

THE İMRALI POST

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

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Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

Youth conference in Dortmund: The core of our work is the freedom of Öcalan

ANF | DORTMUND | 4 SEPTEMBER 2023

The final declaration of the conference organized by Kurdish and internationalist youth in Dortmund, with the slogan “Towards the Freedom of the Leader with Organized Youth” was published.

The conference was attended by young people from many European countries, such as Germany, Switzerland, France, Italy and England.

The physical freedom of Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan was discussed, and a final declaration was announced to the public with a press release.

The declaration said that the conference was held to decide on a number of actions against the absolute isolation of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan.

The final declaration reads as follows:

1. Anything related to Leader Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] will be at the center of young people's work.
2. Explaining Leader Apo's Democratic Modernity paradigm in a better and more structured way to counter the nation-state approach, which has been attacking Leader Apo and the Freedom Movement since the International Conspiracy.
- 3- Introducing and spreading Leader Apo's philosophy and paradigm from the Middle East to Latin America, from Africa to Asia, from Europe to Australia as a way to show devotion and love to Leader Apo. On this basis, developing struggle alliances with youth movements and organizations against the system.
- 4.- Bringing the years of absolute isolation imposed on Leader Apo to the agenda and fighting on this basis-
- 5.- Conducting discussions with all women's organizations in the world within the framework of the Women's Libertarian Paradigm, which Leader Apo created, and acting in light of the Rojava Revolution, which we consider as the women's revolution. Spreading Leader Apo's philosophy.
- 6.- Exposing to the world public opinion the roles played by the US, the EU, the CPT and the ECHR, which present themselves as the most democratic institutions and organizations, in the isolation system against Leader Apo.
- 7.- Sending mail to the CPT and the Council of Europe and organizing actions in different forms in order to ensure solidarity with Leader Apo and the Kurdish people of all those who say stop to this injustice, especially civil society organizations.
- 8.- Opposing attitudes and behaviors against human rights towards prisoners in Kurdistan and Turkey, in the person of Leader Apo, and developing some work on this basis.
- 9.- To carry out efforts to force institutions, especially the Council of Europe, to take steps for Leader Apo's freedom."

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Kurdish youth movement takes over Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan Vigil in Strasbourg

ANF | STRASBOURG | 6 SEPTEMBER 2023

Week after week, since 25 June 2012, activists have been protesting in front of the European institutions and the Council of Europe Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) to demand an end to the total isolation in Imralı and freedom for Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan. This action is one of the longest ongoing protests.

Every seven days, other activists from all over Europe take over the vigil. This week, the 585th week of action, the vigil is being carried out by representatives of the young people movement. In the group are Baz Koçer, Ali Seven and Baxoz Heseke.

Baz Koçer spoke on behalf of the group. He saluted Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan, underlining that he is held in total isolation on the Imrali island. The youth also saluted the guerrillas, the Kurdish people and all the oppressed people.

Koçer said: "We feel deep pain because of the heavy isolation imposed on Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] and appeal to the young people of Kurdistan and Europe to stand up and do whatever they can to ensure the freedom of Rêber Apo. Today is the day to rise up."

— ★ —

Activists of the 'Journey of Freedom': Our resistance will continue until Öcalan is free

ANF | COLOGNE | 8 SEPTEMBER 2023

Almost 200 Kurdish and internationalist activists from Germany, Switzerland, France, England, Spain, Italy, Bolivia and other countries have been marching for the physical freedom of Abdullah Öcalan through North Rhine-Westphalia since the beginning of the week.

The activists will cover 15 km today and meet at the Democratic Kurdish Community Center in Mülheim in the evening, when they will conclude their action with a statement on the importance of the 'Journey of Freedom'.

Before starting the march today, the activists protested the Turkish use of chemical weapons and tactical nuclear bombs against the guerrillas in northern Iraq. Wearing white suits under a cloud of yellow smoke representing chemical weapons, activists denounced the Turkish employment of inhumane methods.

The activists also protested the Turkish state's delivery of the remains of Kurdish guerrillas to their families in storage boxes.

A press statement made by the activists today said the following:

"Leader Apo (Abdullah Öcalan) has been putting up mighty resistance against the international conspiracy and aggravated isolation. No news has been received from him for almost 30 months. The isolation imposed on Leader Apo means conniving at the genocide against the Kurdish people. The CPT (Committee for the Prevention of Torture) has not informed the public about their meeting with Leader Apo.

Those responsible for the international conspiracy that resulted in the captivity of Leader Apo on the prison island of Imrali are not turning a blind eye to the Turkish state's daily attacks against the Kurds. The

Turkish state, which has possessed a barbaric and fascist character throughout history, stays away from all the principles of democracy and humanity. Their war against the Kurds surpasses all moral limits.

The Kurds are murdered systematically, suspicious deaths are taking place in prisons every day, prisoners are left to die, and Kurdish children are killed by the armored military vehicles of the Turkish state. The Kurdish society is under an all-out attack with the approval of the sovereign powers. Human rights organizations have long ignored this aggression, turning a blind eye and deaf ear to this reality. This institutional hypocrisy exposes the true face of Europe, which is an accomplice and has full liability. For this very reason, we can only ensure the end of the policy of Kurdish genocide through a revolutionary popular war under the lead of Kurdish youth. On this basis, Leader Apo's message to the youth and the Kurdish people is clear. As the Kurdish youth, we should respond to the aggression on our people in kind. The Turkish state wants to crush our honor and will, and hands over our remains to our families in boxes and bags. These immoral attacks against the bodies of guerrillas will not go unanswered.

In response to the Turkish state's atrocities and collaborators, we have a message to the youth of Kurdistan; vengeance. We did not and will not forget. We do not forget Tolhildan Tekman, Egit İpek and Hakan Arslan. We do not forget Martyr Helbest and Martyr Baz. We do not forget Mother Taybet. We do not forget Garibe Gezer. We do not forget the betrayal against Comrade Harun. We will not forget any of them.

As the Apoist youth, we will follow in the footsteps of Leader Apo. The PKK taught us not to surrender, but to resist, until Leader Apo is physically freed, and until Kurdistan is freed."

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Prisons

Tuncel says women in Sincan to refuse food for 3 days to protest situation of ill prisoners

ANF | ANKARA | 5 SEPTEMBER 2023

Sebahat Tuncel, former co-chair of the Democratic Regions Party (DBP), made statements at the 31st hearing of the Kobanê Case, and said that the prisoners and Sincan Women's Closed jail will be protesting the violations of rights of seriously ill prisoners. Tuncel talked about prisoner Şakir Turan, who was held in Erzincan L Type Prison and died on 30 August in the hospital where he was finally transferred to be treated for throat cancer.

Tuncel said that women prisoners will refuse food for 3 days in solidarity with ill prisoners.

"Today, the oppression and torture of dissidents, democrats, but mostly Kurds in Turkey's prisons has reached fascistic levels. This is how dozens of Kurdish political prisoners have died in the last two years.

Dozens of laws were passed to allow the mafia, Ergenekon and Hezbollah supporters to be released from prison. As if that was not enough, rapists were also released from prison. On the other hand, Kurdish political prisoners remained in jail and more were arrested. And when they are up for parole, they are denied release. Even the right to hope is denied. In addition, the bodies of dozens of ill prisoners came out of jail, which made one think that Kurds are only to come out of prison dead. The authorities continue to issue reports saying that ill prisoners can remain in jail when all medical reports state the contrary. Moreover, seriously ill prisoners are not even given the 'right to say goodbye' to their loved ones and relatives."

Call to people

Tuncel spoke about the death of 70-year-old prisoner Şakir Turan, who was held in Erzincan. "Turan suffered from cancer, yet was not released from prison. We, as political prisoners in Sincan prison, would like to pay tribute to all the prison martyrs in the person of Şakir Turan. As from today [Tuesday 5 September] we will be carrying out an action to protest the situation of ill prisoners. We will refuse food for 3 days in order to stop this torture and deaths. We call on the public to be sensitive to what is happening in the prisons."



Kurdish man from Rojava faces deportation to Syria after 30 years in Turkish prison

ANF | 5 SEPTEMBER 2023

Abdulmenaf Osman, now 58, has spent more than half of his life in Turkish custody. In 1993, he was arrested in the province of Batman and sentenced to life imprisonment by a State Security Court (DGM) in the same year for "destroying the state unity of Turkey". He was accused of being a member of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). He was 28 years old at the time.

After stays in various detention centres in the country, Abdulmenaf Osman was last jailed in Akhisar high security prison in the Turkish province of Manisa. On Sunday, he was released - but not to freedom. In front of the horrified eyes of his relatives, members of the prisoners' aid organisation EGE-TUHAYDER, the Association of Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD) and the executive committee of the HDP (Peoples' Democratic Party) provincial branch, who had come to the reception, he was arrested by the gendarmerie on the prison grounds and taken to a police station. Arbitrarily and without a court order, said Osman's lawyer, Halil Coşkun. He is to be deported because he is without status, the Turkish authorities claim. "My client is being subjected to an unlawful, disproportionate and inhumane ordeal to deport him to Syria. There, his life would be in serious danger."

Abdulmenaf Osman is a Kurd from Rojava. He was born in 1965 in Heseke, where he stayed until he finished high school. He completed a degree in geology in Syria's capital, Damascus. Since the early nineties, he has been back and forth to Northern Kurdistan and Turkey, where many members of his family have been living for decades. During his studies, he devoted himself to literature for the preservation and culti-

vation of the Kurdish culture and language suppressed under the Assad regime. At first, he wrote for newspapers and magazines, later he wrote novels and short stories. He wrote nine books in prison between 2003 and 2021. He is also the author of the play “Destê Şeş Tîlî” (The Hand with Six Fingers), which was performed at the Diyarbakır (ku. Amed) Municipal Theatre. He also translated the poems of the Syrian poet Nizar Qabbani from Arabic into Kurdish.

Actually, Abdulmenaf Osman should have been released from prison last March. But because the political prisoner refused to make a “confession of remorse”, the release was prevented twice. A so-called control committee, made up of prison staff, certified that he had a poor social prognosis. Therefore, he was not released despite completing his regular prison term. Since last night, Osman has been in the notorious deportation centre in the western Turkish border province of Edirne. According to lawyer Halil Coşkun, he was taken there in a cloak-and-dagger operation.

Deportations from Turkey to Syria are exclusively to the occupation zone. Whether to Idlib, which is dominated by the terrorist group Haiat Tahrir al-Sham, or to other regions of northern Syria such as Afrin, Serêkaniyê, Girê Spî or Azaz, which are controlled by Turkish troops and the Ankara-controlled SNA (Syrian National Army) - a coalition of reactionary, Islamist and fundamentalist militias, Abdulmenaf Osman's life would be in great danger.

In a statement on Tuesday, ÖHD warned against the deportation of the Kurdish man whose family has been living in Turkey for many years. “His family was not allowed to see our client who was taken to the Gendarmerie Command in Akhisar district of Manisa. During our talk with the gendarmerie, we were not presented with any legal foundation for his detention. Still, he was kept waiting there for 40 hours. We were told that he would be taken to the repatriation centre in İzmir, but it turned out that he had been taken to the repatriation centre in Edirne. We have serious concerns over his possible exposure to the death penalty, torture, inhumane and degrading treatment in the event of being deported to Syria. He is exempted from article YUKK 57/A of the law on foreigners and international protection, which requires his immediate release.”



Patnos Municipality HDP co-mayors released

ANF | 7 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) Agirî's Patnos (Panos) municipality co-mayors, Mûşerref Geçer and Emrah Kılıç, and the municipality's Human Resources manager Uğur Laçın were arrested on 12 June, 3 days after being taken into custody on 9 June. Geçer, Kılıç and Laçın, who were tried for “bid rigging”, were released after 3 months.

Background

HDP's co-spokespersons for Foreign Affairs, Feleknas Uca and Hişyar Özsoy issued a statement to condemn the arrests of Patnos co-mayors, Ms. Müşerref Geçer and Mr. Emrah Kılıç, saying that they were arrested on "bogus charges."

There has been constant pressure against HDP municipalities and appointments of Turkish trustees to replace elected Kurdish mayors since 2016. After the 30 March 2014 local elections, HDP won 102 municipalities and trustees have been appointed to 95 of these municipalities and 93 co-mayors were arrested. In the local elections held on March 31, 2019, the HDP's 65 candidates were elected as mayors.

Subsequently, the government denied six mayors their election for the certificate on totally unlawful grounds, deposed the majority of elected mayors and appointed trustees to 48 of these municipalities. The elected mayors were left in place only in six municipalities, including 4 districts and 2 towns. Patnos was one of the district municipalities where no trustees were appointed. Since August 2019, 83 co-mayors have been detained, and 39 mayors arrested. With the latest arrest of Patnos co-mayors, the number of detained and arrested co-mayors has increased to 85 and 41, respectively. The number of co-mayors who are still behind bars is 26, including also those arrested after 2016.



Imprisoned co-mayor of Iğdır suffers heart attack

ANF | 8 SEPTEMBER 2023

Yaşar Akkuş (HDP), the imprisoned co-mayor of Iğdır (Rêşqelas), has suffered a heart attack. He is currently imprisoned in E-Type Prison in Erzurum. Akkuş was taken to the hospital where a cardiac catheterization was performed. Since the expansion of the vessels was not successful, he now has to undergo open heart surgery.

Yaşar Akkuş was sentenced to seven and a half years in prison in May 2021 for "membership in a terrorist organization". The politician was elected to the mayor's office in 2019 together with Eylem Çelik. Both were arrested on 15 May 2020, and replaced by a state-appointed trustee.

The HDP won the elections in 65 cities in the last local elections, almost all of which are now under a trustee. The next local elections are scheduled for spring 2024.



Military aggression and occupation

Turkish state attacks villages of Til Temir by land

ANF | TIL TEMIR | 3 SEPTEMBER 2023

According to information received from Til Temir Military Council sources, the Turkish state and its gangs attacked the villages of Tawila, Til Tewîl and Xemsîn by land on Sunday morning.

Til Temir Military Council responded immediately to the attacks. It is reported that violent clashes took place in three villages targeted by the invaders.

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Tevgera Azadi appeals for calm and dialogue in Kirkuk

ANF | 3 SEPTEMBER 2023

Iraqi security forces in Kirkuk attacked a protest organized by Kurds to open the road on Saturday night with real bullets, killing at least two young people and wounding 11. Young people were protesting the closure of the road to Hewlêr.

In a written statement, Tevgera Azadi said: “Failure to prevent the situation in Kirkuk from escalating further using peaceful means may lead to the development of an ethnic and sectarian war in the city. Further incidents must be prevented urgently: otherwise things may go out of hand.”

The statement continued: “Kirkuk is not the old Kirkuk. It cannot be governed by military methods and dictatorship. The right thing is that Kirkuk should be governed by a democratic system in which the people of Kirkuk can govern themselves with their own will. If further incidents are not urgently prevented, there may be intervention by external powers.

The purpose of the forces behind these actions is political and related to the elections to be held in the coming weeks. These forces want to sacrifice the people of Kirkuk and the brotherhood of people through dirty tricks to achieve their goals.

We call out to all Kirkuk components to address things sensitively. Use peaceful methods to solve problems. As long as we act this way, we can thwart the planned dirty conspiracies.”

The trigger for the protests was the planned return of a building to the KDP. The building is the former headquarters of the Barzani party in Kirkuk. Since the Kurdistan Region of Iraq lost around 40 percent of

its territory to Baghdad - including Kirkuk - in the wake of the independence referendum carried out by KDP leader Mesûd Barzani in 2017 - the building has been used by the Joint Operations Command of the Iraqi Armed Forces.

Last week, Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani ordered the return of the building to the KDP. However, Hashd al-Shaabi supporters are resisting this with a protest camp in front of the construction and a road blockade.



Arab tribal leaders express their support for the SDF operation in Deir ez-Zor

ANF | 3 SEPTEMBER 2023

On Saturday, September 2nd, Sheikhs and leaders of Arab Tribes across various regions of Northeast Syria reaffirmed their commitment to stand by the SDF forces in their continuous efforts to bolster security in Deir ez-Zor. This operation is aimed at countering mercenary groups supported by the Syrian regime, which are attempting to incite sectarian conflict and discord among the various components of Northeast Syria.

In Ain Issa, the Sheikhs of the Tal Abyad region issued a statement emphasizing the need to remain vigilant in countering the schemes led by the Syrian regime and the Turkish occupying forces. They expressed their solidarity with the SDF, which has been a bulwark for coexistence among the diverse components of the region.

Meanwhile, leaders from the Manbij tribe strongly condemned the heinous acts committed by Turkish-backed terrorist groups in the Manbij countryside. These groups had subjected the area to intensive bombings, resulting in the tragic loss of civilian lives.

Additionally, Sheikhs and notables from Tabqa city and its surrounding areas released a statement in full support of the SDF's security operation in Deir ez-Zor. This operation is primarily focused on combating ISIS sleeper cells, curbing smuggling activities, and halting the illegal drug trade. The statement underlined that Operation Security Reinforcement was initiated in response to numerous appeals from the local population to the SDF forces, aimed at maintaining peace and stability in the region.

Sheikhs and notables from Raqqa also echoed their support for the SDF fighters, referring to them as their own sons. They called on everyone to exercise wisdom and resist becoming entangled in hostile agendas.

The SDF launched the "Operation Security Reinforcement" in Deir ez-Zor to counter ISIS sleeper cells, disrupt smuggling networks, and combat drug trafficking. The operation was initiated in response to numerous appeals from Sheikhs and notables in the Deir ez-Zor region, who sought to enhance security in the area.



4 Kurdish protesters killed, 15 injured during protests in Kirkuk

ANF | KIRKUK | 3 SEPTEMBER 2023

Kurdish citizens in Kirkuk took to the streets on Saturday in protest at the closure of Kirkuk-Hewler road by Salafi Sunni groups and the Turkmen Front, an ally of the KDP in Kirkuk, in an attempt to incite chaos in the city.

The demonstrators demanding the opening of the road to traffic were attacked by Iraqi security forces firing live ammunition to disperse the crowd.

According to latest reports from the ground, four Kurdish young men, identified as Hawkar Ebdullah, Hisên Sabîr, Heval Star and Hawrê Ekber, lost their lives and 15 others were injured as a result.

In the wake of the incidents, the Prime Minister's Office declared a curfew in the city where all the streets were closed off. The curfew ended this morning.

Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani is expected to meet with parliamentarians from Kirkuk today to discuss the latest developments.

In the meantime, dozens of Kurds who were said to have taken part in the protests in Kirkuk were taken into custody on Sunday.

The trigger for the road blockade is the planned return of a building to the KDP. The building is the former headquarters of the Barzani party in Kirkuk. Since the Kurdistan Region of Iraq lost around 40 per cent of its territory to Baghdad - including Kirkuk, in the wake of the independence referendum carried out by KDP leader Massoud Barzani in 2017, the building has been used by the Joint Operations Command of the Iraqi Armed Forces.

Last week, PM Mohammed Shia al-Sudani ordered the return of the building to the KDP. However, Hashd al-Shaabi supporters are resisting this with a protest camp in front of the building and a road blockade.



19 mercenaries killed in Ain Issa and Til Temir

ANF | 4 SEPTEMBER 2023

The ground attack by the Turkish-controlled SNA (Syrian National Army) on the small town of Ain Issa in the Autonomous Region of North and East Syria (AANES) was completely foiled by the Military Council of Girê Spî (Tall Abyad).

19 mercenaries were killed and others injured, as the military council affiliated with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) announced on Sunday evening.

The focus of the SNA attacks was the village of Sigêro (also Sakiro and Sukayru), which is located about twenty kilometers east of the city center of Ain Issa. After Turkish proxy troops bombed the town, fighting broke out for several hours in which, according to the military council, five mercenaries were initially killed.

Reinforcements that had moved in from the occupation zone around the town of Girê Spî, which has been occupied by Turkey and its jihadist militias since 2019, were intercepted and also came under fire. Two other mercenaries were killed and seven were injured, said the statement.

The attacks near Ain Issa took place at the same time as an SNA ground offensive against villages near the small town of Til Temir and the attacks on Manbij that had been ongoing for days. The military councils of Girê Spî, Til Temir and Manbij are among the SDF that began a security operation against ISIS cells and criminal networks in the eastern Syrian region of Deir ez-Zor just over a week ago. Both the Syrian regime and the Turkish state are trying to thwart the operation and expand the front lines.

Ain Issa is located south of the Turkish occupation zone in northern Syria and is of strategic importance as a link between the self-governing Euphrates regions with Kobanê in its center and Jazira. Since 2019, the city has been in the crosshairs of Turkey and its Islamist proxy forces as part of a war of attrition, with phases of high intensity alternating with phases of low intensity.

Dozens of villages in the region have already been destroyed and depopulated by Turkish military violence. A Turkish air offensive last November reduced large parts of the infrastructure to rubble and ash.

4 mercenaries killed as MMC fighters destroy a vehicle of the occupation forces

ANF | MANBIJ | 4 SEPTEMBER 2023

Manbij Military Council released a statement providing information about the latest developments in the city.

According to the statement on Monday, Turkish-backed mercenaries attacked some villages in Manbij region this morning. MMC fighters responded to the attack on the village of Xalidiyê to the west of Manbij and killed some of the attacking group.

The attack on the village of Ereb Hesên also faced a response from the Manbij Military Council. A vehicle of the mercenaries was destroyed and 4 members of the group were killed.

According to the statement, the attack on the positions of Manbij Military Council along the Sajur river to the north of Manbij was repelled and some of the mercenaries involved in the aggression were killed.

The Turkish state and its army recruited from ISIS and other groups have increased their invasion attacks against residential areas in Northern and Eastern Syria in recent days, at a time when the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) continues its operations to ensure the security of the people against ISIS mercenaries in Deir ez-Zor.

Ankara-affiliated gangs carried out land attacks on many villages in the north and west of Manbij early on 1 September, World Peace Day, killing 4 children in the village of Mihsenli, located in the North East of Manbij. Continued attacks on the region claimed the lives of 5 civilians.



Turkish forces and allied mercenaries killed 41 children in North-East Syria in 8 months

ANF | 4 SEPTEMBER 2023

According to data from the human rights organizations operating in the regions of Afrin-Shehba, Cizre and Ephrates in North-East Syria, at least 41 children have been killed by the Turkish state forces and allied mercenaries from 1 January to 2 September, 2023.

In addition, 32 other children were wounded, 4 subjected to sexual assaults, 9 arrested and 8 kidnapped, including a baby.

According to reports, details of the crimes against children are as follows:

Cizre Region

One child was wounded in attacks in the border area.

Three children were killed in an explosion.

Attacks by armed drones killed two children.

Seven children were killed, six others injured by bombardments.

Manbij Region

Four children were killed in an attack on a village.

Euphrates Region

An attack by an armed drone injured a child.

Raqqa Region

Two children were killed, two others injured in a bombardment.

Deir ez-Zor Region

An explosion killed a child.

Afrin-Shehba Region

15 children were killed and 16 others injured in explosions.

Four children were raped.

Nine children were arrested.

One child was killed and six others injured as a result of torture and sexual assaults.

Eight children were kidnapped, including a baby.

Six children were murdered.

Villages in the countryside of al-Bab under attack

ANF | 4 SEPTEMBER 2023

In a statement on Monday, the Press Office of the Military Council of al-Bab said that Turkish-backed mercenaries attacked and attempted to infiltrate the villages of Biwêhîc, El Bûgaz and Hemra in al-Bab.

The Military Council of al-Bab responded to the attacks and repelled the aggression. Violent clashes erupted between the mercenaries and the Military Council of al-Bab, the statement said.

The villages located in the western and northern countryside of al-Bab, which was liberated in 2016, are witnessing sporadic fighting due to attacks by Turkish-affiliated mercenaries.

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At least 62 people kidnapped in Afrin in August

ANF | 5 SEPTEMBER 2023

Afrin has been under the occupation of the Turkish state since 2018. The Turkish state, which created a terror regime in Afrin Canton, committed war crimes and serious human rights violations in August.

According to the August balance sheet prepared by the Afrin-Syria Human Rights Organization, a villager named Eli Nuri (65) from Anqel village in Shiye district was murdered last month. Nuri died after being hit by a vehicle belonging to the Emşat gang group affiliated with Ankara. The perpetrators of the crimes benefit from complete impunity.

62 people kidnapped

The organization reported that the Turkish state and its mercenaries kidnapped 62 citizens, 6 of whom were women, in August and raped one of those women.

The organization pointed out that most of those kidnapped had just returned to Afrin, believing the false promises of ENKS.

450 trees cut down, agricultural land and forests burned

The Turkish state and the mercenaries brought to the region within the scope of the ethnic cleansing policy implemented by Turkey, were responsible for the cutting down of 450 trees in the canton and burning tens of thousands of hectares of agricultural land and forests.

Colonial sites being built

Forced demographic change crimes continued to be committed in August. Colonial houses named “Ehil El Xêr” were built near Afrin canton in cooperation with the “Sewasiye” and “Social Development and Humanitarian Support International (SDI)” organizations. Gang families began to be settled in colonial residences built in Shera district. 100 buildings were built on the site.

The Turkish state, in cooperation with Gulf Arab organizations, built a new settlement near the village of Xezewiyê in Sherawa district.

The construction of a new colony has been started north of the Kiwêt Rehm colonial houses in the Jindirês district.

Work has begun on a colonial site near the village of Miryemin in the Sherawa district.

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Guerrillas kill 4 Turkish soldiers in Zap

ANF | **BEHDINAN** | 5 SEPTEMBER 2023

HPG/YJA guerrillas carried out an action against the Turkish army that wanted to advance towards the war tunnels in Zap, connected to Medya Defense Areas.

According to guerrilla sources, 4 Turkish soldiers were killed in the action.

It was stated that the bodies of the Turkish soldiers were under the control of the guerrillas.

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Turkish armed drone attacks city hall of Binarê Qendîl

ANF | 6 SEPTEMBER 2023

On Tuesday evening, a Turkish drone attacked the city hall of Binarê Qendîl in South Kurdistan. A city council van was hit in front of the building, causing significant damage to other local council vehicles and the city hall building.

Dilşêr İbrahîm, co-mayor of Binarê Qendîl Municipality, reported that as a result of the attack, a large fire broke out in the parking lot, extending the damage to a large number of vehicles in the municipality.

Systematic attacks on civilian targets in southern Kurdistan

Bombing such civilian targets constitutes a war crime. International silence, however, allows Turkey to continue carrying out such attacks. The Turkish Air Force systematically terrorizes the people of South Kurdistan by carrying out air strikes that repeatedly result in deaths and injuries. Most recently, last Friday, the village of Gulalê in Şarbajêr was attacked by warplanes at least ten times. At the same time, the villages of Bolê and Dola Şawrê in the mountains of Binarê Qendîl were also attacked from the air. Likewise, the village Êsêwe in the Raperîn region was bombed, causing the breaking of the windows of many houses.

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Attacks repelled, dozens of mercenaries killed in Manbij

ANF | MANBIJ | 6 SEPTEMBER 2023

According to an ANHA report based on Manbij Military Council (MMC) sources, Turkish-backed mercenaries attacked the villages of Al-Buhej and Al-Bugaz to the northwest of Manbij at 12:00 local time today.

Violent clashes erupted as a result of the response from fighters of the Manbij Military Council, and the attacks were repelled. According to reports, dozens of mercenaries were killed and MMC fighters have taken intense measures in the region.

In a statement on 5 September, the Manbij Military Council reported that the Turkish-backed Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (formerly al-Nusra) mercenaries had settled in some occupied villages on the western outskirts of the city.

In a statement on Wednesday, the Manbij Military Council said: “Our forces monitored Hayat Tahrir al-Sham HTS movements and positioning in the occupied Manbij villages, former Jabhat al-Nusra, a group internationally recognized as a terrorist organization. These movements were monitored on the outskirts of the city of Manbij, specifically in many Turkish-occupied villages in the west and north of Manbij, in particular Al-Yashli and Al-Sheikh Nasser in northwest Manbij, which are approximately 19 kilometers away. They have deployed heavy weapons in villages and deliberately evacuated the people. The movements of HTS come in coordination with the Turkish occupation and its mercenaries following their failed attacks on the Manbij countryside that were thwarted earlier by the Manbij Military Council.”

Manbij has been under attack by jihadist proxy forces affiliated with Turkey since 1 September. On Tuesday, four members of the Security Forces of North and East Syria (Asayîş) were killed in fighting. In a large-scale attack last Friday, four siblings aged ten, fourteen, fifteen and seventeen were killed by Turkish artillery fire. On Saturday, a 70-year-old woman was killed and other people were injured in a village on the north-western front.

On the other hand, the invading Turkish army launched an aggression on the villages of Sêgîro, Hiwêca, Sefawiyê and Cehbet to the west and east of the Ain Issa district last night. Further details about the attack with heavy weapons are not yet available.

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ISIS and al-Nusra terrorists appear in Manbij attack

ANF | 6 SEPTEMBER 2023

Today, media outlets affiliated with Turkish-backed armed groups have published footage and photos of the terrorists who attacked Manbij. These terrorists have identified themselves as tribal fighters. However, what is even more concerning is that they are seen wearing badges associated with ISIS.

In a statement about the reports, the Media Center of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) said: “As we previously indicated, these so-called tribal fighters are, in reality, former members of al-Nusra and ISIS terrorists, who are now resurging under a different guise. Additionally, they are using vehicles belonging to the Turkish-backed SNA. This revelation further underscores the potential threat they pose to the stability and security of the region and proves the ISIS-Turkish SNA relationship we exposed earlier.”

SDF Media Center published the video and photos that clearly show these terrorists wearing ISIS-associated badges, saying: “We believe it is crucial to share this evidence with public opinion.”

you can watch the video from this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PG5Eoa9eIb8>

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Three children injured in ongoing attacks on Manbij

ANF | MANBIJ | 6 SEPTEMBER 2023

Manbij has been under attack by jihadist proxy forces affiliated with Turkey since 1 September. On Tuesday, four members of the Security Forces of North and East Syria (Asayîş) were killed in fighting. In a large-scale attack last Friday, four siblings aged ten, fourteen, fifteen and seventeen were killed by Turkish artillery fire. On Saturday, a 70-year-old woman was killed and other people were injured in a village on the north-western front. A commander of the Manbij Military Council, Bozan Berkel, lost his life after the detonation of a bomb placed in his car in Manbij this morning.

While the Turkish state and allied mercenaries continue their aggression in the region, the occupation forces attacked the village of Tehne in western Manbij and other villages to the east of al-Bab this morning.

The bombardment of the village of Tehne left three children from the same family injured. The children, named İbrahim El Casim (12), Celal El Casim (14) and Wîam El Casim (15) were taken to the Berkel Hospital in Manbij for treatment.

According to surgery assistant Ehmed El Elî, the three children were directly taken into an operation as soon as they were brought to the hospital in the morning. Surgeons had to take out the spleens of two of the children who had been hit by shell fragments in the stomach.

Ehmed El Elî said that 15-year-old Wîam El Casim suffered a very critical injury between the kidney and stomach and may lose his kidney in the coming hours.

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Turkey and its mercenaries bomb Assyrian villages west of Til Temir

ANF | 7 SEPTEMBER 2023

In the morning, Turkey and its mercenaries attacked the Assyrian villages of Tewilê, Til Tewîl and Um El Kêf, located west of Til Temir, with heavy weapons and mortars.

No detailed information could be obtained about the results of the bombing.

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15 Turkish-backed mercenaries neutralized and 30 others injured in foiled attack on Manbij

ANF | 7 SEPTEMBER 2023

Turkish-backed mercenaries attacked on Wednesday in large numbers in Al-Bougaz, Manbij's northern countryside. The Kurdish Front forces repelled the attack, and fierce clashes erupted, resulting in the elimination of more than 15 mercenaries, the injury of around 30 others, and the destruction of two vehicles. A large quantity of weapons and ammunition left behind by the mercenaries were also seized.

Among the neutralized mercenaries were individuals affiliated with ISIS, a fact substantiated by the terrorist organization's insignia visibly worn on their attire.

“Ever since the onset of the events in Deir Ezzor, the Turkish occupying state, and its mercenaries have persistently initiated attacks on diverse regions in northern and eastern Syria, spanning from Manbij and

Ain Issa to Tal Tamir and Zarkan. In each instance, our forces, in conjunction with the Syrian Democratic Forces, have successfully thwarted these attacks,” said the Kurdish Front Media Office in a written statement about the attacks on Thursday.

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Turkish drone strikes the Shehba Dam

ANF | SHEHBA | 7 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Turkish state, which commits war crimes through systematic targeting of civilian sub-structures in North-East Syria, has bombed the Shehba Dam today.

According to reports from the ground, the dam in the canton of Shehba was targeted by an armed drone and suffered material damage.

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5 HTS members killed, 11 others injured as MMC thwarts an attack against a village

ANF | MANBIJ | 7 SEPTEMBER 2023

Manbij has been under attack by jihadist proxy forces affiliated with Turkey since 1 September. On 5 September, four members of the Security Forces of North and East Syria (Asayîş) were killed in fighting. In a large-scale attack on 1 September, four siblings aged ten, fourteen, fifteen and seventeen were killed by Turkish artillery fire. On 2 September, a 70-year-old woman was killed and other people were injured in a village on the north-western front. A commander of the Manbij Military Council, Bozan Berkel, lost his life after the detonation of a bomb placed in his car in Manbij on 6 September.

The Press Office of Manbij Military Council (MMC) released a statement providing information about the ongoing attacks in the region.

According to the MMC statement on Thursday, the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS, formerly al-Nusra) mercenaries affiliated with the Turkish state attacked the positions of MMC fighters in the village of Arab Hassan to the north of the city.

MMC fighters responded to the attack, killing 5 members of the mercenary group and injuring 11 others in the ensuing clashes.

The statement noted that the repulsed mercenaries fled, leaving their weapons and ammunition behind.

The Turkish state has been carrying out violent attacks against Manbij, Til Temir and Ain Issa since the launch of the SDF Operation Security Reinforcement against ISIS and criminal elements in Deir ez-Zor region on 27 August.



KCK: The Turkish state wants to make its occupation of Iraq and Syria permanent

ANF | BEHDINAN | 7 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Foreign Relations Committee of the Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK) released a statement about the latest developments and tensions in Kirkuk and Deir ez-Zor, which, it said, are directly related to the visits of Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan to Baghdad and Hêwler [Erbil] from August 22-24.

KCK stressed that: “Only when the Turkish state unconditionally ends its occupation of Iraqi territory and withdraws its hands from Syria and Libya can peace generally prevail in the Middle East.”

The KCK Foreign Relations Committee statement on Thursday includes the following:

“Iraq and Syria have gone through a major upheaval after the attacks of IS and still have not been stabilized. They are being drawn into a new conflict in Kirkuk and Deir ez-Zor. It is clear that the simultaneous tensions in these regions are not spontaneous or coincidental. These tensions and conflicts are directly related to the visits of Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan to Baghdad and Hêwler [Erbil] from August 22-24. Indeed, Tayyip Erdoğan and Hakan Fidan’s statements on both regions also show the intentions and expectations of the Turkish state.

While Hakan Fidan stated that the PKK started the clashes that resulted in the death of 4 people in Kirkuk, Erdoğan, on his return to Russia, described the tensions and clashes in Deir ez-Zor as timely, very good and appropriate developments, thus confessing his support for the gangs that started this clash.

The Turkish state, which violates the sovereign rights of both Iraq and Syria and occupies both countries, wants to make its occupation of Iraq and Syria permanent by spreading it over time, just like the occupation of Cyprus in 1974. Hakan Fidan, who resorted to all kinds of dirty war methods and all kinds of provocations, extralegal executions and massacres in Kurdistan when he was the head of Turkish intelligence (MIT), continues them in the name of diplomacy, this time with the title of foreign minister.

Hakan Fidan and Tayyip Erdoğan, declared Kirkuk, where Kurds, Arabs, Turkmens, Assyrians and Armenians have been living together for centuries, a “Turkish homeland” and a “Turkmen city”. They use the KDP and the Barzani family to hide their occupying and expansionist ambitions. In recent years, Kirkuk has been being tried to be turned into the center of the MIT with all sorts of spying, creating provocations, legitimizing its occupation and positioning itself in South Kurdistan. Kirkuk, which since ancient

times has been home to many ethnicities, beliefs and different cultures, is being turned into the center of a new conflict through Turkey's provocations.

The Iraqi Turkmen Front [right wing political organization claiming to represent the Turkmen people in Iraq] and the KDP administration, are working directly under Ankara and MIT's command, trying to provide legitimacy and credibility to the Turkish state and the dictatorship of Erdoğan, which has no credibility in the eyes of the Iraqi society and the Baghdad government. Turkey is trying to put pressure on the Baghdad administration with the support of some Turkmen personalities and the Barzani family, whom it has ganged up and taken under its control. The fascist-occupying Turkish Republic and its stooges want to turn this magnificent city, Kirkuk, which is rich in history, sociological reality and the experience of coexistence of different cultures, into a tool of power and of their administration. The people of Kirkuk have to organize and struggle to turn Kirkuk into a stronghold of freedom, democracy, brotherhood, and peace on the basis of self-governance and strengthening the grounds of common life by taking a stance against all kinds of foreign interventions and occupying policies that want to make the peoples put a knife on each other's throats.

Turning Kirkuk into a bargaining ground over the sharing of land and districts, dividing it into ethnicities and beliefs, population and calculations of getting a share from oil revenues is synonymous with turning Kirkuk, and thus Iraq, into a permanent crisis area and destabilizing it.

The will of the peoples, of the communities belonging to different ethnicities, different religious and belief groups, of the women and the youth of Kirkuk to establish a life together and in common, to live in peace and well-being in Kirkuk, and the capacity for self-governance is more than enough.

On the basis of these facts, the first thing that everyone who wants peace and tranquility for Kirkuk has to do is to oppose the Turkish state occupying Iraqi territory. The 90 Turkish military outposts on Iraqi soil must be dismantled. It is to oppose the increasing political, cultural and economic hegemony of Turkey over South Kurdistan, which has turned Hêwler into its backyard. Only when the Turkish state unconditionally ends its occupation of Iraqi territory and withdraws its hands from Syria and Libya can peace generally prevail in the Middle East."

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HPG: 3 soldiers killed, 14 positions damaged in guerrilla areas

ANF | **BEHDINAN** | 7 SEPTEMBER 2023

The press centre of the People's Defence Forces (HPG) issued a statement providing information about the latest developments in the ongoing war in Kurdistan. According to the statement on Thursday, resistance continues unabated to the Turkish invasion of the guerrilla-held Medya Defence Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

HPG stated that three soldiers of the Turkish invading forces were killed in the Girê Cûdî resistance during guerrilla actions by the HPG and YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) on Tuesday. Two of the soldiers

were shot dead by YJA Star snipers. Since Tuesday, seven enemy positions in the western Zap region and Metîna have been damaged by sabotage tactics and heavy weapons fire. A Turkish army thermal camera was destroyed in the Sîda resistance area in the Zap. On Wednesday evening, the guerrillas intervened twice with heavy weapons against transport helicopters that were dropping off troops at Girê Cûdî.

The HPG and YJA Star dedicated their recent actions against the Turkish army to revenge for the Garzan martyrs and in particular for Tolhildan Tekman, whose remains were handed over to his father by the Turkish authorities in a plastic box.

The HPG statement said: “The Turkish occupation army is stuck in the face of the active resistance of the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrillas. Although it bombs the Medya Defence Zones dozens of times every day with all the war technology at its disposal, it cannot achieve a single result and suffers serious losses. Most recently, the losses in the Girê Cûdî resistance area were also concealed from the public. Only the killing of one soldier was admitted. As we reported on 5 September, the bodies of four soldiers are under the control of the guerrillas in the Girê Cûdî resistance area. The identity of two of them could be established. Their names are Deniz and Ünal.” The Turkish state has only confirmed the death of Ünal Sipahi.

The HPG also reported continued artillery attacks by the Turkish army on the Zap, Metîna and Xakurke regions. On Tuesday and Wednesday, Girê Cûdî was attacked several times by attack helicopters, and the Medya Defence Zones were bombed ten times by fighter jets. The targets were Girê Amêdî in Zap, Gundê Dergelê, Gundê Şêlazê and Golka in Metîna, Gundê Gûzê and Heftebax in Gare, and Bobrîska in the Qandil region.



Mercenaries' land attacks in Manbij repelled but bombing in Til Temir continues

ANF | 8 SEPTEMBER 2023

According to local sources, mercenary groups affiliated with the Turkish state carried out a large-scale land attack on the villages of Erebi Hesên, Muhsenlî, Toxar, Um Edese and Um Cilod in the northwest of Manbij on Thursday night.

The fighters of the Manbij Military Council responded to the attacks immediately, and the clashes continued until the morning hours.

Many mercenaries were killed during the clashes, while a large amount of military ammunition was confiscated. The attacks carried out by the mercenaries were repelled.

Villages to the north and west of Til Temi have also been heavily bombed since Thursday.

According to the information received, the villages of Tewîle, Til Tewîl, Asuriye, Til Cuma, Um El Xêr, Til Gerebêt and Gozeliyê in the west of the city and the village of Dirdara in the north of the city are being bombarded with heavy weapons and mortars.

The Turkish state escalated its attacks against Shehba, Manbij, Ein Îsa and Til Temir regions at the same time that the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) launched their operation against ISIS mercenaries and drug dealers in Deir ez-Zor on 27 August.



Operation Security Reinforcement in Deir ez-Zor successfully completed

ANF | 8 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Media Center of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) released a statement announcing the completion of Operation Security Reinforcement in Deir ez-Zor, and a transition to specific security operations and anti-ISIS efforts in the region.

The SDF statement released on Friday includes the following:

“Last month, on August 27, our SDF forces launched a security and military operation called Operation Security Reinforcement led by the Deir ez-Zor Military Council, against the ISIS cells that conducted more than 60 terrorist acts against our security forces and the populace of the region, and to track down the narcotics traffickers and wanted criminal elements in Deir ez-Zor area.

Two days after launching the operation, our forces apprehended several ISIS terrorists and narcotics traffickers and combed more than 90 villages in the western and northern countryside of Deir ez-Zor.

Nevertheless, some external actors, particularly the security apparatus affiliated with the Syrian regime found that the success of this operation is the failure of their schemes and plots in the region. Therefore, they hastened to redirect events in another direction and began involving some of their loyal figures, introducing armed elements into the villages of Deir ez-Zor by infiltrating from the western bank of the Euphrates and uniting with the armed cells affiliated with the regime under the name of the ‘Tribal Army,’ which is a security organization directly linked to the regime.

The following are the facts regarding Operation Security Reinforcement:

-The primary objective of the operation was to target ISIS cells. However, when the Syrian regime became involved by sending armed groups and attempting to incite sedition, the operation escalated into clashes with these intruding groups.

-In the Deir ez-Zor area, which comprises 125 villages under the control of the SDF-led Deir ez-Zor Military Council, only five villages were infiltrated by these armed groups.

-Initially, our forces prioritized wisdom and restraint over firmness and decisiveness in dealing with this type of tension. However, these armed groups engaged in looting and destruction of civic services, including the water station in Dhiban town, putting the lives of local inhabitants at risk. The populace called upon our SDF for decisive intervention. Consequently, our SDF forces heeded their call, successfully reclaiming the five villages and expelling the intruding armed groups. Some of them surrendered, while others fled to areas controlled by the Syrian regime on the west bank of the Euphrates.

– Since its establishment, SDF forces hadn't witnessed such a fierce offensive, employing all malign means and media through disinformation, propaganda, and false news to incite sedition. However, our SDF forces acted with rationality, showing wisdom, decisiveness, and professionalism in thwarting this malign scheme, thanks to the awareness of our populace.

– The positive and continuous communication between the SDF and the local tribes in NE Syria has played a crucial role in foiling the schemes of the malign external regimes, the Syrian regime and the Turkish Occupation regime, who tirelessly sought to incite discord in our regions.

– Throughout the operation, our forces convened a meeting with the tribal leaders, including the Sheiks of the al-Akaidat tribe, as well as representatives from the international coalition. The meeting unanimously highlighted the importance of decisively cutting off this malign scheme and restoring security and stability to the region.

– The recent events that happened in the four villages exposed the malign and lurking intentions of the external entities against the Deir ez-Zor area and its populace.

– Coinciding with the operation, the Turkish-backed mercenaries launched a series of attacks on the countryside of Manbij, Tal Tamir, Ain Issa, and Tal Abyad. However, our forces with all their military councils thwarted all those attacks, inflicting heavy losses among the mercenaries.

Today, following the successful clearance of villages from the intruding armed groups, we proudly announce the completion of Operation Security Reinforcement in Deir ez-Zor, and a transition to specific security operations and anti-ISIS efforts in the region.

We commend the heroism and sacrifices of our brave fighters and commanders, the local populace, and community leaders who provided invaluable support and facilitation for our forces throughout this operation. Regrettably, nine civilians lost their lives due to heavy weaponry attacks, such as shoulder-mounted rockets launched by the intruding armed groups in the villages – a fact corroborated by video evidence. Additionally, we mourn 25 fighters of our SDF who were martyred while defending their areas and people against the intruding armed groups.

During the operation, 23 armed members were neutralized. Four Syrian regime-backed NDF, two ISIS terrorists, and fifteen intruding armed elements were apprehended. In addition, large quantities of weapons, ammunition, and explosives were confiscated.

In conclusion, we express our heartfelt gratitude to the people and community leaders in Deir ez-Zor for their steadfast support of our forces against this attempted sedition. Our SDF forces reaffirm our commitment to intensify our efforts against all criminal elements and ISIS cells to ensure security and stability in the region. We will act decisively against those who collaborated with the hostile entities.”



Guerrilla actions dedicated to Kemal Pir on the anniversary of his death

ANF | BEHDINAN | 8 SEPTEMBER 2023

Resistance continues unabated to the Turkish invasion of the guerrilla-held Medya Defence Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq). In a statement released on Friday, the Press Office of the People's Defence Forces (HPG) denied once more reports spread in Turkish media about a fallen guerrilla fighter.

Paying tribute to Kemal Pir, who died in a hunger strike in Amed dungeon 41 years ago, HPG said: “We commemorate with respect and gratitude the internationalist Kemal Pir, who was one of the first companions of Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan], was one of the co-founders of the Apoist movement, is considered one of the first commanders of our guerrilla army and determined the nature of the PKK's resistance. Our forces carried out 17 actions in memory of Kemal Pir on the anniversary of his death. In these actions, four occupants were killed, one shovel excavator and 10 positions were damaged.”

HPG provided the following details regarding the actions carried out by the guerrillas on 7-8 September:

Şehîd Delîl in western Zap region

In the Girê FM resistance area, a shovel excavator was fired at from two sides with heavy weapons and brought to a halt on 7 September.

In the Girê Cûdî resistance area, YJA Star guerrillas continuously struck positions of the Turkish occupation forces with heavy weapons on Thursday and Friday night. Two soldiers were shot dead by snipers. An army airborne operation supported by attack helicopters was thwarted by the intervention of guerrillas with heavy weapons.

Further strikes by the guerrillas left 10 positions of the Turkish forces damaged.

Metîna

In the Girê Ortê resistance area, guerrillas infiltrated the position of a Turkish unit on 6 September and struck them with firearms from close range. Two soldiers were killed.

Xakurke

YJA Star guerrillas hit the occupation forces at Girê Şehîd Axîn with heavy weapons on 7 September.

Attacks by the Turkish army

The Golka area in Metîna was bombed four times by fighter jets on Thursday. In addition, artillery attacks were carried out on the regions of Zap, Metîna and Xakurke.

False reports about Şerzan Mawa

The Turkish Defence Ministry has almost turned into a lie-producing ministry and has once again spread false reports about a fallen fighter, said the HPG. The reports concern Şerzan Mawa (Ferit Yüksel), who fell in an attack with a tactical nuclear bomb in Sîda in the Zap on 28 June, as had been reported by the HPG Press Centre on 4 July. A distorted account of the incident first appeared in the Turkish media on 10 July. Today, the Ministry of Defence published a report in which Şerzan Mawa was described as one of those responsible for the Zagros region and his death was presented as a new event.

“To this end, we must first say that the Turkish army has committed a war crime by using a tactical nuclear bomb. The occupying army is getting nowhere in the face of resistance and the tactical intelligence of the guerrillas. It uses extreme technology and commits war crimes. Because it is not getting results even with this, it is trying to cover up its helpless state with lies. Everything it says on this subject is a lie. The relevant documents have been published before. Our companion Şerzan was an Apoist and sacrificial fighter who believed wholeheartedly in the freedom struggle of his people. However, he was not responsible for the Zagros region as reported by the Turkish special war media,” HPG said.

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Confessions of NDF member who engaged in combat against the SDF under the guise of ‘tribes’

ANF | 9 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Media Center of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) published the confessions of a member of Difa al-Watani (National Defense Forces, NDF) regarding their fight against the SDF in the eastern countryside of Deir ez-Zor under the guise of ‘tribes’.

According to the SDF report, one of the Syrian regime-backed NDF elements confessed that the orders were issued by their group’s leader to fight against the SDF in the eastern countryside of Deir ez-Zor under the name ‘Tribes’. The NDF element is called Ghiath Juma Sahoar, originally from the Damascus countryside, and was captured in al-Busaira town during Operation Security Reinforcement.

Sahoor stated, “While in Damascus, I got in touch with an individual named Abu Basil Diaa / Ghazi, an NDF in Deir ez-Zor. He offered me to join his group, and I agreed.”

“While I was a part of that group, I became acquainted with another individual named Ali Ramadan Khalaf from al-Busaira town,” he recounted. “Following the directives of Commander Abu Basil, Ali and I crossed the Euphrates River into an area known as al-Jazeera. When conflicts arose, I was in the town of al-Busaira.”

“Under the orders of my group’s commander, we were compelled to engage in combat against the SDF, under the guise of ‘Tribes’. While I was participating in the fighting, I was captured by the SDF in the town of al-Busaira,” he explained.

“Despite the Syrian regime’s claim that the individuals responsible for combatting the SDF and causing turmoil in certain villages and towns in the eastern countryside of Deir ez-Zor, engaging in looting, arson, and the destruction of public institutions, were affiliated with local “tribes”, our forces managed to apprehend several members of the Syrian regime-backed NDF during our combating operations,” SDF stated.



MMC reports ongoing aggression after foiled attacks of Turkish-backed mercenaries

ANF | MANBIJ | 9 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Media Center of Manbij Military Council (MMC) stated that the Turkish occupation and its mercenaries persist in their assaults on the outskirts of Manbij.

The night before, the occupation forces launched multiple attacks on various fronts in the northern and western rural areas of Manbij. They initiated an assault on the “Sajour” riverfront and from the axis of the village of “Toukhar”. Manbij Military Council confronted them, resulting in clashes that led to the demise of one mercenary, compelling the rest to flee the front.

The Turkish-backed mercenaries also targeted the axis of the village of “al-Darag”, encountering robust resistance from our fighters, ultimately compelling them to retreat. MMC forces further clashed with the mercenaries as they attempted to breach the front line, spanning from the village of “Hoshariya” to the village of “al-Jat”, striving to gain ground on that axis. The relentless determination of our fighters forced them into a withdrawal and retreat.

In the front of the “Muhsinli” village, the mercenaries made an attempt to advance, consolidating their forces at one of their strongholds. Nevertheless, MMC forces swiftly responded with a barrage of fire, leading to the obliteration of a vehicle carrying a DShK weapon. One mercenary was neutralized, while two others sustained injuries. The remaining mercenaries managed to evade the front.

In the axis of “Muhsinli – Jradah”, the mercenaries launched yet another assault on MMC positions. MMC fighters successfully thwarted the attack. This scenario repeated itself in the axis of the village of “Arab Hassan”, but they promptly retreated upon facing MMC forces’ retaliation.

On the “Sayyada” front and from the axis of the “Um Adsa” village, the mercenaries mounted a substantial offensive against the MMC military positions. MMC fighters responded with unwavering resolve, resulting in neutralizing and wounding several mercenaries. They were unable to retrieve the bodies of their neutralized mercenaries until late last night. Subsequent confirmation confirmed the elimination of five mercenaries.

In the vicinity of “Um Jaloud” village, the mercenaries attempted a surprise assault. MMC fighters swiftly countered their move, compelling them to retreat amidst a barrage of fire. Following the mercenaries’ repeated failures to breach MMC positions, they resorted to intense artillery shelling of the area. This particularly targeted the axes of the villages of “Toukhar,” “Um Jaloud,” and “Um Adsa,” resulting in significant material damage to civilian properties.

On the “Areema” front and in the vicinity of the “Al-Bougaaz” village, the mercenaries gathered but refrained from launching any direct attacks, opting instead to bombard the area with heavy artillery. In the axis of the “Al-Hamran” village, situated opposite the “Um Jaloud” village, a position held by the mercenaries was struck with mortar shells, leading to the injury of four of them. On Friday morning, the fronts experienced a relative and cautious calm save for sporadic shellings on certain fronts.

The escalation by the Turkish occupation and its mercenaries on the Manbij fronts coincides with the commencement of the “Operation Security Reinforcement” launched by the SDF in Deir ez-Zor countryside to pursue the remnants of the ISIS cells, combat drug traffickers, and apprehend elements sowing chaos in the region.

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Femicide

29 women murdered in Turkey in August

ANF | ISTANBUL | 3 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Platform We Will Stop Femicide (KCDP) published its report on femicides for the month of August.

According to the report, 29 women were murdered by men during the past month, 21 of them under suspicious circumstances.

8 of the victims were killed for seeking divorce and refusing reunion, marriage and relationship.

59 % (17) of the victims were killed by their husbands while 69 % were found dead at their homes.

The platform stated that violence against women continues to grow in parallel with the failure to take preventive measures, to sentence perpetrators to deterrent penalties and to hold fair trials.

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9 women murdered in South Kurdistan in August

ANF | 5 SEPTEMBER 2023

According to a compilation by RojNews agency, at least 9 women were murdered, and 3 others died under suspicious circumstances in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq in August.

The femicides in question, as well as other cases of violence against women, were recorded in the cities of Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk, Halabja, Germiyan, Qeladiz, Raperin and Behdînan.

There has been a significant increase in femicides in South Kurdistan in recent years as perpetrators are granted impunity for the killing of dozens of women every year.

According to the Kurdistan Region Organization for Legal Support for Women, 13,584 women were killed in 2021 and 15,897 in 2022.

In a statement drawing attention to the increasing violence and sexual assaults against women in southern Kurdistan, the Kurdistan Free Women's Movement (RJAK) said: "The situation of women in South Kurdistan has grown worse and worse after Raperin (popular uprising against the Baath regime on 5 March 1991). Subjected to violence or killed under various pretexts, women are drawn into psychological pressure while male perpetrators are protected. On some occasions, perpetrators are released after a short period of imprisonment. Laws are not respected and are replaced by tribal domination and mediation by parties and families."

RJAK pointed out that sexual assault, breach of human dignity and countless cases of torture and murder are covered up by legal centers, human rights and civil society organizations. This is one of the reasons for the increase in violence, which is largely justified by various motives such as honor and religion.

Calling on women to get organized against untransparent and insufficient solutions and to stop this repressive system, RJAK demanded that perpetrators of femicide be sentenced in accordance with law to ensure that women are not tyrannized or treated as second-class citizens.

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Saturday Mothers attacked and detained again on the 963rd week of action

ANF | ISTANBUL | 9 SEPTEMBER 2023

Turkish police have again attacked the Saturday Mothers at Galatasaray Square in Istanbul. The initiative wanted to make a statement for the 963rd time on “disappearances” in state custody and demand punishment for the perpetrators on Istiklal Avenue. But despite a contrary ruling by the Turkish Constitutional Court, the blockade of their ancestral rally site was not lifted today either. The Galatasaray Square on the central Istiklal Avenue was widely cordoned off by barriers and grids in the early morning, with patrol cars and prisoner transport vehicles parked in the side streets. Riot police were deployed with a large contingent to prevent the group from approaching the square.

On their way to Galatasaray Square, the Saturday Mothers were accompanied by numerous human rights defenders, including former deputies Musa Piroğlu of the HDP (Peoples’ Democratic Party) and Ahmet Şık of TIP (Workers’ Party of Turkey). The group was surrounded by police before they reached Galatasaray Square. The police justified the encirclement with a ban on assembly issued by the district governor’s office.

Ali Tosun, son of Fehmi Tosun, a Kurd who was abducted by Turkish civilian police in Istanbul in 1995 and has been missing since, protested against the action and said: “The highest court of this country has ruled that the siege of this square and the bans and dissolutions of our vigils are unlawful. But the police are defying this ruling and preventing our gatherings. It seems that this country is ruled by a state within a state.”

After Tosun’s speech, the police broke up the meeting and twenty people were handcuffed and taken into custody. The police were particularly brutal while detaining Ali Ocak, the brother of Hasan Ocak, who was also abducted by the police in Istanbul in 1995 and tortured to death in prison. In addition to Ali Tosun, the others taken into custody are Mikail Kırbayır, Maside Ocak, Hanife Yıldız, Nazım Dikbaş, Ömer Kavran, Deniz Aytaç, Melike Ersoy, Mete Demircigil, Davut Arslan, Hünkar Yurtsever, Doğan Özkan, Cüneyt Yılmaz, Türker Demirci, Necef Arpaçay, Gülendam Özdemir, Hanife Yıldırım, Gülseren Yoleri and Hatice Onaran.

For over 28 years, the Saturday Mothers have been demanding information about their relatives who have disappeared in police custody. It is the longest-running civil disobedience action in Turkey, which began on 27 May 1995 with the sit-in by the family of Hasan Ocak, a teacher murdered by torture. An estimated 17,000 people, including journalists, politicians and human rights activists, “disappeared” in Turkey in the 1980s and 1990s, mainly in the Kurdish regions. Often their bodies were dumped in secret mass graves on military bases, but also on rubbish dumps or in well shafts. Neither the police nor the judiciary have taken any measures to investigate.

Since the 2013 resistance in Istanbul’s Gezi Park, protests have been banned in the square in front of the Galatasaray High School. Only the Saturday Mothers were allowed to continue protesting here. But with the accusation of “closeness to the PKK”, the initiative’s 700th vigil was banned and violently dispersed

on 25 August 2018. Since then, all protests in Galatasaray Square have been banned. But this is contrary to the right to freedom of assembly and demonstration, ruled the Turkish Constitutional Court on 22 February 2023, rejecting the ministry's objection that Saturday Mothers threatened the "protection of public order".

"Everyone has the right to take part in unarmed and peaceful assemblies and demonstrations without prior permission," says Article 34 of the Turkish Constitution, which the security authorities violated with their banning order for the forcibly dispersed Saturday Mothers' action in August 2018 and all subsequent ones. The blockade of the square is thus invalid, according to the ruling of the constitutional complaint with which Maside Ocak Kışlakçı was successful. However, the Turkish Interior Ministry and the Istanbul security authorities are ignoring the ruling and are taking violent action against the Saturday Mothers for the 23rd week in a row.



Ecocide

AKP-MHP government systematically slaughters forests in Bitlis

ANF | BITLIS | 7 SEPTEMBER 2023

Tree cutting continues after the curfews imposed in July and August in the villages of Hizan (Xîzan) in the province of Bitlis (Bedlîs). According to local sources, trees are cut down especially at night and more than 10 to 15 trucks of trees are cut down and taken away every day.

Bitlis is one of the regions where Turkish soldiers deliberately destroyed forests. Approximately 90 percent of the forests in Bitlis and its districts, whose mountains, valleys and plains were covered with forests until the 1990s, were burned or cut down. The Turkish state, which never stopped the destruction of the environment in Bitlis, accelerated it even more during the AKP-MHP government. The Turkish army burned and continues to burn tens of thousands of acres of forest in Bitlis and its districts, especially between 2020 and 2023, under the name of military operations.

The Turkish army destroys forests by starting fires every year in the name of "security". In particular, the forested lands around the police station became the target of the soldiers. Forests are set on fire, especially before all military operations.

Trees removed from their roots with buckets

In Hizan, which was recently declared a prohibited area, tree felling continues, carried out by soldiers, village guards and people cooperating with the state.

On 2 June, a curfew was declared in many villages and hamlets, such as Harat, Akunus, Govan, Lanilan, Xûlepûr, Kekulan, Sureh, Pertawan, Kuran and Ureh, all in the province of Hizan. After a ban on entry and exit to these settlements, the area called “Findıklık Forest” was declared a “Special Security Zone” on 14 July. During the operation, hazelnut trees in the village of Xûlepûr were uprooted by diggers brought to the area, and thousands of trees were destroyed, paving the way for military operations and the building of roads.



Human Rights Violations

Trade unionist Şimşek: Poverty will deepen because of the AKP policies

ANF | ANKARA | 4 SEPTEMBER 2023

Public Employees Confederation Unions (KESK) member Gönül Kural Şimşek spoke to ANF about the increasing poverty with rising inflation in Turkey.

The trade unionists said that the share of the workers in the budget is decreasing, and added that the government's choice is in favor of capital, not labor, and that this was seen once again in the Collective Labor Agreement (TİS) negotiations in the public sector.

Şimşek said that the government, which oppresses the workers under taxes, only speaks in favour of the employers and added: “Workers in the municipalities run by different political parties, in business lines where there was no activity before, whether unionized or non-unionized, are protesting for additional raises. While the share of the budget allocated to workers decreases every year, the share of capital increases as the salaries of all workers approach the minimum wage. There are budget negotiations and metal business line contracts in September. I think poverty will get deeper.”

Exploitation is increasing

Stating that the AKP government is not on the side of the workers but on the side of profit and war, Gönül Kural Şimşek said: “The government provides capital tax deductions, incentives and loans to employers. This is actually the biggest indicator that this is a government of capital. While the Turkish economy grew by 5.5 percent in 2022, the share of labor decreased from 30 percent to 26.3 percent in one year.

We saw how olive groves were given away to Limak Holding, known as the ‘gang of 5’ in Akbelen. Despite the resistance of the people, the government continues to protect the interests of the capital close to it and

uses force on the people. It was reported in the press that the state paid more than one billion liras in incentives to this company.

All capital groups are getting their share from this growth, not just employers close to the government. The most concrete example is that Koç Holding, Turkey's largest capital group, quadrupled its profits, while the salaries of workers who were previously paid three times the minimum wage are now nearing the minimum wage. As workers work harder and get paid less, capital increases exploitation."

Budget allocated to war

More than 20 percent of the budget was spent on war in 2022, said Şimşek, adding: "We all see and experience the increasing pressure on the people and workers struggling for the smallest of rights. We have all seen the violence against private sector teachers who took the streets demanding an increase in wages. For several weeks now, the Saturday Mothers have been prevented from making statements about their relatives who have disappeared at the hands of the state. We know that if the budget allocated to war and armament during the earthquake had been spent on building solid housing, such a great disaster would not have occurred. The government also uses the budget it allocates to war to restrain the workers and the people."

We should struggle for common demands

Şimşek said that it is necessary to organize to fight against poverty and added: "There is no other way than for the largest segments affected by this poverty and price increases to come together and fight for their common demands. The biggest responsibility here falls to political parties and unions. It is necessary to establish the broadest labor platforms and to make efforts for labor organizations to develop ways and methods that will unite the workers around their demands."

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DFG: 59 journalists in prison in August

ANF | AMED | 4 SEPTEMBER 2023

Dicle Fırat Journalists (DFG) Association published the August Report on Rights Violations Against Journalists.

The report said: "We would like to state with regret that, these days, when people demand peace, there are still serious problems in the country regarding freedom of thought and expression and freedom of the press. In an environment where many journalists are still in prison, it is of course not possible to talk about freedom of thought. And this situation has become even worse. The fact that the violations continue to increase causes us deep concern."

The association's August Report on Rights Violations Against Journalists said: "Journalists who are stopped while following the news are also subjected to beatings, torture and ill-treatment from time to time.

In August, 3 more journalists-writers were remanded in custody, bringing the number of journalists in prison to 59.”

The report added: “78’s Initiative spokesperson Celalettin Can, who was sued for participating in a one-day editor-in-chief campaign in solidarity with Özgür Gündem newspaper, was sentenced to 1 year and 3 months in prison. Currently, the co-chair of our association, Dicle Müftüoğlu, and many journalists arrested in 2023 are still in prison. As we have stated many times, it is a shame that so many journalists are in prison in 21st century Turkey. We demand the immediate release of our friends.

Attacks on the economic and social rights of journalists continue to increase. As if creating an army of unemployed journalists was not enough, some press and media organizations follow the government’s orders, and employ people for a penny, and do not delay in firing them when it suits their needs or when the employees defend their rights.”

The report underlined that “the dismissal of Sputnik employees due to union activities is an example of that practice. Sputnik employees, who are still on strike, want their rights and their fired colleagues to be reinstated.”

The report continued: “Penalties given to television channels by RTÜK have now become a routine. We can also talk about websites that are still closed. Access to news articles can be blocked very easily. This is pure censorship. Journalists are censored and prevented from writing what is happening in the country.

When we look at it as a whole, we see that we were faced with heavy pressure, intimidation and censorship when it came to freedom of press and expression in August. We know very well that the sole purpose of all this pressure is to prevent journalists from telling what happens in the country. On this occasion, we say once again ‘Stop repressing journalists, you cannot chain free writers’.”

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Human Rights Association calls for global fight for refugee rights

ANF | ISTANBUL | 5 SEPTEMBER 2023

The hegemonic wars of the major international powers and their regional allies are causing more and more people to flee the Near and Middle East. Global warming caused, among other things, by the capitalist lifestyle and production methods is making more and more areas of land uninhabitable. According to the UNHCR, 108.4 million people are currently displaced. Many people are making their way to Europe. Countless people, especially from African countries, drown in the Mediterranean, while Turkey plays an important role as a transit state for those seeking protection. According to official information, 4.9 million migrants are registered in Turkey, two million of whom live illegally. The Turkish state uses asylum seekers as a means of exerting pressure on the EU as well as for its colonial projects in Northern and Eastern Syria.

In an interview with the Mesopotamia news agency, the chair of the Istanbul office of the Human Rights Association (IHD), Gülseren Yoleri, criticized the international migration policy and said it is deeply inhumane. Yoleri pointed to the agreements signed by European countries which allow the old continent to become a fortress. By barricading themselves, European countries have de facto abolished the right to flee, a fundamental humanitarian right.

Yoleri underlined that many people are now fleeing not only war and political persecution. They are fleeing for ecological reasons and poverty. However, these aspects would not be included in international conventions. International pressure is necessary for this, said the human rights defender.

EU is trying to externalize refugee camps

Yoleri spoke about the camps that restrict the rights of asylum seekers. In Turkey, the rights of migrants are violated in these camps. In particular, the violation of the rights of women and children in the camps is increasing day by day. Yoleri pointed out that this development can also be observed in European countries and said: “There is a new discussion going on in Europe these days about refugee camps. The EU summit in 2023, for example, saw massive pressure being built to push EU countries not even to accept camps within their own borders. Instead, Europe is pushing to externalize camp policy.”

Greece and Turkey are used as camps

Yoleri criticized the fact that European states use countries like Turkey and Greece as “refugee camps” and used the term “depots for migrants” to underline the dehumanization of the issue. She said that billions of euros are received by Turkey in return for its “policing” role to prevent refugees from reaching “fortress Europe”.

Great Britain, said the human rights defender, has reached a new low with its ship prison for refugees. “With its refugee ship prison, the United Kingdom has brought a new dimension to the action against those seeking protection onto the agenda. It has effectively put these people in a ship prison that completely isolates them from society. While these countries debate extensively about how to keep people seeking protection away from their borders and increase security measures against refugees, they are not addressing the causes that lead to flight and migration at all.”

Racist policy against refugees

Yoleri said that Turkey signed the Geneva Convention on Refugees only with regional reservations, meaning that only people from Europe can apply for asylum. There is a racist policy particularly against those seeking protection from Syria. The claims that those seeking protection are privileged are not true. Yoleri said that the only thing that is free for those seeking protection from Syria is attending educational institutions. And of course, education is mandatory. Given the challenges, she warned: “These people face discrimination and language barriers. Even for the group that supposedly enjoys the most protection, there are incredible problems. This is a manipulation of facts to create an anti-refugee atmosphere.”

The refugee issue can't be solved politically; a humanitarian solution is necessary

Yolerci underlined that the government is acting with a state-based logic on the refugee issue, when this is an issue that must be solved not politically but on a humanitarian basis. “Countries must approach this problem in a humanitarian way and not politically. If we do not put a clear humanitarian approach and a solution based on humanitarian principles on the agenda, there will be no solution. Wars must be prevented and peace must be promoted. Solving this problem seems easy. But unfortunately, the state mentality and political interests make this process difficult. Therefore, a global fight against these global policies must be strengthened.”



Police who killed Kurd in accident ‘punished’ with a fine

ANF | AMED | 5 SEPTEMBER 2023

The defendant was conspicuous by his absence, his defense lawyer appeared satisfied, the relatives on the bench of the co-plaintiff reacted in shock: more than three and a half years after the accidental death of the Kurd Cihan Can in a Turkish police van, the Diyarbakır regional court ruled on Monday that police officer Hakan Avcı was to be sentenced to three years in prison for manslaughter. The sentence was reduced to six months and converted into a fine. In the end, he would have to pay 21,200 liras, which is the equivalent of around 730 euros. In other words, the fine was less than the police officer's monthly salary.

The court thus fell well short of the public prosecutor's demand, who called for a prison sentence of two to six years for Avcı. The co-prosecution saw the crime as murder and requested that the main hearing be suspended and referred to a large criminal chamber. The defense demanded that the proceedings be discontinued.

Officer Hakan Avcı ran over civil engineer Cihan Can in Amed with a police van on 27 December 2019. The 33-year-old was walking late in the evening in the borough of Bağlar and was trying to cross a street when he was hit head-on. Can died at the scene of the accident. Footage from a surveillance camera documented the incident.

The case caused heavy protests. The police officer responsible for Can's death said that he mistook the man for firewood from a nearby bakery. A total of six expert reports were obtained during the course of the investigation and the proceedings with the conclusion that the person who caused the accident was solely responsible for Cihan Can's death.

An example of Turkish justice

“The verdict is an example of what Turkish justice is,” said Neytullah Can after the trial. The supposed punishment for killing his brother is not a punishment, but rather a reward. “Our idea of justice is differ-

ent. We demand that the police officer go to prison for the murder of Cihan Can.” The verdict is not yet final. The lawyers announced in the courtroom that they would appeal the decision.

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ESP Co-Chair Özlem Gümüştaş and lawyer Sezin Uçar detained

ANF | ISTANBUL | 5 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Co-Chair of the Socialist Party of the Oppressed (ESP), Özlem Gümüştaş and lawyer Sezin Uçar, a member of the Law Office for the Oppressed (EHP), were taken into custody in Istanbul on Tuesday.

Gümüştaş and Uçar were detained at the Courthouse where they appeared to give a statement.

In a social media post, EHB said: “We will continue doing our profession, no matter what. We appeal to our colleagues. This is not an attack against EHB alone, but against the defence profession itself.”

In a statement about the detentions, ESP said that Özlem Gümüştaş and Sezin Uçar were detained after going to the prosecutor’s office to give a statement due to the fabricated accounts of confessor Onur Demir. “Revolutionary socialist politics is a crime to you, and an honour to us,” the party said.

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Ibrahim Uzun tells of the ordeal they had to go through to retrieve their son’s remains

ANF | 6 SEPTEMBER 2023

HPG member Tolhildan Tekman (Yılmaz Uzun) fell as a martyr with his 5 comrades following a Turkish air attack in Siirt in 2020. What Tekman and his family experienced is a summary of the genocide and brutality committed by the Turkish state against the Kurdish people. It reveals what this system, which doesn’t respect even the dead, can do to Kurds.

The state hid Tekman’s death from his family for 3 years and asked the family to join the AKP group sitting in front of the Amed HDP Provincial building. The family resisted this for years and did not give in to the blackmail. However, the response given by the state was inhumane. Tekman’s remains were delivered to his family in a box after 3 years. Although a blood sample was given in 2020 to identify the body and the results were available, the family was not informed.

When Tekman was buried, the Turkish army attacked. The state blockaded the village of Bastok, and did not allow the body to be brought to the mosque or the funeral prayer to be performed. Not content with this, the state put soldiers on duty at every house in the village and did not allow attendance at the funeral.

Ibrahim Uzun, father of the guerrilla, lives in Tatos (Tekman). He spoke to ANF about what the family went through.

Uzun said that he was called by the Istanbul Police in 2020 and was told that his son had died in clashes. He was required to do a DNA test. Uzun said that he was kept waiting for weeks in Siirt, where he went for the DNA test. He had been told by the authorities that they would get in touch with him within 6 months to a year.

Ibrahim Uzun was called to Vatan Caddesi Police Station 5 months later. He was asked to join the AKP group that held a sit-in in front of the Amed HDP Provincial building. Uzun rejected this offer. The state raids Uzun's house once a week to put pressure on him and force him to accept the 'offer'. This situation turned into routine house raids, carried out almost every day, every week.

Despite the repression, the family did not give in

Uzun stated that he was offered to go to Amed before and after the DNA test, but said: "This was an immoral offer and I could not accept it. I said to them, 'You are telling me that my son is dead, but you are making such an offer.' They told me that he was alive and that if we did what they said they would convince him to come back. I told them that it was my son's free will and that I didn't interfere with that. "I would never do such a dishonourable thing. They stop calling."

Uzun learned that his son had fallen a martyr after a long period of silence, and added: "The prosecutor's office put his death in 2021 and he was removed from the population. The state knew that he was dead, but they hid it from me. They buried him in the Siirt homeless cemetery. I applied to collect my son's remains. I opened his grave and saw a small box. I picked up my 1.85 tall son in a small box and put him in the car.

When I opened the box, I was horrified. There were small jars inside the box. They put my son's pieces in small jars. At that moment, my world collapsed and I wished the apocalypse would come. What kind of morality is this, what kind of humanity is this? I asked myself what kind of brutality it is to cut a person into pieces and put them in tiny jars. Do you have no conscience, no morals?"

Amed. Uzun said: "They asked me for a death report in Bitlis. We traveled the 6-hour journey to Siirt and Erzurum in 20 hours. We arrived at the village around 10 pm. When I went to the village, soldiers were stationed in front of every house. We were not allowed to go to the mosque, nor to perform funeral prayers there and receive the condolences of the people. The soldiers kept guard in front of every house and did not even allow the villagers to come to the cemetery. We couldn't even find an imam. But luckily, we have an imam who is a relative of ours and he came to the cemetery and fulfilled the religious duties. The village was blockaded."

The HDP delegation that went to visit Uzun managed to overcome all obstacles. Uzun added that he would take the matter to court.



Erdoğan pardons another perpetrator of Sivas pogrom

ANF | 6 SEPTEMBER 2023

Turkish President Tayyip Erdoğan has pardoned another perpetrator of the 1993 Sivas massacre. Erdoğan's decision was published in the official gazette on Wednesday.

Hayrettin Gül's life sentence has been lifted due to "permanent illness". Gül had initially been sentenced to the death penalty, which was later commuted to life imprisonment.

In 2020, another perpetrator sentenced to life imprisonment, Ahmet Turan Kılıç, was pardoned by Erdoğan at the age of 86.

The massacre took place on 2 July 1993 and was directed against participants in a cultural festival organised in honour of the Alevi folk poet Pir Sultan Abdal in the central Anatolian city. The guests at the festival, who were staying at the Madımak Hotel, were mainly Alevi artists; poets, thinkers, singers and folklore dancers, but also critical intellectuals of different denominations. 35 people, including two hotel employees, died in the fire at the Madımak Hotel.



Interview

Mother of fallen guerrilla: I will continue my daughter's struggle

ANF | BREMEN | 3 SEPTEMBER 2023

Xeysa Nas' life began in a village near the district of Idil in the Kurdish province of Şirnak. Because of persecution by the Turkish state, she had to flee to Germany in the 1990s. Since her first day in exile, she has been committed to the liberation struggle. In an interview with ANF, she talked about her activities in the Kurdish association Mala Kurda in Bremen and in the Commission for Families of Martyrs. The mother also talked about her daughter Rojda Nas. The PKK fighter, whose nom de guerre was Rûken Hespist, was martyred in Botan in 2007 along with seven other guerrillas.

Could you please introduce yourself?

I come from Şirnak. Our village is called Hespist and belongs to the İdil district. I was born, raised and married there. It is the village of my ancestors.

How old were you when you had to leave the village?

I was 34 years old when I came here. Only one of my children was born here. All the other children were born in the homeland.

What was your life like in the village?

Our village was really beautiful. We were all close to each other, there were no strangers among us. We had a good life then. No one treated the other unfairly. We were engaged in agriculture. There was a beautiful stream next to our village. We had fish, we had rice. We didn't have to buy anything from the city - peppers, aubergines, tomatoes, rice, and so on. We had everything. Our valley was very beautiful.

Then the state came and said: "You are no longer allowed to grow peppers and tomatoes. PKK members come to the valley and use the vegetables. That's why they don't starve. You are also not allowed to plant rice anymore." They forbade us to cultivate the valley, so we could not use it anymore.

Then the revolutionary struggle arose. Some called them "bandits", others "students". I don't remember exactly, but they were called different names. Some denigrated them by saying, "They are thieves who broke into our houses." Only when people came into contact with them did they understand that they were pursuing the same cause as Şêx Seîd. Gradually, we began to understand them.

How did you feel when you saw the guerrillas for the first time? How did you see them?

I will tell you something, but you will probably laugh. I prepared food for them, and they took it. Then they brought me their shoes. I didn't know them, "Oh, are they really human shoes?" I smelled them and said, "By God, they smell human!" They told me nothing. They just asked me to prepare food, but didn't tell me who they would take it to. So, I cooked the meal. Sometimes they brought me old and new shoes. They said that we could work with the old shoes. Some shoes had holes. At the beginning, I didn't know the guerrillas, but little by little we got to know them.

Sometimes they met with us, held meetings and taught us. They explained to us that we would become millions. Sometimes they asked for help. They gathered us in the school and said, "We are your children, you are our parents. We struggle for you. We do not accept the oppression you experience." Our bond became so strong that we wanted to share everything we had with them. Our love for them had grown so strong. We often wondered when they would come and be our guests and what we could do for them.

"As we got to know them, we also got to know the oppression of the state"

We got to know the guerrillas through their beauty. As we got to know them, we also got to know the oppression of the state. The state accused us of taking them in, giving them food and helping them. Then,

the military stormed our houses every day. The pressure was not limited to our village, but also reached Filê, Bafê and all the surrounding villages.

Our village is located on the Botan side at the junction of the road to Torî. Everyone from the surrounding villages travelled to Îdil via our village. The roads to Botan and Bagok also passed through our village. For this reason, the villages of Bafê, Acaniyê and Filê were also subjected to repression. The people there were patriots like us. They loved the party like us. The guerrillas were our own children. How could we not love our own children? We still love them today. They took to the mountains for us. Wouldn't they also want to have their own homes and their own children? But their parents are oppressed. Their brothers and sisters are oppressed. Their children are subjected to oppression. Of course, they had to go to the mountains. They didn't go because they were bored. Nobody goes there just like that.

“If it weren't for the Mala Kurda, I would suffocate”

You came to Germany after the attacks by the state. By what route? What did you experience here?

We came here because we were persecuted. If there had been no persecution, it would have been nice in our village. It was our country, our village, we had everything there. When the wall of a house collapsed, the villagers would come together within half an hour and rebuild it. When we built a house, we helped each other. We would never want to leave our land. Who would want to leave their country anyway? But we were oppressed. We had to leave. We were settled in a refugee camp. Three or four times we were taken to other places until we finally arrived here. We experienced a lot of humiliation, we also had difficulties in the refugee camp.

My daughter had arrived here before us. I came later. My daughter and I suffered a lot for a year. I said, “My daughter, I am also very sad.” She said, “Mum, we go to the kitchen, but we don't speak the language. We try to speak, but we don't know what language they speak. I want to go back home.” I said, “My daughter, look, they say conditions will improve after a year.”

I came here and asked: “Isn't there an association here? Isn't there a Kurdish house where you can at least get some air and see some compatriots?” Then I found out that my brother and his friends were active in the organisation there. They were preparing an evening event. When I saw that the association was full of people, I felt relieved and said to myself, “Thank God!” When we came to the association and saw our patriotic people, we told each other about our problems. That's how we gradually got to know our association. We got to know Mala Kurda and it became our home. I have lived here for 27 years, and my children for 30 years. They came two to three years before me. I have not seen my country for 27 years. Without the Mala Kurda, I would suffocate in a day. Because the Mala Kurda embodies our language, our culture, our existence. At least we can talk about our problems together there. Twelve years ago, we, four or five people, including friend Herbijî [Celal Özkan] who is the father of three martyrs, founded the Bremen Commission for Families of Martyrs.

Why did you establish this commission?

We had an urgent need. There are many people like us whose hearts are on fire with pain. We visit them. We live in exile. No one would listen to our problems. Who should we tell our problems to? Germans, Arabs, Persians? No. We can only tell each other our problems. In other words, we visit these families and

ask if they have any wishes, how we can help them, what they need. That is why this commission was established. A commission was set up in each town. These commissions meet once a year and they all report on their work. The Commission for Families of Martyrs works officially. It is officially recognised. It is not an illegal activity. It is a commission set up by mothers whose hearts are on fire.

Could you tell us a little about your relationship with the association? What was it like when you first joined it? How did your relationship develop?

In our country, we were so patriotic that when friends taught us, they would say, “When Kurdistan is established, this village will be its capital.” We were so happy! So, we worked harder.

When I came to Germany, I went to the association. When I saw a map of Kurdistan there, Hespist was not marked. I asked, “Where is the picture of Hespist?” They said, “Who knows Hespist?” I said, “How, so you don’t know Hespist! Hespist is the capital of Kurdistan.” We started working with the people. We made jokes. What had we seen so far but Hespist? At most, we got as far as Îdil and then returned to our village. We had never seen anything else.

“I taught my children the mother tongue first”

Can you tell about your children? How many children do you have?

I have four sons and four daughters here. One of them fell as a martyr. My children work here. When we came here, thank God there was the Mala Kurda. We took our children there and brought them up. They grew up with their parents’ culture. They grew up with their mother tongue. They speak three languages now. Of course, they could have learned Turkish as well. But I forbade them to speak Turkish. I didn’t want them to speak that language because Turkey had persecuted us so much. Then, when my children went home, they needed an interpreter. When they went to the consulate, they were told, “Why don’t you speak Turkish?” They grew up here. Their mother didn’t speak Turkish, neither did their father. What can we do? We don’t speak Turkish.

The mother tongue must come first. I brought up all my children in their mother tongue. My child who was born here speaks Kurdish very well. Sometimes he confuses the words, but thank God he is good at the language. I thank God that our children grew up with the culture of their mother, their ancestors and their homeland.

“My daughter was worthy of the mountains”

Let’s talk about your fallen daughter.... What was Martyr Rojda’s childhood like?

I can’t put her childhood into words. She left with dignity. We were not worthy of her. She was very active in the country. She used to say, “Look, Mama, when the comrades come, I will bring them food.” Even when she was hungry, she would think of the comrades first. She would try to bring them a plate of food. I said, “This plate is not enough for you, why are you giving it away?” She replied, “No, I am not hungry.” She loved the comrades so much!

When she came here, she was very sad. She became sadder and sadder and was only a shadow of her former self. Sometimes I told myself that it would get better after two years. But she always said, "I can't breathe here." She went to school here for one year. She never left the house. She went to school and came back, but didn't leave the house. She knew German. She listened to Kurdish music on a tape recorder all the time. She did that for a while. Then she got the idea of returning to the country. She always said, "I'm not going to stay here. I won't stay here even if you kill me."

One day, after breakfast, she said, "Mum, you can watch TV, I'll clean the dishes." She always did that. She did everything by herself and organised the household. Our guests would come, and she would clean up everywhere. She was such a humble, hardworking person. She deserved that place. I congratulate her for falling a martyr for this revolution. No misfortune has befallen her.

Then she was gone... That morning I looked, and the plates were still there. A friend had come to our house. Rojda told her to spend the night with us. The next morning, I found that my daughter had disappeared. We asked everywhere where Rojda was. Her code name was Rûken, her name at home was Rojda. We asked where Rojda had gone. She had a friend who said, "Someone called a taxi and your daughter Rojda got in and left." I looked and saw that her other friend was not there either. I understood and said to myself, "Ok, they've gone."

No matter what we say, it's about the heart. It was the time when Rêber Apo (Leader Abdullah Öcalan) came to Italy. Rojda was in education there. When she disappeared, we didn't know where she had gone. The police asked us what we wanted. We said, "She is of age, but we don't know where she went." They asked us if she had joined the PKK. "We don't know," we said. "Do you want to file a complaint?" they asked. We declined. Of course, I had learned by then that she had left. More than six months had passed. Then a person called, "She got sick at work, we'll take her home." We said, okay, bring her home. Our daughter came home. We took her to the doctor. The doctor said her blood value was bad. She stayed with us for a month. When she got better, she said, "Mum, I'm going to go." I said, "You were there, you saw them, they have no clothes, they live on the mountain without shoes, where are you going? You can't bear it like them." But she said, "No, Mama, I'm going."

When my daughter said she was going, her father and I bought clothes and a phone card for her. We asked, "Are you really going?" She said, "Yes." We accompanied her to the bus stop and said goodbye. In the beginning, we had difficulties, but we saw her off ourselves.

Five or six months after she left, I received a phone call. I picked up the phone and asked if it was her. She answered, "Yes, mum, it's me." Then she said, "I have reached you now. Talk to your mother, you may not have a chance to talk to her again, the friends said." I said, "Look, my daughter Rojda. You have gone to them and settled down. But if you are wounded, blow yourself up, but do not surrender to the enemy. If you surrender to the enemy and testify against your comrades, my sin will be on you." She agreed and we promised to think of each other.

Once we received a letter from her. She wrote: "Send me a camera." We sent her a camera. We sent many things, but they did not reach her. She was in Qandil. We received a photo of her. And then she sent a letter. She wrote that she was going to Botan and needed clothes. I sent her clothes. She took a photo with the dress and sent it to me. After that I did not see my daughter again. She did not call me, and I did not call her.

One morning, her father woke up and said, "We will organise a condolence service." I asked him why, what kind of a funeral service? He said, "I will organise a condolence service for my daughter." When I asked him why, he said, "Your daughter was martyred, and her body is lying on the ground right now." Then he said he had dreamt that she had been hit by a bullet, she was just paralysed. Doctor Mahir was her doctor, he said. This doctor also fell with her. I didn't believe all that and said: "Listen, acquaintances said that she had come to Southern Kurdistan. She was in Botan and is back in South Kurdistan."

Afterwards, we went to the association. The commemoration of Comrade Zilan was going on there. I said, look, we have eight martyrs. Orhan Doğan had a heart attack. The bodies of the martyrs were still on the ground on the video on the news. It turned out that there were subtitles on TV and my daughter's name could also be read. I myself am illiterate. I said turn up the TV, there is a news programme. They said they wouldn't do that. They knew. They had read the subtitles. Then they turned on the TV and the second news bulletin said, "Rûken and seven friends have fallen in Uludere."

"Not a tear will flow from my eyes"

There were maybe 60 or 70 people present. I cried out, "My daughter Rojda, my Rûken!" I had sworn not to shed a tear unless she testified against her comrades and fell. But the heart... What can we do? I turned to my friends again and said, "I apologise to you. My daughter fell with dignity, she did not surrender. She resisted till the end. I congratulate the guerrillas, Serok Apo and our patriotic people for her martyrdom." Tears welled up in my eyes. We got up together and went back home. Her father told me that he had not been able to tell me directly that our daughter had fallen. Then we prepared the funeral service.

They said, "Get a Turkish passport and travel there to attend your daughter's funeral." I refused. An older sister of hers was there. The other children had already left when they heard about it. I don't mean just our family. Thousands of people marched behind her all the way to Hespist. I said, "Am I her only mother? All those who marched behind her are her mothers. They are all as heartbroken as I am. Our martyr is not alone, our children are not alone."

"The state fears even the bones of the martyrs"

Since that day, I have continued her struggle. I promised her: "My daughter, do not look back. As long as your mother lives - and I say this on behalf of my siblings, children and relatives - we will continue your struggle. We will not betray our people. We will not betray our martyrs. That is all I am saying." Since then, I have been working tirelessly to continue Rojda's struggle in any way I can. I am part of Rojda's struggle. (She points to the newspaper photo.) Eight comrades fell together. You see, one of them was captured alive. Who captured him and killed him? Where is he? I will follow their cause. We want to know who killed him. We will do whatever is in our power. Thousands of her brothers and sisters continue Rojda's struggle. They have not given up their weapons. Why do we say "Şehîd Namirin" (Martyrs are immortal)? Because the place of the martyrs is always being reoccupied. The Kurds are spread all over Europe. They all have children. They are all part of this struggle. We are persecuted, oppressed. Our home was burnt down, our houses destroyed. After six years, I told the children to prepare a grave in the village, even if only bones are left. They went, built a coffin and brought her remains to the village to bury them. In total, we have six or seven martyrs. Even these graveyards have been destroyed by the state. We are not even allowed to bury our dead. I ask myself, how far can injustice go? The state is even afraid of the bones of our martyrs.

22,500 signatures collected for the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan

Here are some photos. There is a photo of Abdullah Öcalan and photos of Rojda at different times. Can you tell us more about them?

When there was a signature campaign for Rêber Apo, we also collected signatures. We went to the association and suggested collecting signatures together in one street. At first, we put the completed lists in one place. Then when the friends saw how many signatures I had collected, they said, “You are really doing a lot.” They suggested that I keep my signatures separately.

I wanted to collect signatures. But we have enemies here too. There are many who hate us here too. I cooked dinner for my children and then I collected signatures instead of sleeping. It became a kind of school for me. I was on my way to the Bremen train station and knew a few German words. Some people took the sheet I gave them and tore it up. Some Germans made victory signs and rejoiced.

One day a friend from the association said to me: “Comrade Xeysa, the police asked me why we weren’t at the signature stand for Rêber Apo.” Imagine a police officer commenting on the incompleteness of our solidarity! The police officer told him, “Only Xeysa is serious. Some people complain about her. We are keeping an eye on her. We know that the allegations are not true. Only she is acting seriously and even collecting signatures herself.” I collected the signatures with great difficulty. Within a year and a half, I collected 22,500 signatures alone. I was told that I was the first in Europe to collect signatures for Rêber Apo.

This is a photo of Rojda. The middle photo is the last picture of her. This photo shows the comrades she fell with. And here is the notebook she sent to me before she died. A friend brought it to me as a package. She wrote everything in it. She was in the party for about nine years. And she fell.

“Death to Treason”

Do you have anything to say in conclusion?

In memory of Rûken, I congratulate all the guerrillas who are resisting and fighting today in the mountains, in the trenches, in the tunnels, in Rojava, in Shengal. Death to treason! The Barzani family is responsible for the martyrdom of young people every day. It is a puppet of Turkey. Down with the Barzani family! I am talking about the Barzani family, not about the Peshmerga or the Kurdish people in Southern Kurdistan. There are patriotic people there. In Shengal, our girls and women were kidnapped and sold all the way to Qatar. The honour and dignity of the Kurds was sold to Saudi Arabia. This will always stick in our throats as long as we live. Many things have improved in Rojava. We should all feel connected to it. We must help them with all available means. We have 35,000 injured people there. We must help them and show solidarity with them. The occupiers should leave our country and one day we will return home!

You can watch the interview from this link: <https://1649452211.rsc.cdn77.org/2023/08/2023-08-19-berlin-dayika-xeysa-nas-sehit-ruken-annesji-1.mp4>

Kalkan: İmralı is the continuation of the international conspiracy against Ocalan

ANF | BEHDINAN | 7 SEPTEMBER 2023

KCK Executive Council member Duran Kalkan spoke about the situation of political prisoners in Turkey and the inspiration that Abdullah Öcalan's resistance has given to people all over the world.

Abdullah Öcalan has been held captive on the prison island of İmralı in the Sea of Marmara for almost 25 years, but he continues to resist and his political ideas seem to be spreading. What more can you tell us about his situation and what can you tell us about the connection between the person of Abdullah Öcalan and the Kurdish question itself? What is the situation outside of Kurdistan in the international context?

At the beginning, I would like to respectfully salute the historic resistance on [the prison island of] İmralı by Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan]. Right now there is a big struggle going on, including important international initiatives, for his physical freedom both on a legal as well as on a political level. For example, a few days ago, our people and our international friends were demonstrating in many European cities and showed a magnificent stance and clear demands for the freedom of Rêber Apo. So I would also like to send my greetings to the protests especially in Düsseldorf and Strasbourg, but also the other protests in Europe by our people, our international friends, by young people and women. I would like to wish them continued success in their struggle and underline that we are fully convinced of our struggle to continue successfully.

It has been more than two and a half years now that there is no information about the situation of Rêber Apo. Most recently, his lawyers made an important call to the ['European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment'] CPT, asking them to disclose the information and findings they have.

It can be seen, that the struggle against the system of İmralı, the system of torture, isolation and genocide, is actually getting bigger and more meaningful. This is a clear indication of the extent to which Rêber Apo has shattered the walls of isolation in İmralı and how he managed to expand his ideological leadership to a global level. It can be clearly expressed, that he created a leadership guiding the way to liberation of oppressed people, especially women, youth and working people worldwide.

A lawyer once said that without the physical liberation of Rêber Apo and the disintegration of İmralı, it is meaningless to even talk about peace. One can see that the ideas of Rêber Apo, the new paradigm – the paradigm of women's liberation and an ecological-democratic society – is being spread. People watch, follow and adopt them with interest. They see solutions to their own problems within his ideas and the new paradigm. There is indeed a serious search for a new political system, that started especially after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The answer to that lies in the ideas and the new paradigm developed by Rêber Apo, where the people see the path to freedom, democracy and equality. They see their own salvation in it and that is the reason why people are more interested, struggle more, participate more, and raise their voices more. They take a more definite and clear stand for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo, and are seriously questioning the AKP-MHP fascism.

Still, the official institutions lack any kind of reaction to this struggle of the people. Tayyip Erdoğan's administration has not surprisingly turned out to be lying. To say that they have built an empire of lies and fear is still an understatement. What Tayyip Erdoğan has developed, is a fascist dictatorship. We understand their intentions, we know their policies, and we also know their ideology, which is a fascist, colonialist, genocidal one. That is also the reason why they are constantly attacking. What is difficult to understand and the main problem is, why other international institutions responsible for Imralı [and the compliance with international law and human rights] remain silent as if they approve the Turkish administration. There is a partnership in crime or a partnership of interest. Through this, the physical freedom of Rêber Apo is being prevented. It can be stated as a clear fact, that the most severe fascist, colonialist, genocidal oppression, persecution, torture and genocide known to history is being practiced on Imralı.

Of course, we always ask the question of what to do. And our answer is clear; we will struggle without expecting immediate and huge results. The torture and isolation system of Imralı stems from the Kurdish question itself. The questions mean the genocidal ideology and politics imposed on the Kurdish people. It is perhaps one of the most severe problems known to humanity. The Arab-Israeli contradiction and conflict is the heaviest and oldest problem in history, but the Kurdish problem has surpassed it, because it is not limited to the Turkish Republic and the states of the Middle East. The global capitalist hegemony is based on an ideology and politics in which Kurdish existence is being denied and Kurdish people are targeted for extermination. Therefore, it can be put as much force as wished on the fascist AKP-MHP, a coup can be initiated, the country can even be forced to collapse; but still, at the end, there will be someone there to support and save this ideology and politics. This has been seen several times in history.

The Kurdish question is no question that can be solved quickly and easily. In order not to be wrong and not to make mistakes, the problem needs to be grasped well. It can be described as the most comprehensive struggle for freedom and democracy in history, which is why it has merged, not by coincidence, with the other most comprehensive struggle in history, the struggle for women's liberation to solve the problem of freedom of women. The development of [the science of women] 'Jineoloji' within the Kurdish freedom struggle and the beginning of the women's liberation revolution is definitely not a coincidence. It is related to the essence and scope of the Kurdish question and struggle.

The international conspiracy was organized and, as a result of it, Rêber Apo was taken to Imralı, because he was searching for a solution to the Kurdish question. The Imralı system is a continuation of the international conspiracy. They did this in order to carry out the genocide of the Kurds, to prevent a solution to the Kurdish question, and therefore prevent the democratization of Turkey and a democratic influence in the Middle East and the world. In this respect, the struggle for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo needs to be seen as the struggle for the freedom of Kurdistan, for Kurdish freedom, for a democratization of Turkey, and for a freer life of humanity as a whole.

It can be stated, that the solution lies in developing this struggle in every aspect, by every method and in the strongest way. In particular, legal struggles should be developed on this basis. Like it has been said many times, within the framework of democratic law, the Imralı system must be discussed, scrutinized and thoroughly exposed. We need to develop the struggle on a political level as well as within the masses, the youth and the women. Our movement is already developing the struggle for freedom and our guerrillas are fighting heroically. The sum of all these is the struggle that will ensure the physical freedom of Rêber Apo. We have to be persistent in this struggle, have to be stubborn, strong-willed and patient, we

have also to believe in victory and fight with determination until victory is achieved. With that in mind, I would like to wish success to all those waging this struggle.

You have already mentioned that the system of Imrali is being expanded. In which sense should this be understood? What is the current situation of political prisoners in Turkish prisons? How is the handling of the Kurdish question reflected in the Turkish prisons?

Rêber Apo stated a few years ago about his situation: ‘Such a system has been established here that without talking about myself, my own situation, still hundreds of people are subjected to extreme pressure, persecution, imprisonment, torture, because of me, because of this system here.’ This affects everyone and therefore has to be opposed and fought against.’ Now we are facing that situation in almost all prisons. The situation of political prisoners is not being turned into Imrali, not to that extent, but it is deeply affected by it.

There is very heavy fascist oppression, terror and torture in the prisons. Corpses are coming out of the prisons, as the prisoners are being martyred. The last prisoner that was martyred was Şakir Turan, whom I would like to respectfully commemorate. I also would like to remember all our friends that have been martyred in prisons. I share the pain of our people and the pain of Şakir Turan’s family. The families of the ones imprisoned are struggling against the prisons, which is very important, but it is necessary that it gets better organized and better planned. There are indeed shortcomings and weaknesses, so there is an opportunity to strengthen them.

But the situation is obviously not only the problem of families. A human rights organization recently published a report and stated that right now 313 prisoners are being held in prisons for arbitrary reasons, even though their sentences imposed by the courts have been completed. This is a very serious situation which is a result of the spread of lawlessness practiced in Imrali. 313 people is not a small number. Some of them have finished serving their sentences six months, some a year, some two, three years ago, but they are not being released. By saying this, it is not as if we are approving those sentences, because they are completely unjust punishments with no democratic legal aspect to them. They were sentences based entirely on fascist, colonialist, genocidal considerations, but even that is no longer respected.

In the same report mentioned above, it is stated that in 2022, they noted 1,201 cases of use of torture. If it were not for the administration of Tayyip Erdoğan, but a different one that would use even just a quarter of this oppression and torture, hell would break loose from many circles. But there is not much noise against the Tayyip Erdoğan administration and all the reports about it are being ignored. As they say, it is the metaphor of the three monkeys. The world is indeed turning a blind eye to what the AKP government is doing to the Kurdish people.

What is being applied to the Kurds is also being applied to the workers, the women and the youth, as well as the revolutionary democratic socialists of Turkey. The people are resisting in the prisons by following the tradition of July 14th resistance. [In 1982 a hunger strike was started in the prisons, which spread all through the country.] No pressure or persecution can make them give up their goals or break their will. The last words of martyr Şakir Turan were: ‘My head is upright.’ Everyone should stand up straight.

The administration of Tayyip Erdoğan put tens of thousands of people, men and women, in prisons, but still they did not manage to break the political will of the people. Everyone stood upright, struggled and

was struggling. I would like to once again send my greetings to them and wish them success. Their resistance is difficult, it may be painful, they may be tortured, and some may be martyred. They are fighters for the cause of freedom and democracy.

It is necessary to be in solidarity with this struggle, to see it, to understand it, and to protect it. In this sense, the struggle is not only that of one of the families, but is actually the struggle of the whole society. The scale of torture in prisons has now become so high that it will spill over into society. Now everyone is saying that the torture practiced on Imralı has spread to all of us. This pressure, oppression, exploitation, hunger, crisis, economic crisis, political crisis, everything stems from there and from the Kurdish problem. Imralı exists just because of the Kurdish question. All this war, bloodshed and death are all things caused by the Kurdish question. Therefore, the ones responsible for this are those who created the Kurdish question and did not want to solve it. Those who imposed oppression, persecution, genocide and colonialism on Kurds, and those who want to destroy Kurds who do not accept their existence, freedom and democratic rights. When we talk about the Kurdish question, no one should see the Kurds as responsible. On the contrary, there is this persecution, oppression and extermination of the Kurds, for which they are jointly responsible.

The resistance in the prison needs to be understood, and there has to be more solidarity and support. These practices of persecution and torture have to be exposed more. There is no regime in the world that is able to execute this kind of torture; it will collapse upon exposure. In this respect, it is necessary to support the prison resistance more strongly.

Right now there is a massive war being waged in Kurdistan by the Turkish state. While the main focus is on the Medya Defense Zones, the war is not only limited to those regions. What can you tell us about the military situation and the guerrilla resistance right now?

Firstly, I would like to respectfully commemorate comrades Mehmet Guyi, Mêrxas and Rêvan, who were martyred on September 4, eleven years ago. They had been struggling for years. They were the commanders of the Kurdish Wan province [Van] who lost their lives in one of their great attacks. We gave hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands of martyrs like them. In this regard we can speak of a guerrilla with a sacrificial spirit that is guided by an army of martyrs. In this knowledge we struggle, resist and fight. There is a reality of war embodied in [the South Kurdish/North Iraqi regions of] Zap, Avaşîna and Metîna; in other words, in the South Kurdish Medya Defense Zones. But the war is not limited to this region, it is also everywhere in Bakur [Northern Kurdistan/South-East Turkey]. Right now, there is war in [the northern Kurdish regions of] Garzan, Merdin [Turkish name Mardin], Amed [Turkish name Diyarbakir], Serhad [Turkish name Serhat], in the metropolises and all cities, as well as in Başur [Southern Kurdistan/Northern Iraq] and Rojava [Western Kurdistan/Northern Syria] and all of Kurdistan. The Turkish Republic is attacking the Kurdish people wherever they live in order to subject them to genocide, but we are resisting this.

The resistance in the Zap war is decisive, as it has lasted a year and a half. They have been attacking the same areas for two and a half years now, to occupy them. In fact, they have been attacking for eight years, since their big offensive started on August 26, 2016 and did not end until today. It has entered its eighth year, as also the great guerrilla resistance has entered its eighth year.

The recent attacks and resistance are, of course, much more important. Our Central Headquarter published the monthly balance sheet which said that 323 guerrilla actions were carried out and 134 Turkish soldiers were killed. It shows how many actions the guerrillas carried out every day, how many fighters got wounded, how much destruction happened and how much enemy equipment was destroyed. It is a heavy balance sheet, showing that there is a big war going on every day and every hour, and this now for months and years. The enemy is constantly attacking with airplanes, with helicopters, the use of chemical weapons, the use of tactical nuclear weapons, and all kinds of weapons and methods.

The Turkish state is trying to establish its influence over the areas it attacked last year to occupy them, but it is failing. Some people say that the 'Claw operation' [name of the operation of the Turkish Army] caught its own claws. The Turkish army is indeed caught, as it has been trying for months and years to take one hill in the Western Zap area. A state mobilizes all its power, all the support it receives from NATO, but it cannot succeed in this goal. It suffers blow after blow, loss after loss. In this respect, the battle in the Medya Defense Zones is important and has historical significance. The heroes who waged this war, the heroic martyrs of this war, should always be remembered with respect, love and gratitude. Because Kurdish identity continues its existence here, the basis for this resistance is possible and that is also the reason why the future of the Kurdish people is shaped there.

The Zap resistance continues in the spirit of the prison resistance from 1982, it continues in the spirit of the İmralı resistance. It is the most meaningful and heroic sacrificial resistance that history has witnessed. There are no other examples of such a kind. An enemy that is locked, blocked and unable to get out of the place it entered in order to get the quick results they aim for.

As we said, the war is not only going on here; we need to see other areas too. They are not very famous, they are considered non existent, they are covered up. This is not the case. In many areas of North Kurdistan there is a guerrilla war going on. Every part of Kurdistan is a forbidden zone and there are military attacks by the Turkish army everywhere. As the [Turkish] former ministers used to say, "we have finished it, we are finishing it" [referring to the PKK]. They again entered this mood. They are hiding these fights in order not to be exposed.

The fighting also continues in the cities, which is also very important to mention. It should not be taken lightly. Our 'Peoples' United Revolutionary Movement' [HBDH] has played an important role in this regard. HBDH militias did effective work. They made fascism feel that it cannot sleep comfortably anywhere. They make the fascists live in fear at every moment. In other words, they have become fascism's fearful dream.

Again, the 'Civil Protection Units' [YPS] and similar organizations are showing a certain effectiveness and showing their importance. There is a reality of resistance that has spread almost all the way to Turkey.

The enemy also continues its occupation attacks. It seems that he will want to continue his attacks by spreading them more. This, of course, means that the guerrillas will spread its resistance too. Will resist stronger, fight stronger, and give heavier blows to the enemy.

The balance sheet I mentioned may seem low, but it's not all about numbers. Still, at least 134 soldiers were shot, the Press Center of HPG announced, and still there is a total lack of a reaction from Turkey. This is actually the bad thing, not the 134 people. Even if it was one person or three. Hell should have

broken loose in Turkey, in society, among women, young people and workers. Everyone should have asked how can you send children of this land, children of this society, to death like this. How can you drive them away? This fascist dictatorship should have been caught. But it never happens like that. On the contrary, pay attention, they make big shows; they advertise that they are building so many warplanes, so many cannons, so many lethal things, and society watches with interest. Today they are killing the Kurds, and while they are killing them, they are also killing you. What have prisons become? What has life become? What about the economic crisis? It almost reached the level of starvation. The minimum wage is heading towards starvation. All of this is linked to this war.

These things are being hidden from society. A society has been created that cannot see these things, that cannot see and talk about them. With lies, some of them have been made unable to see. Others see it but cannot talk about it out of fear. There is a racist, nationalist, chauvinist, anti-Kurdish mentality and politics. It got to such a level that comrade Mustafa Karasu said that the current Turkishness means the killing of the Kurd. It means the extinction of the Kurds, it means Kurdish hostility.

I thought Kurds and Turks have been brothers for a thousand years. Starting from the Battle of Manzikert 1071 to wherever, it were the Kurds who contributed the most to the formation of Turkishness. Will this be repaid with massacres, persecution and death?

The situation in Turkey needs to be seriously questioned. The founding principles and policies of the Turkish state, and the anti-Kurdish, colonialist, genocidal mentality and politics conducted by the AKP-MHP fascism today need to be questioned and overcome. Without this, there could be no democratization in Turkey. In this respect, the guerrilla resistance is actually the biggest struggle that develops democratization in Turkey.

In the last weeks there have been several talks in Bagdad in Hewlêr by the Turkish government. How do you evaluate these talks? And since the reports about betrayal and collaboration by the KDP are getting more again, what can you tell us about the approach of the KDP right now?

What the administration of Hewlêr [referring to the KDP party of Southern Kurdistan] is doing is obvious. They massacred many guerrillas and are responsible for the death of many more. Right now we are approaching the second anniversary of the martyrdom of a group of our friends that, at the end of August 2021 were attacked and martyred by the KDP forces in the South Kurdish region of Xelîfan. I would like to once again respectfully commemorate them.

The meetings in Bagdad and Hewlêr have been evaluated and analyzed by us. Many sides are trying to understand what has been discussed, and what was intended to be done. Because Tayyip Erdoğan said, "After the elections, we will both increase the military attacks, as well as focus on strengthening our diplomacy". The talks that they held in Bagdad do not seem to have gone as they wanted, which was actually predictable as their arguments were very weak. They are negotiating Kurdish oil and Kurdish water in order to slaughter Kurds. This is the level of cleverness of the Tayyip Erdoğan administration.

Of course, not everyone is Tayyip Erdoğan and not everyone is like the Turkish administration. For example, the administration of Bagdad does not have such hostility towards the Kurds, as there exists the official Kurdistan region. In fact, if the democratization of the Kurds were to be realized, the effects and re-

flections of this on Iraq would be more liberating and democratic. They have hopes in this respect, but still there are various negotiations going on.

Let's put it this way, the Turkish state has declared an area to occupy and is attacking it, but it fails. This is the situation in its current state. It seems that they need to move to other places in order to realize this fact. When these invasion attacks started, we said that when they attacked a hill, they won't be able to hold it, they will sooner or later be forced to pull back. Right now, we see that they are unsuccessful. They are stuck and cannot expand, because they lack the power to occupy this region.

Tayyip Erdoğan drew huge maps and promised that he will realize the Misak-ı Milli [National Pact]. He is developing neo-Ottomanism and is trying to occupy everywhere. If they occupy Kurdistan according to the Misak-ı Milli, they will then turn to the Arab field. It is not clear what would happen and where he would stop, just like the Ottoman expansion at the beginning of the 16th century.

Now in Turkey, they want to expand with capital accumulation based on global capital and therefore want to exploit Kurdistan and the Arabic countries even more. Some say Turkey has imperialist ambitions. Yes, it wants to re-develop colonialism, but it cannot afford it. The Kurdish resistance has thwarted all their plans. It frustrated their imperialist expansion and colonialist ambitions. It also brought them to the point of collapse. Everyone saw how Hakan Fidan [foreign minister of Turkey] embraced Nechirvan and Masrour Barzanî. He does so because he needs them and wants to push them into more battles. He wants to move them to where his power is not enough. If he could, he would attack them himself, but right now he wants to attract them because he is powerless. And they promised to be supportive, which they also showed in practice. So far they are accomplices. But let's look to the future. From now on, if they take any step forward in [the South Kurdish regions] Metîna, Garê or Xinêre, if they fire a bullet, it will be war. Everyone should know this.

The KDP should not think that it can get away with whatever it does. Some say the PKK is weakened. Turkey speaks according to themselves. Let them remember the past. This is how the Turkish Republic was misled in the past and what happened to them. In that respect, the KDP should not play with fire.

The situation for the Turkish Republic is obvious. I don't think the KDP will have much power either. They are in a situation where they cannot get out of it. In the end, they may still end up looking for other forces to get them out. It is necessary to see it like this, but it is dangerous. In particular, the society and people of Başur should be conscious to this situation. It is thanks to the sacrificial resistance of the guerrillas that South Kurdistan still has not become fully colonized. If the Turkish state finds an opportunity for this, they will do it. Also, the KDP wants this, as they have indeed sworn to destroy the PKK. The KDP has all kinds of relations and alliances with all the enemies of the PKK. And then, when the PKK speaks out, they say "they are speaking against me". KDP does everything, engage in all kinds of betrayal and collaboration, and no one can say anything against it. Is there such a thing? Who does the KDP think Kurdish society, Kurdistan is? They should be fully aware of what they are saying and what they are doing.

This is the situation right now. Let's see how it develops. We are following it closely. So we are evaluating all kinds of possibilities. We focus on what they might want to do. We prepare ourselves accordingly and everyone should do the same. All our patriotic people must see and evaluate this situation. They should not only be prepared for such attacks, but they should also remember and see that the resistance and strug-

gle against this colonialist genocidal mentality and politics is through the struggle against collaborationism and betrayal. Without the struggle against collaborationism and betrayal, the colonialist genocidal mentality and politics cannot be defeated or fought. This has become like flesh and blood, it has become united. We say that if we wage this struggle, we will win.

This year, the Kurdish Culture Festival is dedicated to the three martyrs of Paris: Evîn Goyî, Mîr Perwer and Abdurrahman Kizil. What is your opinion about the festival according to the latest political developments?

Firstly, I would like to state that it is a very important festival that has been taking place every year since 1992. It represents the identity, culture and tradition of the Kurdish national community in Europe. It is significant in this aspect because we see that on the other side, military attacks, arrests, tortures, murders and persecutions continue in Kurdistan, all with the aim of conducting a cultural genocide against the Kurdish people. The Turkish state is killing some Kurds and trying to assimilate and Turkify the rest. For this reason, in addition to economic pressure, military pressure, police pressure, it is mostly carrying out cultural attacks, by developing language assimilation, cultural assimilation, historical assimilation. It does this through propaganda, through art, through literature.

In this regard, it is very important to organize Kurdish cultural festivals, to develop cultural events, to carry out cultural work. It is without any doubt very important to develop Kurdish art, literature and language. But it is necessary to do these things together with the freedom struggle, by integrating values that are being created through the resistance of the guerrillas. Only in this way will Kurdish culture further gain real and deep meaning. In this respect, cultural events are important and meaningful, but I would also like to take this opportunity to criticize. In fact, I have already criticized our people in Europe a little bit, but still there is a need to add something to it.

Culture cannot be lived just on one day a year, not with one festival a year. In Europe there should be cultural activities every day. A cultural festival at the national level can be held every few months or once a year, but in the regions, there should always be cultural activities. There should always be something happening, as it used to be. For example, I remember Newroz, which was never before, just one day. It was celebrated for at least two-three months. Also, other days like August 15 and November 27 were celebrated. All kinds of artists ran to these events and the art of them was developing at these events. That was a development that especially started and always promoted by Rêber Apo. But when we look at it now, we see that most of these activities have been reduced to an absolute minimum. Artists do not come together face to face anymore and are not any longer in direct exchange with society. They call themselves cultural associations, but cultural activities are not carried out by them. Children were actually being educated in these places with their own culture and language some years ago. It seems like the system developed by Rêber Apo has been changed by the people in Europe. We need to go back to the old system and the way that Rêber Apo showed us.

Both being a member of a people under genocide, and being abroad living within other societies, but trying to live the Kurdish culture. This is not possible. This can only be achieved if you adopt a real cultural stance and expand the cultural work. As a matter of fact, the Kurdish community in Europe could become the nucleus of Kurdish democratic nationhood. We also saw this when the breakthrough of August 15 took place and there was a broad basis of support. The spirit, consciousness and will of this breakthrough

were formed into organizational power. We have to regain this attitude, spread it further, develop it, and make it a part of our daily cultural activities.

I would like to congratulate everybody who took part in organizing the festival. On behalf of the leadership of our party, I would like to wish them great success. I send my respectful greetings to everyone participating in the festival. At the end, I just want to say to all artists and other workers, let's unite in more festivals!

In the last days there has been heavy fighting going on in North and East Syria, which is an indication of the developments of the last months and years in the region. What can you say about the clashes right now and differing interests in the region?

In fact, after the presidential and parliamentary elections of May 14 in Turkey, Tayyip Erdoğan's administration embarked on a search. Therefore, Erdoğan went to Astana and tried to organize support for his politics there, as well as to get support from NATO through the negotiating of Sweden's entry into the alliance. In the focus of the talks, was Erdoğan's interest to find more support for the attack on the Medya Defense Zones. His aim was to get these forces to encourage the KDP to get more involved in the war. Secondly, it was to launch a new offensive against North and East Syria. But the final results of the diplomatic moves have not been satisfying for them. At that moment, the way for a new invasion attack against North and East Syria remained blocked. So, instead of a new invasion in the form of a ground offensive, they attack every day, with airplanes and combat drones, as well as constant artillery shelling. The Turkish army hits cars every day and night. Also, it turned out, that Islamic groups have been organized and encouraged underhandedly, to create fake conflicts from within the region. These have been new methods instead of a direct Turkish invasion. Also, a trip to Sochi could be called a search for support, as they are constantly probing Iran. So, for example, right now it is said that the Turkish Foreign Minister will go to Iran.

In parallel, there are developments in North and East Syria. The [Syrian Democratic Forces] SDF announced that it had started an operation under the name of 'Strengthening Security'. Now some circles with close ties to Turkey claim that there are clashes between the SDF and some tribes of Deir ez-Zor, but the SDF has stated that they will fight against gangs and ISIS remnants.

On the other hand, simultaneously, Turkish forces and gangs affiliated with them immediately attacked Manbij, where children have been massacred in the villages. If those forces get the opportunity, they will continue with their misinformation campaign and their attacks.

The Turkish state is seeking a possible way for a new invasion that it can carry out without air strikes. It spreads its intelligence network, agents, and affiliated gangs everywhere and, by this, tries to disrupt and provoke the situation. It is Tayyip Erdoğan's administration that is controlling these forms of attacks. It should be seen, that Tayyip Erdoğan's administration has supported both ISIS as well as other Islamic gangs in Syria for a long time. The fascism of AKP-MHP supports these forces at the highest level.

Especially since the battle of Kobanê, a revolution of freedom is developing in North and East Syria, and in order to suffocate it, Tayyip Erdoğan has been carrying out these planned attacks. They tried to disrupt the evolution of the system of the democratic nation. The relationship, friendship and brotherhood between the Kurdish and the Arabic people are developing and strengthening. That is what the Turkish state

is afraid of and why they attack. If Kurds and Arabs manage to live in pure solidarity, if they become a democratic unity within the framework of their own principles of freedom according to the system of democratic nation, there will be no possible way for the Turkish state to further carry out its fascist genocidal attacks. In this case, it would of course not be possible for the Turkish fascist state to survive any longer.

In regard to Deir ez-Zor, there are currently various plans and interests being pursued by the various global, as well as regional forces. There are essential energy resources in the region, energy transport routes run along it and, not to forget, the Shiite crescent [Territorial connection project of Shiite-dominated areas from Iran to Lebanon]. Virtually all forces that are in some way present in the Middle East are in the region, making it an area of conflict. Also, Deir ez-Zor is historically a really difficult region to govern. It was once a place of exile for the Ottomans where they also committed massacres [especially the Armenian Genocide]. Whoever opposed the palace or stood against it was immediately exiled there. The region is such a social accumulation.

Now, with so many provocations, everyone has their hands in Deir ez-Zor. The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria should take a calmer and cooler approach. They should try to understand better what is happening and should not fall for provocations. They should understand the games, take precautions and act carefully and sensitive against them. There has to be complete control over this issue.

I would also like to make a call to Arab society, and to their tribes. The biggest development in North and East Syria is the development of a democratic nation. It can be seen here how different ethnic groups organize themselves on the basis of their own principles of freedom and establish a democratic unity and brotherhood. This is an historical and very important situation. It has been proven that the concept of the democratic nation developed by Rêber Apo is the path to freedom, democracy and liberation for everyone. For this, a good understanding is necessary, as well as it is necessary not to fall for simple, cheap calculations and for the many provocations. There are many who are afraid of and against the development of the Kurdish-Arab alliance.

Let's protect and develop this area of freedom, this area of democracy, which was created and developed on the basis of fighting against IS and defeating it, given more than ten thousand martyrs. Let us work, discuss, talk and join forces to develop this. Everyone, especially the Autonomous Administration, has to understand and approach things more correctly and all such games will be foiled.

A few days ago it was the first of September, the World Day of Peace. Among others, the people of Amed took to the streets to demonstrate for peace. However, the day was not without controversy and so it was on this day that serious fighting broke out. What can you tell us about it? And what is the responsibility of young people in this time?

On September 1, the day of peace, while people were taking to the streets, the administration of Tayyip Erdoğan launched its most widespread attacks. From [the South Kurdish regions of] Asos to Qandil, all over Behdînan and in northern Kurdistan, all the way to Rojava and Manbij. September 1 is not a day of peace; September 1 is the day Hitler's fascism attacked Poland. In other words, the day the Second World War started. It is actually a day of war. Today's fascists are also attacking and, in fact, they are acting in accordance with that day by doing so. One can see the ideological bond between Erdoğan and Hitler.

From the point of view of Kurds and democratic forces, how much can we talk about peace today? A European lawyer said clearly that it is meaningless to talk about peace until Rêber Apo is physically free. In other words, even to talk about peace under these circumstances is meaningless and wrong. Which peace? What peace? There are so many attacks all the time.

From this point of view, how necessary and meaningful was it really to hold a peace rally in Amed? One could say because the Kurds are not at war, they are not attacking, but they are under fire of a war. They are facing a massacre and a genocidal attack. There is not really a war, but a fascist genocidal attack and massacre developed and carried out by Tayyip Erdoğan and the [governing] 'People's Alliance' in order to crush the guerrillas, liquidate the PKK, and complete the Kurdish genocide on this basis.

The Kurds are resisting this. They have to resist. They want to eliminate them and they are resisting this. The people of Amed are not on the side of the attacker, so they don't have to give peace advice somewhere, saying not to attack. Whoever is attacking, wherever they attack, in whose name these attacks are being carried out, to them advice has to be given. If they do it in Ankara, if they do it in Izmir, if they do it in Istanbul... They are doing it, but it would be more meaningful if they did it more. Because these attacks are carried out on that basis.

I would like to underline that what we want is peace. Looking back on September 1st, we wish that those who went out on the streets of Amed on September 1st had also gone out on August 15th [anniversary of the start of the armed struggle of the Kurdish movement] and if they had celebrated and greeted the 40th anniversary of the breakthrough by the guerrillas in 1984. Because the breakthrough of August 15, 1984 is one of the most meaningful acts of freedom and democracy of humanity and is in this sense, also an act of peace. Not only in words, but also in practice.

After August 15, just a single person sentenced to death was executed. After that, nobody was executed. They even had to erase it from the constitution. It can be easily said, that the breakthrough of August 15 served peace in a very essential way. Just calling it a guerrilla offensive and immediately calling it a war will get us nowhere. We need to be careful with the concepts we use and the words we say.

We are also approaching the anniversary of the fascist military coup of September 12, which, by the breakthrough of August 15 was foiled. Instead of being executed or killed, people were released from prisons alive, the torture was reduced, and small steps towards democratic practices were developed. On the other hand, the anniversary of the ISIS attack on Kobanê, which took place on September 15 is approaching. Those who sealed the downfall of IS and saved humanity from the scourge of IS were the guerrilla fighters shaped by August 15.

It is a matter of a fact, that we as Kurdish people are under heavy attack of annihilation and genocide, which started under the involvement of global political powers with the Treaty of Lausanne [Treaty from July 24, 1923 that split up the Ottoman Empire and formed the borders of today's Middle East]. On July 24, 2015, there were massive bombardments of our positions, conducted over several hours by about seventy Turkish warplanes. On April 25, 2015, the Tayyip Erdoğan administration knocked over the table of the so called peace talks in Imrali, which is why Rêber Apo clearly stated, that it was Tayyip Erdoğan's administration who initiated those attacks. The attack that began on that day and continues till today is an attack on our free existence with the aim of destroying our freedom and annihilating our country. Since then, we have been resisting and fighting, as we have to hit and defeat the enemy with the only language

he understands. There is no alternative at this time and no other way out. It is clear what we have to do, as we won't make ourselves act like sacrificial lambs. When there are heavy attacks on us, we won't just say "Stop, I want peace!", because by doing so the aggressor won't stop.

We will fight with the clearly defined goal of breaking these attacks and this aggression. By doing so, we will use every possible method for our struggle. For more than 40 years now, nothing would have developed without the guerrillas. If it weren't for the guerrilla forces in Zap and Avaşîn, who endured and resisted in those tunnels for months, at a level that no normal human being could endure, Kurdish identity wouldn't even exist anymore. One should stay away from Hamaset literature [literature style about heroes and legends] and support the guerrillas instead. One cannot get anywhere by standing in such fear and dread. That is why I especially call on young Kurdish people. We more or less know what kind of anti-propaganda is being spread about us and what some people try to say about us, but to make it clear, as the PKK, we are fighting against this fascist, colonialist, genocidal war with the guerrilla style. Our strategy is to fight, because we are forced to do so if we want to protect our sole existence.

The ones that can't reach these guerrillas should go to Deir ez-Zor and join the war against IS. The only way that we can win against these reactionary forces of AKP, MHP, IS, KDP and so on, is by resisting and fighting in a guerrilla way. The Kurdish young people should be very attentive and conscious of this situation. They should see that there is a special warfare of the state that is being fought against by revolutionary war. It is our responsibility, especially as a youth movement, to build up the force behind the concept of revolutionary war.

Rêber Apo once said, "You say peace, peace all the time, but fighting for peace is the most difficult fight in the world. Peace is only achievable through struggle." Peace cannot be achieved solely by talking. It can only be achieved through a comprehensive struggle, which, at the same time, has to be a struggle for freedom and democracy. Like our great martyred commander of our resistance in Şirnex [Turkish name Şirnak], Comrade Zeryan, said, "May it be your peace, we want our freedom." In this sense, I would like to once again call on the youth to join the guerrilla especially in this period, and to develop the revolutionary war against the fascist regime of AKP-MHP in every field.

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Opinion

Guerrilla resistance frustrates the special war of the Turkish state

EGID SIRWAN | BEHDINAN | 5 SEPTEMBER 2023

The special war, waged through propaganda and psychological manipulation, is an integral part of the Turkish invasion attempt in the Medya Defence Zones protected by the guerrillas. The Turkish state is do-

ing everything it can to sell itself successfully. In particular, a media apparatus completely under the control of the regime is used for this purpose. However, the reality on the front lines tells a different story. The ongoing resistance on the Zap front is an excellent example of the reality in the battlefield.

The guerrilla struggle has ushered in a Kurdish resurrection

A glance at history is enough to expose the continuity of Turkish war propaganda. Already at the beginning of the armed struggle on 15 August 1984, the Turkish state announced: “We will wipe them all out within 72 hours.” But 40 years have now passed, and the guerrilla struggle has ushered in a Kurdish resurrection. The state repeatedly claims to have killed countless guerrilla fighters, a number so high that the PKK should actually no longer exist in many cases. Since 2015, the Turkish army has conducted large-scale operations against the Medya Defence Zones and Northern Kurdistan every year, always claiming that it has now finally destroyed the guerrillas. In doing so, the Turkish state uses state-of-the-art technology and banned weapons such as chemical warfare agents every year. Especially in the last three years, the use of chemical weapons such as tactical nuclear bombs has increased. Despite all these efforts, the Turkish state has so far been unable to achieve its goal.

Those who claimed to wipe out the guerrillas within a few hours have now been bogged down in the Zap region for three years and are taking heavy losses. Therefore, in addition to the factors mentioned above, intelligence, psychological warfare and cooperation with the collaborators of the KDP (ruling party in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq) also play a decisive role in the warfare. The Turkish state tries to cover up its own losses by using not only Turkish soldiers but also mercenaries from Syria and other countries.

The state covers up its losses

The state propaganda contrasts with the documents of the guerrillas, who regularly report on their actions, document them with videos and openly report their casualties. Hardly any armed force conducts its struggle in such a transparent manner. In most of the videos, it is clearly visible how at least one Turkish soldier is killed. These recordings only concern actions that have been videotaped, while numerous other actions take place against the Turkish invading army. Last year, the guerrillas even published the identity cards of soldiers whose bodies had come under their control. Despite the overwhelming evidence, reports of Turkish soldiers killed by the Turkish state are extremely rare. This fact raises the question of where the bodies of the thousands of Turkish soldiers killed remain and who the deceased are if they are not Turkish soldiers.

To keep up the morale of society and the army, the Turkish state pretends that there are hardly any casualties on its side. As documented by the guerrillas, the Turkish army repeatedly throws the bodies of its own soldiers into ravines or burns them. For the Turkish state, the lives of its soldiers are worth little, in stark contrast to the officially cultivated cult of martyrdom. The mortal remains of soldiers are held in even less esteem. When dead soldiers are reported, they are portrayed as victims of falls in ravines, lightning strikes or similar accidents. Nevertheless, the Turkish state is obviously unable to hide the reality.

The obvious contradiction between the claim to have wiped out the guerrillas and the deployment of tens of thousands of soldiers in the combat zones is obvious to everyone. This is especially true for Northern Kurdistan. If the guerrillas had indeed been completely wiped out there, why are so many military opera-

tions taking place in these areas? If there are no guerrillas there, against whom are these operations carried out, and who are bombed in the mountains?

The reality of war is shown in the footage of the guerrillas

The reality of war is shown in the footage of the guerrillas. While the guerrillas strike in the mountains, autonomous groups like the “Children of Fire” carry out actions against fascists, the Turkish police, authorities and companies of the regime. Such actions take place on a daily basis. The Turkish media repeatedly report accidents or fires that have broken out by chance, while the “Children of Fire” claim responsibility for their actions. This shows that the Turkish army cannot make Kurdish children bow down.

In the mountains, a highly equipped army that uses the latest technology and carries out heavy bombardments against the mountains faces a guerrilla force that is technically inferior but tactically highly mobile and superior in terrain and tunnels. The guerrilla videos clearly reflect this reality and show that even under the heaviest attacks, the guerrillas are able to go on the offensive in the Medya Defence Zones. The guerrillas' professional fight suggests that success of the resistance is quite possible.



Bayık: The Kurds are leading a renaissance in the Middle East

ANF | FRANKFURT | 9 SEPTEMBER 2023

The KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union) Executive Council Co-Chair Cemil Bayık sent a message to the 31st International Kurdish Cultural Festival in Frankfurt.

In his message to the festival, which is attended by thousands of people, Bayık highlighted the role of culture and art in the struggles of societies and said it was time for the Kurds to take steps in the fields of music, cinema, theater, literature, folklore, painting and sculpture.

Greeting the participants of the festival, Bayık paid tribute to all those who have been martyred in the guerrilla areas in Medya Defense Zones, in prisons, in the areas of struggle and resistance, and in the attacks and massacres against the Kurdish people. He vowed to fulfil their aspirations and keep their memories alive.

Bayık expressed his gratitude to Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan who, he said, made unprecedented efforts for the improvement of Kurdish culture and arts, and to the artists who gave a concert in Italy demanding freedom for Öcalan.

Referring to the genocidal policies pursued by the nation states, forces of capitalist modernity and all sovereign forces to deflect humanity, detach it from its traditions and put it through genocide, Bayık stated that there could be no life without culture and arts.

Bayık pointed out that capitalist modernity considered culture and the arts as a sector and sought to take peoples and societies under control through not only terrifying means of war, but also soft power meth-

ods. "Resistance and struggle against these policies and attacks are valuable and sacred. Culture is the future and reality of peoples. Every human being and society grows, lives and develops on its own roots," he said.

Bayık stressed that the Kurds experienced policies of cultural genocide more than any other society as the tyrant and genocidal powers were still employing every method to annihilate them. "They kill the language, culture and art through white slaughter. Still, the Kurdish people have never bowed down. They have always stood on their own feet, fought for their freedom. They have been a source of morale and hope for all the forces of freedom and democracy. This has been achieved thanks to their commitment to their culture."

Bayık said that the Kurdish people have great advantages today after 50 years of struggle that has generated great values and opportunities.

"The legendary struggle of Leader Öcalan in İmrālî, the struggle of the guerrillas in Zap, Metina, Avashin and Xakurke, and the struggle of the freedom prisoners behind bars require the creation of great works. These historic struggles should be crowned with literary and artistic works. Those dealing with cultural and artistic activities in particular should appreciate these struggles. The Kurds are living a renaissance today thanks to tens of thousands of martyrs, and they have the Middle East live its renaissance. The greatest disaster for this society would be a failure to embrace its ancient and historical culture and art. Leader Öcalan did so, and created a culture with the struggle of the PKK, through which he encouraged the Kurds to fight for their own freedom and to inspire entire humanity."

Bayık stressed that artists should defend society and be based on socialisation, draw strength from socialisation and consolidate socialisation through their art. "The capitalist modernity stands against socialisation, and therefore encourages populism, individualism and materiality. In doing so, it draws artists into a commercial state and drives them apart from their goals. By means of this policy, it kills not only life and society, but also art and artist. For this very reason, culture and art play a vital role in the creation of the mindset, personality and social life, as well as in the improvement of social creativity and the protection of the future of society. That's why artists are the leaders, guides and intellectuals of society. It is their responsibility to develop and preserve social, moral and political features."

Bayık continued: "Everything begins in the mindset and is won with it. Leader Öcalan has put up a remarkable struggle for the improvement of the mindset, personality and life of the Kurds. To do this, he developed a struggle of philosophy, ideology, leadership, organisation, militancy, people, life and mentality. As a result of this struggle, the Kurdish people reached a desired and exemplary level. The duty and responsibility of the artists is to improve these realities further among the Kurds and other peoples of the world, in the international arena. All challenges, obstacles, failures and shortcomings can be overcome through mindset. To this end, Leader Öcalan presented us with the mission of "Revolution of Conscience and Mindset", which enhances human perspective, courage, determination and will."

Bayık pointed out that the attacks of genocidal, collaborationist and treacherous capitalist modernity could not be confronted through military struggle alone. "In order to thwart these attacks, we need to wage a struggle and war in the ideological field. We can frustrate these attacks through a struggle in the fields of culture and art. Artists are the tongue, heart and mind of society. They see the problems of society and lead it to solutions. Artists from Kurdistan are the leaders in shaping and enlightening society. As the

genocidal Turkish state seeks to destroy the Kurds, the duty of artists is to develop a struggle against it. They should understand the influence of capitalist modernity and nation states, and reconsider and strengthen their sense of patriotism and revolution.”

Bayık pointed out that the legendary struggle in Kurdistan, which inspires the forces of freedom and democracy all around the world, should be represented more successfully in art worldwide.

“We are in the most critical phase of the 50 years of struggle, which embraces not only dangers but also great opportunities. The danger is not posed by the capitalist modernity and cruel-genocidal states alone, but also from the collaborating Kurdish line that takes sides with the perpetrators of genocide against the Kurdish people and their freedom struggle. Leader Öcalan, the guerrillas and our people are resisting it. This resistance is also directed against the support of NATO and the second largest army of NATO. The hearts and minds of our people in Europe should be in Kurdistan and they should mobilize all their means for it. I salute the struggle of our people in Europe. The artists and our people in Europe should take it as a fundamental duty to preserve and develop the Kurdish culture and language. All Kurds should be able to read and write in their language and raise their children in a free Kurdish culture.”

Bayık continued: “Leader Öcalan said ‘Culture, language and geography constitute the body which you should claim. This is a vital instruction and perspective that concerns all of us all the time. You are physically far away from the country, but you should not leave your country and land in your hearts and minds. Our people’s commitment to their country, culture and language and the freedom struggle of the country should always remain strong and alive. So much so that even your dreams should belong with Kurdistan, not Europe. Culture is land, country, agriculture, labour. It is life itself.”

Bayık suggested the opening of an art conservatory as soon as possible, development of culture and art, engagement with the freedom and democracy struggle and enhancement of solidarity in the international arena.

“We should know that our main struggle is for the physical freedom of Leader Öcalan, and the fact that the Kurdish people have been held in captivity for 25 years. Actions are taking place everywhere for the physical freedom of Leader Öcalan today and these actions will continue to grow every day. Culture and art have a fundamental and basic role in the struggle for the physical freedom of Leader Öcalan. We are sure that all the artists will lead this historic campaign. On this basis, we celebrate the 31st Kurdish Cultural Festival, trusting that it will play its historic role. On this occasion, I extend my greetings and respects to all esteemed artists and patriots, and wish you all success,” he added.

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