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### **Stop the Ethnic Cleansing of the Kurds! Stop Turkish State War Crimes!**

Yesterday, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan publicly declared that all infrastructure and energy facilities in Rojava/North and East Syria (NES) and northern Iraq/Iraqi Kurdistan are “legitimate targets”, although military attacks on civilian infrastructure clearly violate international humanitarian laws and conventions. Turkish FM Fidan has claimed, without evidence, that those responsible for the attack on the Turkish Interior Ministry on 1 October came from Syria. Just a few hours after these statements, Turkish warplanes bombed the al-Misheirfah neighborhood in the city of al-Hasakah and 7 other sites in Amuda and Qamislo, reportedly causing several civilian casualties.

While the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) rejected Fidan’s accusations that “the perpetrators of the attack in Ankara came from Syria”, the Turkish Armed Forces launched a series of airstrikes against civilian areas in North and East Syria. The SDF stated, “...Turkey's search for excuses to legitimise its ongoing attacks on our regions and launch a new military offensive increases our deep concern. Targeting the infrastructure and economic resources of the region and its populated cities is a war crime.”

Civilian infrastructure includes schools, hospitals, dams, power plants, grain storages, and other vital facilities, and Turkish forces have targeted these structures numerous times throughout areas governed by the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES) over the years. The Turkish state’s ongoing war against the civilian population of Kurdish-populated regions in Syria and Iraq, deliberately puts the lives of 5 million people, including hundreds of thousands of displaced persons and refugees, at risk.

The endless bombardment of mountainous areas in northern Iraq, also illegal under international law, continues. The Turkish state must be held accountable for its years of attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure and other war crimes in North and East Syria and Iraqi Kurdistan. In parallel to this brutal military aggression, the Turkish state has launched a new wave of repression within Turkey’s borders, arbitrarily detaining and arresting hundreds of Kurdish politicians since 1 October.

It is outrageous that the Turkish government can publicly announce a campaign of ethnic cleansing against civilians and this bold declaration of intent to systematically commit war crimes is met with silence from all relevant international organisations of which Turkey is a member, including the Global Coalition Against ISIS (Daesh), the Council of Europe, NATO, and the United Nations, all of whom, through their silence, accept the clear suspension of international law and provide the Turkish state with implicit approval to proceed as planned.

This new campaign of military aggression and ethnic cleansing pursued by the Turkish state is a consequence of the political inability to resolve a centuries-old conflict based in the denial of the Kurdish people’s basic right to self-determination. International acceptance and support for the aggressive and militaristic Turkish state intensify the Kurdish-Turkish conflict and will result in increased instability, displacement, and war throughout the region if there is no international political, legal, and diplomatic intervention. Furthermore, attacks against North and East Syria will directly provide ISIS, which is still supported by the Turkish state, an opportunity to reemerge and pose a renewed threat to regional and global security.

The incident in Ankara has once again drawn international attention to Turkey's unresolved Kurdish question, which has resulted in tens of thousands of lives lost and millions of people displaced across various countries, shaping other major regional crises, and drawing in global powers. This conflict must be resolved through political intervention.

To this end, we call on all international organisations of which Turkey is a member to compel Turkey to comply with international law in order to prevent a new campaign of ethnic cleansing by the Turkish state.

Furthermore, we call on all friends of the Kurdish people and other peoples of North and East Syria to express their support for the peoples of the region and uncompromising opposition to the Turkish state's intention to wage a total war against civilians in the region.

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