if the PKK was broken, defeated and liquidated, the others would not be able to resist. In other words, they started with the PKK because it was the strongest and most resilient and had the broadest base among the Kurdish population. The PKK resisted on the basis of Rêber Apo’s [Abdullah Öcalan] ideology because it relied on its own strength and consisted of committed, self-sacrificing people who tried to break every link with the ruling order and resisted everywhere, at all times and under all conditions.

Could you give an example of this?

The most outstanding examples were comrades like Kemal, Hayri and Mazlum. Before their arrest, these friends played an important role in the foundation and development of the PKK and its spread in Kurdistan. They were highly respected, loved and respected throughout the PKK structure and created this love and respect through their work, awareness, sacrifice and humility. There was no financial power nor was it about their own career. They created everything out of themselves. On 14 July 1982, they entered their great death fast against fascism and they fell in September. Mazlum lit the spark of resistance on Newroz. As a modern Kawa, he lit up Kurdistan and became a vanguard of resistance. Of course, actions like hunger strikes require great willpower. Such things require clear thinking, decisiveness, resilience and perseverance. To complete a death fast is a very difficult form of resistance.

The death fast that began on 14 July was carried out under difficult conditions. The fasters endured the pain and agony of their bodies melting away gram by gram. It was not easy for these people who “loved life so much that they were ready to die for it” to accept death. The commitment of Kemal and the others who had started fasting on 14 July, their attachment to life, can be summed up in these words. In other words, they knew what they were doing. They knew the history and were aware of the social situation. They were aware of what fascism was up to. That is why they risked their existence and their lives to stop fascism’s extermination project. Their actions had profound historical consequences.

What were the consequences of this resistance?

They showed the level of militancy, dedication and sacrifice of the PKK. They implemented their resistance in the most impossible place. They fought in the most besieged, most isolated place, where the possibilities were most limited. In this way, they created a benchmark for PKK militancy. The courageous struggle that is taking place today comes from there. It is not something that came about spontaneously. The militancy, the level of thinking and the determination of Hayri, Kemal and Mazlum are the nourishment, the basis and the driving force of today’s courage. No one can distort this reality.

Kemal Pir fell on 7 September. He was the first of the comrades to fall. Hayri then fell on 12 September, Akif Yılmaz on 15 September and Ali Çiçek on 17 September. These anniversaries connect 1982 and 2022. 40 years have passed since then, but they still live on in our struggle, our history, our war and our resistance.

Have the PKK’s goals changed?

Just as Turkey has not given up its goals, the PKK has not given up its resistance. It will never give up. The historical confrontations and struggles continue. As long as the project of annihilation and denial of the Kurdish people does not end, war and resistance will continue. The fact that we are resisting so massively and staking our lives is not the result of an arbitrary decision. This should be common knowledge. It is a historical necessity. We participate in this struggle voluntarily. We do not live comfortably, our resistance is born out of necessity. Because we know; there is war, death, dungeons, torture. Our thinking, our ideals and our conscience demand that we stand against tyranny and injustice. The great death fast of 14 July showed the role that this free will struggle plays in history, that it can thwart fascism, that it brings confidence and hope to the people. Fascism was defeated in prison. The Turkish state, the junta of 12 September, had to put an end to the torture, to the attempt to break the movement in the dungeon of Amed. So,

it accepted its defeat. The Kemals, Hayris and Mazlums are undefeated, they are still alive today and have passed into society.

Many guerrilla fighters today bear the names of Hayri, Kemal and Mazlum. We will continue to pay our debt to them with gratitude.



Who Are We?

The International Initiative “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan—Peace in Kurdistan” was founded in March 1999, a month after Öcalan’s abduction from Kenya and his imprisonment by Turkey. Since its initial foundation, the International Initiative struggled for Abdullah Öcalan’s release from prison so that he can play his rightful role in the establishment of a just peace between the Turkish state and Kurdistan’s Workers Party (PKK). The International Initiative also aimed at contributing to the repairing of the ties between the Kurdish and Turkish peoples, as well as all other peoples of the Middle Eastern regions.

In order to achieve its aims, the International Initiative followed several related paths. Influencing international and national audiences through international campaigns to interfere with Turkish state’s policies towards Abdullah Öcalan has been one of these paths. A second area of work the International Initiative committed itself is the dissemination of Öcalan’s views through art, publications and conferences. Finally, the International Initiative has also been active in raising awareness for Öcalan’s conditions and the human rights violations he faces through reports, fact-finding delegations and lobbying.

Campaigns

The International Initiative organizes signature campaigns to influence the policies towards Öcalan. One such campaign which was launched in 2012 by one thousand preliminary signatories including Gerry Adams, Prof. Antonio Negri, Prof. Immanuel Wallerstein, Prof. Achin Vanaik, and other intellectuals, politicians, MPs, and NGOs from South America, Europe, Asia, Russia, and the Middle East. The campaign reached 10,328,623 signatures and may be the biggest signature campaign for the freedom of a political prisoner that the world has ever seen. It significantly challenged the isolation that was enforced on Öcalan and possibly paved the ways for the peace talks that the Turkish state and Öcalan led between 2013 and 2015.

The International Initiative also organizes video campaigns that educate the public on Öcalan’s life-story, his prison conditions and the demands for his freedom.

Publications

The International Initiative translates, edits and publishes books written by Öcalan in different languages including in English, German, French, Spanish and Arabic.

It compiles brochures from his works on specific topics, such as democratic confederalism or women’s freedom.

It edits books on Öcalan that discuss his main ideas.

The International Initiative also publishes regular reports on Öcalan’s prison conditions and his isolation.

Conferences

The International Initiative organizes biannual conferences and invites scholars, activists, students and politicians to discuss Öcalan’s ideas in order to initiate a conversation between different Movements around the world.

Delegations

Every year on February 15th, which is the date of the abduction of Abdullah Öcalan, the International Initiative organizes a group of internationally acclaimed people to take a trip to Turkey for a fact finding mission and publicizes their findings.

Lobbying

The International Initiative lobbies in the European Council, CPT and other international organizations against the human rights violations against Abdullah Öcalan and his total isolation in İmralı prison.

Art for Öcalan

This campaign aims to express the relationship between Abdullah Öcalan, Kurdish people, freedom and women’s freedom and to educate the wider public on the past and present of the Kurdish people. The International Initiative has already collected art from Brazil, South Africa, USA, South America, Italy, Germany as well as Kurds from different parts of Kurdistan. These works have been printed in postcards, t-shirts and canvas and made available for solidarity sale.

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