

THE IMRALI POST

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

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Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

Kalkan: A new struggle has emerged from within the İmralı system

ANF | BEHDINAN | 17 OCTOBER 2023

KCK Executive Council member Duran Kalkan made evaluations about the İmralı torture, isolation and genocide system and the 25-year resistance of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan against it.

In the previous interview, we have been talking about the 25-years of the İmralı system in its various dimensions to get a holistic perspective. Now we would like to dwell on the various dimensions of Abdullah Öcalan's 25-year resistance against this. How is a person capable of resisting such a system of torture, isolation and genocide for a quarter of a century?

How does one survive in such an environment of severe isolation and torture? Normally, it is not possible to survive for 25 years under these circumstances, cut off from society, let alone struggle for that long. Very few people can survive like this. How is it possible to not only survive under these circumstances, but to turn oneself into a fighting force that is a hope for all humanity? This is the reality of Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan]. This is what we call the reality of leadership, what we call the truth of leadership.

In fact, in his 5-volume Manifesto for a Democratic Civilization and in other previous prison writings, Rêber Apo made several evaluations about life in the İmralı system. He expressed how he managed to create life within it, what it is based on, how he survives, how he creates these developments. These evaluations were without any doubt very important. The theoretical theses he presented through his prison writings formed the basis for the paradigm shift of the movement. Rêber Apo managed to express his feelings, understanding and approach to life very clearly here.

When the February 15 conspiracy took place, almost everyone's hopes were dashed, faith was lost. Almost everyone expressed that at one level or another and just very few people did not fall for this. The vast majority, both within the movement, within our party, within our patriotic people, among our international friends, and throughout the world, have already evaluated it in this way. "Everything is finished!", they used to say. There was also this common saying: "The PKK cannot survive any longer than 6 months. Then it will disintegrate and there would not be anything anymore called the PKK in this world." A lot of articles have been written on this basis, and intellectuals, politicians, and a lot of people that think that they know everything discussed this publicly. Those who profited from the international conspiracy and the so-called 'Kurdish question' were obviously very happy about this situation. They thought they had "gotten rid of this scourge," to use their own words. Kurdish patriots and the international friends of the Kurds were feeling great sorrow and agony. They asked themselves: "Now, is this the end?". There were those who felt great sorrow, those who were filled up with hate, and those who were severely traumatized. It was because they assessed the situation and thought that now that the struggle had failed, there would

be nothing left but a reality of isolation and massacre. They said that: “The history of Öcalan is over, nothing can be done for him anymore.”

When the leadership of our movement declared that we stand by Rêber Apo and will continue to follow him, many of the people and also many of our international friends could not accept it. There were even those who intervened and said: “Enough of Rêber Apo. Now it is time to listen to us and it is time to do our revolution.” There have been many people who have sought to take advantage of this situation and have tried to get their hands on the gains and structures that have been built through the struggle of the movement.

No one thought that the Imrali system could be survived, that the struggle could continue there, and that the struggle for freedom could even develop there. Those who expressed such thoughts were regarded as dreamers fleeing from reality. It really seemed impossible, as it was commonly known, that a normal person can not survive Imrali. But it was exactly this place, from where on the struggle started to grow. The more we were talking about this reality, the more people were mocking us and even getting angry at us. They called on us to forget about Rêber Apo. This is a fact that I did not just make up in my mind, and it is not something that was just said by some people. We have got the written proof of this in our archive. And this stance was nothing that the people just made up. They were looking at themselves, asking themselves if they could take this resistance to a new level, and they said: “I can not.” Hundreds, thousands of political prisoners evaluated their own situation, seeing that they could barely protect themselves when their conditions were still far away from the ones of Imrali. That is why they could not believe that Rêber Apo would be able to do so. “What can a prisoner of the system of capitalist modernity, a prisoner of the United Nations, do in a place like Imrali, how shall he be able to develop, how shall he even find a chance to think or work?”, was the common question in the minds of the resigned people in the prisons.

Only Rêber Apo believed in himself and took a decision based on his own strength and characteristics. He said: “I will fight on here.” He made a call on the movement and on our people and said: “Give me one chance and follow me.” At the beginning of the international conspiracy, the unity between Rêber Apo and the party leadership was very weak. This is mostly due to the fact that the leadership has taken a completely negative stance. Therefore, the most important point was Rêber Apo’s approach. He developed an optimistic and positive attitude in order to form a correct and comprehensive response to the needs and fears of the people. He named the necessity of ending the division and fragmentation, as it can be said that there was no other alternative to it. He had tried a lot of ways and many different methods, that in the end brought him in the situation that he was in. Either he would decide to fight on, and struggle for a successful solution to the ‘Kurdish question’ or he would let things slide. Rêber Apo evaluated the situation and observed this fact clearly. That is why he opted to fight on. Realizing that there would not be any other possible way of finding a solution for such a big question, the leadership of the movement responded: “Yes” and joined Rêber Apo in his struggle. Rêber Apo said to this: “Anyway, there would not be any other option for you.” At a time when Rêber Apo had faced the Imrali system of torture, isolation and genocide despite applying every possible method, what else could our leadership or any of us have done? We couldn’t have done anything. At most, we could have repeated Rêber Apo at a lower level. Even if we had applied practices at or close to the level of Rêber Apo, the point we would get to would have been Imrali. We would have just experienced a repetition. So the important point was not to repeat this practice, but to go beyond what we had done until then. Rêber Apo called on us to go beyond what we had done before. He trusted that we could do it, and he supported us in that. At the same time, society trusted in Rêber Apo and formed a unity around him. They rose up against the conspiracy of February 15. The youth,

women and all working Kurds in the four parts of the country and also in exile rose in popular uprisings. It was the sacrificial resistance of the people who developed the defense of Rêber Apo under the slogan 'You cannot darken our sun'. This showed the faithful stance of the people and their trust with Rêber Apo. This was their way to join in Rêber Apo's call.

Rêber Apo mainly defined the power of the struggle, the power to resist on İmralı, as a meaningful life. He said that for: "understanding life and finding a way on how to live it", we should look at the example he is giving. This is also the core of his evaluations in the prison writings. A meaningful life is a life with meaning. This is transcending the narrow, ordinary material life. The existence as a whole, the universe, the world, society and the life of humanity should not just be looked at on a materialist level. The crystallization of the significance of one thing gives life its meaning and makes it significant. When material things are loaded with such a significance, then they become a value. Therefore, Rêber Apo does not regard it as right to see life as the fulfillment of just such simple material needs. He underlined, that such an understanding should not be the outcome of an analysis, done both on an emotional as well as analytical level. He said that beings with the narrowest intellect and power of thought see and do it that way. That means not being able to go beyond and not really differing from animals. If we limit ourselves to a rigid, narrow, material life, then there will be no point at which the human being differs from other species. What is this point of difference? The power of a meaningful life, the power of giving meaning to something, the power to give meaning to life, the power to develop emotion, thought, and a world of spirituality and morality. To be able to see that human beings are spiritual beings as much as they are material beings, even more so, and that social life is made up of spiritual patterns, and to be able to take pleasure in this. How is Rêber Apo capable of doing research and deep thinking on these topics? On which basis? Undoubtedly, he has a great deal of practical experience beforehand. Since the mid-60s, he has been educating and developing himself in every aspect, following the events and developments in Kurdistan, Turkey and the world. He stated that he started this work from childhood, that he started to give meaning to life from childhood, from the age of 7, that he chose the path of living meaningfully, that he always questioned the existing life and always doubted its veracity. These are the basic characteristics of Rêber Apo.

These accumulations of experience of this great struggle, guerrilla warfare, the struggle of the party, made it possible for Rêber Apo to develop. He started research and deepened his thinking, trying to reach a comprehensive, holistic understanding and thought about the universe, the earth, social life, human existence. Rêber Apo has never stepped away from this struggle, he never said anything like: "I got trapped here behind these thick walls. I can not get out of here. Life is finished." On the contrary, he said: "Here life will be created."

But we have to ask why the İmralı system even emerged. When Rêber Apo was waging the struggle by forming a party, waging a socialist struggle, waging a guerrilla war, waging a struggle for national liberation, he analyzed the situation according to other examples that exist in the world, and thought that the national problem would probably succeed with the solution of the nation state. When he came to Rome and presented the most reasonable methods to find a solution to the problem, he, at the end, had to face the torture, isolation and genocidal system of İmralı. Why did this happen? What has been wrong? What would have been necessarily different? What are the things that brought him face to face with the İmralı system of torture, isolation and genocide? How will he overcome it, how will he defeat it? Rêber Apo did not stop asking himself these questions, neither did he hesitate nor was he afraid of these questions. He did not give up on his research on life. On the contrary, he deepened his research even more under the conditions of İmralı. He developed his power of giving meaning to something. Even further, he developed

his power of thought, he came up with new ideas, he made new analyses, and by doing so Rêber Apo created a synthesis, which formed a system that will make it possible for humanity to take historical steps.

This aspect is quite important. The perspective on life, the orientation towards it and how we approach it are essential. The answers to the questions of 'Why do we live?', 'What do we live with?', 'How do we live?' are very important. Rêber Apo has already asked these questions in his prison writings and formulated extensive answers to them. He always criticized the narrow, ordinary, crude, materialist approaches. Rêber Apo criticized this understanding of life. He revealed with broad theoretical analysis that life does not just consist of that.

These were the main points that kept Rêber Apo the power to stay alive in the system he himself called the 'İmralı coffin' for 25 years. This kept him alive, made him so productive, made him able to do what no other human being could do, and even made him able to do on İmralı what he himself could not do when he was outside İmralı. We need to express it like this.

What was Rêber Apo's attitude towards the conspiracy? By looking at the moment when he was captured by the forces of the counter-guerrilla in Kenya on February 15, he describes it like this:

For one or one and a half hour, I showed a strong reaction against them. I didn't answer their questions. I wanted to deny everything and start a process of coarse resistance. Later, reached a certain decision. I came to the conclusion that a mere coarse resistance is what the conspirators had intended me to show. They want to annihilate me. They didn't want anybody to know how I had been disappeared. So if I had insisted on my first stance of showing a coarse resistance, the conspirators would have succeeded and achieved their aims. In such a case, defeating the conspiracy, shedding light on its various dimensions, wouldn't have been possible and humanity wouldn't know anything about it. I came to the conclusion that adopting a coarse resistance would give the conspirators the opportunity to achieve their aims. That's why I abandoned my first attitude and adopted a new one. I took a different decision. I decided to struggle, and I did so. I am pursuing my struggle.

There is a difference here; what is that first one-two hour attitude based on? It is based on reflex. What is the other one based on? This attitude is based on the power of the creative mind, it is based on deep questioning, evaluation, forming a meaningful power. One leads to crude resistance, the other to a result-oriented, combative attitude. One means a frontal attack. The other one, Rêber Apo later called as a strategy, a way of struggling against the system from within the system. With that change of attitude, Rêber Apo made a fundamental methodical shift, a strategic change. Fighting against the international conspiracy from within the conspiracy. This is important as he decided to struggle in this way.

There have already been similar situations before. For example, Rêber Apo was invited to Greece, but when we wanted to go, they didn't accept him. Instead of reacting against this and insisting on going back, he investigated why this happened. He wanted to continue the path on which he had started. Rêber Apo has this attitude of questioning everything, he discusses a lot both within himself, as well as with those around him.

There are some people who don't know Rêber Apo, but who are talking about him, saying he would be a person that is indecisive. Rêber Apo himself once said, that it is about being possible to create success out of a situation in which you are without any power. It often happens, that people are very mistaken in their view of the leadership. It also shows up in those people who are around him. To this, Rêber Apo said:

'When someone looks at me superficially from a distance and approaches me with a narrow understanding, he is only fooling himself.' Rêber Apo is always doing research and questions, but also shares this to not leave anything unclear and to take decisions based on this. When he takes a decision, he definitely goes until the end in implementing it. In his steps he is never hesitating or indecisive. When hurdles and difficulties arise in front of him, he is not the one who says: "There are problems, it is getting complicated, I give up on this." In this respect, to come back to the example, instead of continuing trying to return to Greece, he searched for new places. So when Russia became an opportunity, he envisioned going there.

Now, his attitude and stance against February 15, against the conspiracy, and also in the court, are all very important. Everyone was surprised when they saw his attitude when he first appeared in court. When the lawyers visited him for the first time and talked to Rêber Apo, most of them were surprised. They even tried to guide the Leader. A lot of people lost their hopes when they saw Rêber Apo speaking for the first time in front of the court. Many of them taunted him. There were some that said and were also thinking, that struggling and resisting had been given up. Some went and apologized and took the stance that they had wanted from them. Not just like this, they said the PKK is a terrorist organization. Everyone thought that now, they would attack everybody. But they were surprised when they encountered a person who analyzed the situation according to principles and that gave an answer to them. They were all under the influence based on this. A clear attitude and stance against the conspiracy was not just easily taken.

Because I am talking about the struggle of İmralı. Really, nobody was hoping for such a struggle. There were some friends who distanced themselves from us because we did not renounce Rêber Apo and they gave up hope. There were some regretting what has happened and expressing their sorrow for us. They said that so much blood had been shed. There were some who even told us that now was still the chance to drop Rêber Apo, but to continue following him would make us guilty.

After the trial finished, Rêber Apo sent a message through his lawyers. He said: "There is no room for emotionality or revulsion here. I have also lived emotionality, but he has to overcome this. We will have to question ourselves completely and question our worst attitudes. Where did we go wrong? What have we done right? Why did come to this result? How can we overcome this situation? We have to search for answers to these questions. That is why no one should approach this process with reactions, emotions and sentiments. I will question myself and if we want to be successful from now on, all our friends have to do the same." Rêber Apo was really able to overcome his emotionality and described this also later in his prison writings, and named this process of research 'the organizing of the emotions'. Rêber Apo said to this: "By organizing ones emotions, one is able to make a lot of progress and this brings upon a struggle. But by a narrow way of living emotionally, this takes a lot of ones energy. This reactional approach destroys everything."

Rêber Apo formed his researching on this basis. Still nobody was hoping, that it would be possible to stop the execution with such a struggle. But Rêber Apo was researching on the question of what needs to be done. He was thinking and asking a lot. He asked his lawyers, but was also expecting proposals from the movement and the people. He found appropriate ways and methods and according to them he evolved his analysis and thoughts. He was deeply evaluating the role that the Turkish state is playing in the conspiracy, as it was Turkey which decided upon the execution. He affected at least the Turkish society and state. All those statist forces saw the execution of Rêber Apo as more dangerous and damaging to themselves than the İmralı rotting policy. These forces analyzed that the execution of Rêber Apo would deepen the problem and, at the end, would become a danger to themselves. They told themselves: "If we just leave

him in the Imrali system, he will rot there and slowly all of his impact will get lost.” They calculated that it would take some time, but it would not be too damaging for them, was what they thought. They developed such an approach, but it turned out that they were wrong. They could not fully evaluate the reality of Rêber Apo. Still the rulers of Turkey believed this and were repeating this all the time. They said: “There is nothing like Rêber Apo or PKK. That are all some groups that are guided from outside by forces like the CIA or the Mossad.” The Left wings said: “They are marionettes of the imperialists.” and the Right wings said that they would be controlled by some other forces. Everybody wanted to connect it like this in some way. That is because of their racist, chauvinist and nationalist mentalities. They saw Kurds as inferior and weak and said that Kurds would not be able to act like this. They said that Kurds could not be able to have such a big thought and such a big movement. That is the basis why they said: “This is not done by the Kurds. It is not Rêber Apo who is doing this, there are some others.” They discussed it like this. They always analyzed the reality of Rêber Apo like this.

Heeding the available data, they thought that they were right. How shall we say this? The contrast was the difference that Rêber Apo made. The mentality of Rêber Apo, the way he approaches incidents, his method, his way of approaching developments, his system of work, discipline, understanding of life, believing in success, urge for freedom and Kurdish life, the possibility to create. That is what surprised everybody. Everybody has seen him just like oneself, just like a normal, average person. But now he was not just an average person anymore, there was a person beyond that, there was a genius. Of course, this needs to be seen. The reality of somebody who managed to overcome such a superficial and materialist life, just living by the power of meaning surprised everybody.

Rêber Apo tried to create a perception of democratic civilization through his first prison writings. As a system of thought, he made his first general analysis in the prison writing titled “The Roots of Civilization”. This was actually a definition of democratic civilization according to the statist paradigm. He defined democratic civilization, and brought the democratic solution on the agenda. He considered Europe as the right wing of democratic civilization. In the same text he stated, that the left wing of democratic civilization could be developed in the Middle East based on the Kurds and the democratic solution of the ‘Kurdish question’. On this basis he put forward a program for a democratic solution in the four parts of Kurdistan. With the political formulation of a democratic Middle East, a free Kurdistan, a new program for the solution to the ‘Kurdish question’ emerged.

He analyzed it like this, and saw it as a political solution, but it still was not completely clear. It still did not differ that much from what has been before. Therefore, the issue of overcoming the system of Imrali and whether or not to defeat it was not very clear. Even in that form, though, it frustrated the attempt of Ecevit’s government to solve the ‘Kurdish question’ based on an individualized level, by developing pseudo-democratization In Turkey and successfully implementing the system of Imrali.

Developing a left wing approach to the democratic civilization in the Middle East according to the aim of forming a democratic Middle East and a free Kurdistan, made the Ecevit government’s attempts come to naught. But still it seemed not clear how this paradigm is going to look, what it is going to consist of. It was time of ideological crisis, a depression of thought. While he was so much in the process of analyzing and was working on a program for a political solution; when asked about the party, he said that it is living a ideological crisis. The whole Freedom Movement lived a ideological crisis. That was why the PKK could not exist like this anymore. It has existed with an ideological system until now, and this system has now ended in a crisis. The PKK like this was at the end it this time. The way it had been until then was neces-

sary to be ended and it had to be changed. There were just two ways. Either the struggle would end there, or we would find a solution to this ideological crisis, and the forethinker of the movement went to this level. What did he achieve by his analyzes? He found a solution to the ideological crisis. How did he do this? He did so by changing the paradigm of the struggle. He managed to create a synthesis between the means, the aims and the methods. That is the essence of the paradigm shift. The aim is to form a free society, living an equal, democratic, sharing life, to build up the life. The tools were power and state. But what were power and state? Now what is 'power' and 'state'? They are instruments of oppression, exploitation and cruelty. Living freedom, equality and democracy is impossible through oppression, exploitation and cruelty. This is the main purpose why the real-socialism dissolved.

Until then Rêber Apo was in a phasis of questioning and criticizing in many ways. He came up with a complete critical conclusion, and linked it to this. He thereby gave meaning to the historical experiences of the global liberation movements. Therefore he saw the necessity of forming a unity between the means, the aims and the methods. A ruling and statist mentality can not walk together with socialism. Freedom, equality and democracy can not walk together with a ruling and statist mentality. A new way was necessary. Rêber Apo defined this as 'democratic leadership', as 'autonomous self-governance of the people'. Based on this a paradigm shift, a new mentality, a new theoretical frame, a new ideological-political line, a new tactic and strategy, with the principles of freedom, equality and democracy was formed. Democratic Confederalism takes the place of the state, of the national state. When the democratic nation was formulated, a new system, a new paradigm was formed as a political solution. This brought the reconstruction of the PKK to the agenda. It was not just the name of the PKK that had been changed, but the PKK has been radically changed on the basis of a shifted paradigm. It was newly formed on basis of deep criticism and self-criticism. This created a very strong force, a force of life, a power of meaning, enthusiasm and excitement within Rêber Apo. He said, that he enjoys a lot the creation of new ideas and is getting satisfied by giving meaning to ideas. He said: "Some people are happy and satisfied when they eat nice things, wear nice things or are in nice environments. But for me, thinking about nice things and to reach the point of getting the strength of a deep understanding, makes me enjoy, happy and satisfied." He evaluated the impact the meaning of something has on human beings and showed how the paradigm shift gives a great moral strength, excitement, and vital strength. This became the strength of resistance and the basis of Rêber Apo's resistance. We should be conscience that this broke the decision of execution. This frustrated Ecevit's policy of decay. The paradigm shift frustrated Tayyip Erdoğan's Islamistic policy. Because the resistance against the international conspiracy frustrated many planned attacks, it gave a lot of moral, strength, hope, trust and faith back and strengthened them. This is how the resistance developed and got stronger. In order to bring about change in paradigm and to define the new paradigm her criticized, in many respects, all the social scientists, philosophers and thinkers. He stated that these thinkers had not developed a wholesome critical approach to the establishment and had failed to come up with an alternative model. So he developed a mental structure and theoretical framework that enabled him to criticize the establishment and at the same time come up with a new alternative. This inspired the people with moral power, will power and life force.

This is how resistance against these attacks and this pressure evolved on an individual level. We do to understand it in this way. Hadn't he created such a big power of resistance, he wouldn't have tolerated that environment. How are you going to resist now? Imagine that you are for 25 years in a surrounding where the enemy is constantly observing you. You are surrounded by them. Every day, every minute when you look around, you see them. You just hear them. They are the ones providing you with your basic materialist needs. Everything around you forms pressure on you, is meant as an attack on you, on your soul, on your

emotions, on your ideas, on your life. I spent six months in an isolation cell in Germany. There has also been pressure there. I can not really say, that I understood it. That was also an advantage I had, because for example I was not conscience about how much of an enemy I am confronted with. I did not understand what they told me and when I was stuck, I just said what came to my mind. What they have saying to me could not affect me, as I was not understanding it. I was very angry about there approach. The injustice of the case had an impact on society. It varied from person to person, not everyone behaved in the same way. We were disturbed by their behavior. The injustice of the case had an impact on society. It varied from person to person, not everyone behaved in the same way. Gradually, when it became clear that the case was a hollow case, that it was fabricated, the attitude of the people around us changed. At first they were looking at us with such definitions as “those terrorists” in order to protect the state. But slowly their perspective changed.

But now is Imrali also like this? No, they can not even be compared with each other. It is such a racist, chauvinist, nationalist, Kurdish-hostile environment, there is no environment as Kurdish-hostile as Imrali. This colonialist, genocidal mentality and politics wants to turn Kurdistan into a killing field for Kurds. The place where this is expressed the most minute by minute, is Imrali. How is it possible to resist in such a place for 25 years. It is necessary to analyze this good. It is not a year or five years, it is 25 consecutive years without any break. What did the ones that created Imrali say? What did they say why there was no execution? The ones that created this system said, that execution means dying once, but living in this system means dying every day. They said that they have created a system where one dies every day. Analyzing Imrali and its environment, means to see this point.

There is a system of torture. After the military and fascist coup of September 12, 1980 there was torture in the prison of Amed [Turkish name Diyarbakir]. There where many ways of psychological torture, but mostly it was physical torture. Against great physical torture a great physical resistance was lived. Now there is the deepest, most systematic torture according to the methods of psychological torture and special warfare on Imrali. How can somebody at such a place resist against this torture? It is not possible to uphold such a resistance just with a narrow materialist or individualist stance. Only by understanding these things, by analyzing them in yourself, by defeating them in your own mind, in your feelings, thoughts and behaviors, can you endure and overcome them. Since Rêber Apo defeated the whole system with his paradigm shift, since he judged and condemned the system that wanted to judge him, he also condemned those around him. He developed behavior to sustain himself in the face of their every behavior. He was able to interpret every word, every attitude of the enemy and developed meanings to sustain himself. He remained standing with the power of meaning. Otherwise the gates would have been opened for an individualist struggle. But there is nothing like this.

They are lying and giving punishments to Rêber Apo by saying he would be indisciplined. There is absolutely nothing like that on Imrali. Something like does not exist in the person of Rêber Apo. The 25 years have passed, according to law he must be set free now. The ECHR said that there is the ‘law of hope’. There needs to be a trial, because according to European law, Rêber Apo should become physically free. They can not keep him in Imrali anymore. Just four months are left. Now they are inventing all these things, they are trying to give new sentences and create a justification for keeping him in prison. There is no other explanation for this. It has nothing to do with reality, it has no credibility. Somebody can not be forced to remain in Imrali because of fake disciplinary punishments. Impossible to spend more than 25 years on Imrali. How did this happen? It becomes possible by living a meaningful life, with the evolving of thought, with the power to give the right and sufficient answers to everything. There are friends who went

to Imrali and returned. Some of their things are reflected in the press. We read about their observations, their memories. They make very interesting evaluations. They say that Rêber Apo lives in Imrali in the same way as he lived in the Mahsum Korkmaz Academy [former academy of the PKK in the Bekaa Valley]. In such a place he formed such an environment.

For example comrade Mehmet Saît. He is a comrade that has seen education in the Mahsum Korkmaz Academy. He said that Rêber Apo had turned Imrali into the Mahsum Korkmaz Academy. Can a place like Imrali, which is the headquarters of a colonialist, genocidal mentality and politics, be turned into the Mahsum Korkmaz Academy? Can such a thing happen? The terms of Rêber Apo's way of living, working and organizing is like this. Whatever they may do, how many difficulties they may make, Rêber Apo will still do this. Even they give just a limited number of papers and pens to him, sometimes not even giving this.

They do everything to arouse anger and reaction from his part. It is now 25 years that this situation is like this. These were affecting Imrali. There was a coup in Turkey. It is not clear what happened. It affected Imrali the most. How was Rêber Apo able to overcome these? With the power of meaning and the power of evaluation. It is because he is a different person from the people who stand in front of him, because he created an alternative to them. It is because he is a power of understanding and solving. Like this he was able to overcome them. If he would have not overcome this, if he would have been weaker than his opponents, he would have not been able to resist.

They called it isolation. The system made a mistake in this point. They isolated him and thought that all his effect on the outside world will perish once he gets put in a place solely. That is probably the biggest mistake that they have ever done. Rêber Apo expressed it many times, he always expressed loneliness. Rêber Apo has had a lot of human relations, but he was not a person who randomly interacted with people 24 hours a day and had idle conversations. If he wants to solve certain problems with people, he discusses with them, educates them, and establishes such deeper relationships. He was busy with educating himself and his work. It was not a problem if he stayed in one place like that. They thought that if they would keep him alone, they would squeeze him, that he would turn crazy. But Rêber Apo was used to it. He has lived like this before. Thus, they said he would forget how to interact with people, or even how to talk. That is what they are trying to do. But he continued reading, analyzing and thinking. Rêber Apo does not create new thoughts and ideas by reading books, he does so by reading life itself. His life and the way of his struggle is like this.

There is an emotional dimension, and there is a psychological dimension. How does he overcome the emotional and psychological dimension? Through the production of thought and with the power of meaning. On the other hand, also by keeping his connection with the people and the movement alive on basis of meaningful relationship. They could never break this connection. They have put Rêber Apo in the torture system of Imrali for 25 years, but they never managed to cut his connections to the outside world. They could not separate Rêber Apo from the people, the movement and humanity. They tried not to give him any opportunity. They developed measures so that he would have the least information, but still with the least possibility of getting informations, he developed the power to make the most comprehensive evaluations. He never said something like: "There is not enough information, therefore I cannot understand, I cannot think, I cannot know what is going on." He knew better than anyone else with the most information.

Now everyone is saying that the isolation in Imrali should be lifted, that Rêber Apo should speak and have his say so that we can find solutions to the problems we face. Kurds, women, the youth, Turkey's socialists, revolutionaries, the world's intellectuals, politicians and artists are saying this. Everyone who read/reads the books of the leadership, who reads the prison writings, who learns about the reality of the leadership, wants to hear and know the new evaluations, new views of Rêber Apo in order to gain more meaningful power. For this, they are developing a struggle that embraces the Rêber Apo. It is the global struggle for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo against the Imrali system and the influence of Rêber Apo's thoughts that are creating an impact. Everyone who is acquainted with these thoughts sees their own interests represented there, sees their own goodness and beauties represented there, and in order to hear more of this, they want Rêber Apo to speak more, they want him to write more, they support and embrace Rêber Apo more. It has such a dimension. His system of thought has this level of influence. What does this mean? It expresses Rêber Apo's bond with humanity, his bond with peoples, his bond with women, his bond with the Kurds. He said: "If I had not been able to combine the concrete situation and reality of the Kurdish people with my own personality, and the situation of the Kurdish people with my own personality, I would not have been able to produce all these thoughts and practices. I could not have achieved all these developments." This expresses the level of feeling his struggle and uniting with it. It shows how much he has become one with the people, the nation, and integrated the existence of free life in his personality. Thereby, he overcomes the narrow platform of sentimentality. He sees the problem, understands them, solves them and shows solution on how to get out of the pressure and oppression.

But there are physical difficulties. Rêber Apo said that his physique is strong. To survive for 25 years against the Imrali torture and isolation system, against such a system of oppression, shows a great physical strength. But this is an island. The sea air is very humid. Rêber Apo had fungus and sores on his feet, he was treating them. Later he had surgery for sinusitis because this humid air is damaging. Dry air would be good for his health. An island in the middle of the sea represents the most unfavorable weather in this respect. It is the most humid air. He also has to resist against this. This may be the most physically difficult. That weather, that environment is not physically suitable. We don't know if they chose this consciously. There are many different reasons. There is the history of Imrali. That was also mentioned. Imrali has already been used against dissidents before.

Counter-guerrilla centers and Super Gladio use seas and islands to imprison revolutionary leaders and influential dissidents. It has been used against them. That the location of Imrali was chosen to place Rêber Apo under such a system, was taken perhaps because of his health. They may have especially preferred that place because they knew that. But even so, Rêber Apo resisted with his moral strength. He was able to overcome even the most unfavorable environment and weather. He physically resists based on this. There obviously also is the biological and physical level of resistance, as one can not say that it is just about a mental way, but we need to know the effect of mentality, the power of thought, the ability to live life meaningfully, to give meaning, on physical strength. There is a great deal of this, and Rêber Apo is in a position to combine them and use them in a very powerful unified way.

In conclusion Rêber Apo stated: "Without the Imrali system we might not have been able to realize the birth of the third leadership." [Abullah Öcalan defines the beginning of new stages in his life as 'new births'. Coming to Imrali and changing the paradigm of the movement was his third rebirth, becoming the 'third leadership'.] It has happened in such a way that it is as if the Imrali system has benefited us this much. Pressure and difficulty are the midwives of new births. Imrali played the role of a midwife. The difficult environment there became the place of the third leadership. But this does not mean that in every

difficult environment a new birth will necessarily occur. On the contrary, that difficulty can either end the existing one or bring destruction. The new birth depends on the new essence there, on the new seed, on its germination. In Rêber Apo, there is such a reality of constant self-renewal. His power to resist also depends on his ability of constantly renewing himself. He called it: "Make every day to the beginning of something new." He has overcome a rigid, dogmatic repetitive mentality and style. A true artist is one who constantly invents new things, who can make new beginnings every day, who has a creative style. With this creativity and this capability of creating new things he can resist against everything negative and every outside pressure. It is his attachment to the organization and the people, where he takes his faith, his strength from. The comrades said: "We are attached to Rêber Apo." And he answered: "This is debatable. Are you attached to me, or am I attached to you?" That is a topic that needs to be well understood. He added: "Your attachment is very ordinary. You should see my attachment, understand how deep it is." This attachment, this belief in power is very strong.

Those who thought that they could liquidate the PKK by cutting the effect of Rêber Apo through the Imrali isolation for 25 years were wrong. For 25 years, Rêber Apo has successfully carried out his duties as leadership. Not only the leadership of the PKK, not only the Kurdish leadership, but the leadership of all the oppressed, especially women and youth. Because he produced solutions to the problems posed by the entire power and state system. He showed the way to solutions, he showed the way to salvation. Those who wanted to destroy Rêber Apo within the torture system of Imrali, within the pressure of isolation, encountered such a situation. From the system created with such a desire, Rêber Apo realized an unprecedented new birth. He brought about great developments at this level. How did this happen? It happened with the passion and love of life. He could have said: "I have done as much as I can do, I have worked as much as I can work, and now I am here. There is all kinds of pressure. What more is required of me, let others do it." He could have said: "Let those who have the means do it, let those do it." But he did not say that, and he did not act like this. On the contrary, he saw himself more responsible than anyone else. Even though he was in the most difficult environment, in the most impossible environment, he did not say that these things. He used his strength for humanity, for the oppressed, for freedom. In this regard, he never acted selfish, individualistic or idle. On the contrary, he did not stop for day and night, he worked hard with the most meager means and appropriated his power of thought, his power of knowledge for humanity. He shared it with the oppressed and showed the way to salvation.

This is how much he served humanity still under the torture and isolation system of Imrali. Now, to understand this resistance of Rêber Apo, to embrace Rêber Apo, to oppose the torture and isolation system of Imrali, to fight for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo is not much that is requested. Rêber Apo has given us all more. This is paying a debt. To what extent what we have done paying our debt is very debatable, it is very weak. Even under those conditions, it was Rêber Apo who served us, who served all of humanity. So, of course, we need to repay this service. We need to know how to repay out debts. We need to understand the reality of Imrali well. Therefore, we need to see the meaning and importance of the resistance in the Imrali system. We need to realize the meaning of the emerge of this third leadership and the service that Rêber Apo rendered to humanity despite those conditions. Only then understanding this resistance correctly and fulfilling the duties and responsibilities it places upon us get possible. There is a real passion about this. The Kurdish people, women and youth know Rêber Apo well and embrace him. They see and feel the meaning of Rêber Apo. Some circles in Turkey are also in such a development. There are also intellectuals, politicians and artists in the Middle East and the world who begin to understand this reality. This is spreading more and more. This is something very important.

But some circles are also still very influenced by racist chauvinist propaganda, colonialist genocidal mentality and politics. There are many such people in Turkey. There are also many in the Kurdish ruling classes. We know Kurds who are sworn enemies of the leadership, enemies of Rêber Apo and PKK. They have been struggling against the leadership for fifty years. For 25 years he has been in İmralı, giving everything to keep Kurdishness alive, but they are still attacking him. This goes beyond moral values. In Turkey, the influence of that racist, chauvinist, genocidal mentality and politics is very strong in the society. It is in their souls, in their emotions, in their thoughts, in their behavior, in everything. This is constantly being imposed. They are keeping the İmralı system of torture, isolation and genocide alive and do not want society to oppose it. They try to achieve this through racist, chauvinist propaganda and brainwashing. Because if the society in Turkey realizes that the resistance in İmralı is not just for Kurdish freedom, but also for Turkey's democracy they would join in. The measure of being a democrat in Turkey is the level of opposing the system of İmralı. This is the case legally, ideologically and politically. From a legal point of view, also lawyers say this. Merdan Yanardağ said it. "If the people would see someone like him, they would immediately rise up." Therefore, this fascist, colonialist, genocidal dictatorship, mentality and politics that tries to keep the İmralı system alive and feeds on the 'Kurdish question' could disappear in one day. To prevent this, they denigrate Rêber Apo every day. They ban everything related to the leadership. Recently they have been developing what is called isolation in this direction. They do this so that the truth is not seen, the leadership is not understood correctly, the role and meaning of the İmralı resistance in terms of democratization of Turkey is not seen. Therefore, they are making an intense effort to prevent Turkish society, youth, women, left revolutionary socialists, intellectuals from opposing this mentality and politics. They are oppressing and brainwashing in their educational system. That whole education system is brainwashing. One wonders why patriots and leftists send their children there. The cultural attack is at the highest level. There is a complete genocide of a society. The genocide of a mentality, the destruction of conscience. They are in such a state of social destruction. They are doing this through abusing art and literature. They abuse the media, the press and broadcasting at the highest level. In the worst way.

They are doing this in order to make society in Turkey unable to understand the reality of the resistance of the leadership and İmralı and therefore unable to embrace it. It is very consciously planned. Everyone needs to see this and we see development in this direction. We are hoping on this. The 26th year of struggle against the international conspiracy will be the greatest year of struggle to completely destroy the torture and isolation system of İmralı and to ensure Kurdish freedom and democratization of Turkey on the basis of the physical freedom of Rêber Apo. I wish great success to the struggles carried out on this basis.

I call on everyone to fulfill their duties and responsibilities and to participate in this struggle with all their strength.

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Bilmez: Lawlessness in İmralı spreads to the whole of Turkey

ANF | VAN | 17 OCTOBER 2023

Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan continues to be held under heavy isolation conditions in İmralı F Type High Security Prison. There has been no news from him for 30 months and the silence of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) continues.

Ibrahim Bilmez, one of the lawyers of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan, said that the lawlessness in İmralı has spread and spread throughout Turkey "because there is no such thing as a 'state of exception' in law. The laws introduced targeting Abdullah Öcalan have become a big problem in Turkey today."

'The conspiracy continues in the form of isolation'

Bilmez said that the conspiracy that took place in 1999 is currently continuing in the form of isolation in İmralı. The lawyer said that the system designed on 15 February 1999 was a system aimed at this, and added: "Mr. Abdullah Öcalan, with his uncompromising stance in favor of peace and insistence on a democratic solution, frustrated the aims of that system. It actually made the isolation system futile. The point we have reached today is a point that goes beyond isolation. Because we have not even heard from Abdullah Öcalan for 2.5 years. It is a unique situation in the world. There is no prison in any country in the world where no lawyer or family has been able to go for 2.5 years. The whole world turns a blind eye to this and remains silent."

'Isolation is a problem for everyone living in Turkey'

Bilmez continued: "When I first went to İmralı, at a time when seeing lawyers was rare, the feeling I felt when I first saw Mr. Abdullah Öcalan and when I left, there was a tremendous feeling of loneliness. Abdullah Öcalan was being punished for his peace efforts. This is actually what we call isolation. The loneliness there, the silence, were all a method of punishment. It was a method targeting the will of Mr. Abdullah Öcalan. I thought it took great willpower to endure the conditions there. I personally witnessed how he resisted under difficult conditions. To do this, a very strong will and sincere belief is needed. Mr. Abdullah Öcalan endured those conditions thanks to his strong will, and he still endures and continues his struggle, trying to get results. The forces that play a role in the conspiracy process do not sit idle, they continue to play their roles."

Bilmez added: "This is actually the reason for this silence today. The conspiracy [that began in 1998] continues in the form of isolation. Today's isolation and lack of news show this. Those forces and states still do not want a peaceful solution to the Kurdish issue, they want the conflict process to continue. Otherwise, these countries would have raised their voices against the isolation imposed on Abdullah Öcalan. As Öcalan stated in his defense, leaving the Kurdish issue unresolved will cause the people to lose the most. The deadlock and isolation of the Kurdish issue is the problem of everyone living in Turkey."

'The lawlessness in İmralı is spreading to the whole Turkey'

Pointing out that the main reason for the bad economy in Turkey is that the Kurdish issue remains unresolved and isolation, Bilmez added: "Isolation means that the Kurdish issue remains unresolved. That's why everyone living in Turkey needs to raise their voice and take action against isolation, from a human, conscience, moral and legal point of view. This isolation concerns everyone in every sense."

The laws introduced targeting Abdullah Öcalan have become a major problem in Turkey today. Turkey was convicted in the European Court of Human Rights on this issue. For this, everyone needs to show their democratic reaction. Turkey, as a state, needs to understand that leaving this problem unresolved is in the interests of external powers. Turkey must take seriously what Mr. Abdullah Öcalan has said through his repeated calls both before and after the İmralı process. Öcalan was saying: 'Let's solve the Kurdish issue

among ourselves and not involve international powers. That's why the state needs to put an end to this unlawfulness as soon as possible. It needs to eliminate isolation. Resolving the Kurdish issue peacefully will bring benefits to all people. That's why I call on everyone to be more sensitive."

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Activists from Antwerp take over the vigil for the freedom of Öcalan in Strasbourg

ANF | STRASBOURG | 18 OCTOBER 2023

Since 25 June 2012, groups from all over Europe have been taking turns to hold a weekly vigil in front of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) in Strasbourg for an end to the isolation and physical freedom of Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan. This week, a group from Antwerp took over the permanent vigil. The activists, Cesur Rekawt, Hamid Seidi, Seid Huseyni and Efşin Hatemi, demand the freedom of Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question. There has been no contact with Abdullah Öcalan and his three fellow prisoners, Hamili Yıldırım, Ömer Hayri Konar and Veysi Aktaş in İmralı Island Prison in the Turkish Sea of Marmara since March 2021.

The campaign "Freedom for Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question" was launched in Strasbourg last week. At the same time, there were declarations of solidarity in over a hundred places worldwide. The campaign demands immediate access for the legal team and family members to PKK founder Abdullah Öcalan, who has been held hostage on the Turkish prison island of İmralı since 1999, and finally his release under conditions that allow him to play a role in finding a political solution to the Kurdish question.

The campaign brings together academics, journalists, NGOs, political parties, parliamentarians, activists, philosophers, Nobel laureates, women's organisations and representatives of indigenous peoples from all continents.

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Öcalan Books Day, 2023: You can't imprison ideas!

ANF | 20 OCTOBER 2023

On 10 December 2023, it will be 75 years since the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Despite this, hardly a day goes by when human rights are not systematically violated in Kurdistan and other places around the world.

The Turkish prison island of İmralı and the solitary confinement of Abdullah Öcalan, the foremost theorist and leader of the Kurdish freedom movement, represent an extreme case. Abdullah Öcalan has been in solitary confinement in Turkey for over 24 years and has been cut off from any means of communication

with the outside world. This also isolates his political ideas and their possible implementation in a peace process and in the Kurdish movement's struggle for freedom.

It is impossible to rely on the established institutions for human rights work and against torture in custody, such as the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture CPT, the Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights. Despite numerous requests and available information, they have not fulfilled their obligation to intervene against the unlawful practice of isolation, which is considered torture, and which includes cutting off all contact with the outside world, his lawyers and relatives.

In order to break the isolation of Abdullah Öcalan, a call was issued by the campaign for the Freedom of Abdullah Öcalan to organize the Öcalan Books Day on International Human Rights Day, December 10, 2023. The freedom of Abdullah Öcalan also means that a political solution in the Kurdish society's struggle for freedom can prevail instead of isolation, repression and war.

The organizers wrote: "Abdullah Öcalan's writings and his political philosophy are discussed and applied by social forces worldwide, despite his isolation and defamation by ruling states. These ideas inspire intellectuals, free thinkers, scientists, workers, activists, artists, trade unionists, social movements, politicians, families and entire societies.

Since the democratic awakening of the so-called Arab Spring, an autonomous, self-governing social system based on the ideas of Abdullah Öcalan has been emerging in northern and eastern Syria. The foundation of these ideas is based on the three pillars of women liberation, ecology and radical democracy. The Kurdish freedom movement has not only democratically organized and politically educated Kurdish society in Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran as well as in the diaspora, especially in Europe. Far beyond this, the political philosophy and the example of the Kurdish movement are having an impact on people regaining hope for free-democratic changes and uniting and politically organizing against fragmentation and isolation.

With the political philosophy of the Kurdish movement developed by Abdullah Öcalan, we can regain hope in the possibility of a democratic social system. This process of profound democratization and dissolution of the relationships of domination between genders, between different social groups and in relation to the earth's resources can be given great enrichment and new impetus. If he can be freed from solitary confinement, the political situation will have changed to such an extent that a Kurdish solution can become tangible, the release of Öcalan is the necessary precondition for a peace process."

The call said: "Öcalan's prison writings are a stunning vision of a freedom movement centred on women's liberation, democracy, and ecology. Öcalan helped reinvigorate the Kurdish freedom movement by providing a revolutionary path forward with what is undoubtedly the furthest-reaching definition of democracy the world has ever seen. "Beyond State, Power and Violence" and especially his five-volume Manifesto of Democratic Civilization are a breath-taking research into life without the state and the Kurdish freedom movement, and a vision of a democratic-ecological society which is also offering a fresh and indispensable perspective on the quest for a new socialism. Öcalan's calls for non-hierarchical forms of democratic social organization deserve the careful attention of anyone interested in constructive social thought or rebuilding society along feminist and ecological lines."

The call added: "In this sense, we as the campaign for the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan call on all publishers, writers, booksellers, educators, students, workers, and all struggling people to join us on the Öcalan

Books Day, December 10, 2023, under the slogan “Thoughts that break through the iron bars - you can’t imprison ideas!” in protest against the isolation in Imrali and spread the liberation ideas of the prison writings.

#Take a stance against the isolation in Imrali, read a book from Öcalan!”

Find here all publications from Öcalan: <https://ocalanbooks.com>



New “disciplinary” penalty given to Öcalan and other prisoners in Imrali

ANF | ISTANBUL | 21 OCTOBER 2023

Lawyers from Asrın Law Office went to Bursa Execution Judgeship on 10 October to request visits for the families of Kurdish People Abdullah Öcalan, who has been kept in absolute isolation and has not been heard from for 3 years, and other prisoners in Imralı, Hamili Yıldırım, Veysi Aktaş and Ömer Hayri Konar.

According to Mezopamya Agency, the lawyers requested in their application to ensure family visits, to provide a copy of the file of a new “disciplinary penalty” investigation, if any.

Responding to the lawyers’ application on 13 October, the Execution Judgeship stated that there was a new “disciplinary punishment” given to Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan and other prisoners. However, no information was given about when this new “disciplinary penalty” was given, why it was given, and with what number it was given.

Rejecting all requests, the judgeship rejected the request for a file sample, the subject of “disciplinary punishment” requested by the lawyers, on the grounds that it was “reflected in the press”.



international campaign “Freedom for Öcalan and a political solution for the Kurdish question”

North-East Syrian People’s Initiative joins global campaign for “Freedom for Öcalan”

ANF | QAMISHLO | 14 OCTOBER 2023

The North-East Syrian People’s Initiative announced its participation in the international campaign “Freedom for Öcalan and a political solution for the Kurdish question” in Qamishlo on Saturday.

The campaign, which was launched simultaneously in 74 countries on 10 October, unites social movements, political parties, municipalities, trade unions, activists, intellectuals and millions of Kurds and people in solidarity with the Kurdish liberation struggle worldwide around a common goal: the participation of Abdullah Öcalan in a dialogue for a just and democratic political solution to the Kurdistan question in Turkey, which has remained unresolved for more than a century.

The press conference at the Qamishlo Stadium was attended by representatives and members of the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES), non-governmental organisations, political parties, notables from Kurdish and Arab tribes, members of women and youth organisations, TEV-DEM (Movement for a Democratic Society) and hundreds of people.

The press statement was read in Kurdish by Henaa Xelîl and in Arabic by Enwer El-Esir on behalf of the People’s Council.

The statement pointed out that millions of Kurds as well as Arabs, Syriacs and various people all around the world see Abdullah Öcalan as a representative of their political will. Öcalan is considered to be a solution and will for peace by the oppressed peoples, ethnic groups, religious, denominational, social circles and defenders of equality and ecology, it noted.

The statement noted that the Kurdish leader has been held in aggravated isolation for 25 years, denied contact with his family, lawyers and the world, and subjected to torture and inhumane treatment. “Still, Leader Abdullah Öcalan’s philosophy has inspired all circles. For this very reason, his struggle for freedom is a global cause and parties, organisations, institutions and individuals all around the world campaign for him.”

The statement pointed out the Kurdish question is at the same time an international issue as the Kurdish people see their political and cultural rights violated, subjected to massacres and displaced in millions. It called on everyone to struggle for the achievement of Abdullah Öcalan's physical freedom and realization of peace "because Öcalan, with his powerful role and mission, can come up with a solution to the Kurdish question and other problems in the Middle East. For this very reason, the isolation imposed on him must be brought to an end and he must be granted physical freedom immediately."

The statement concluded with an appeal to all women and youth organisations, as well as political parties and institutions to join the campaign, and vowed that the struggle would be enhanced with determination through political, legal and diplomatic efforts.



Arab intellectuals join the global campaign for "Freedom for Öcalan"

ANF | 15 OCTOBER 2023

A number of intellectuals, artists, politicians and academics announced their participation in the international campaign "Freedom for Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question".

The campaign, which was launched simultaneously in 74 countries on 10 October, unites social movements, political parties, municipalities, trade unions, activists, intellectuals and millions of Kurds and people in solidarity with the Kurdish liberation struggle worldwide around a common goal: the participation of Abdullah Öcalan in a dialogue for a just and democratic political solution to the Kurdistan question in Turkey, which has remained unresolved for more than a century.

The statement released by Arab intellectuals said the following:

"Abdullah Öcalan was captured in the Kenyan capital Nairobi and handed over to the Turkish state on 15 February 1999 as a result of an international conspiracy led by the U.S. and Israel. Imprisoned on the prison island of İmralı, he was sentenced to death, which was later commuted to life imprisonment. The decision was made by a court in violation of law.

One of the main objectives of the international conspiracy was to target the Kurdish people through Mr. Abdullah Öcalan. It was directed against his demand for freedom, justice, equality and co-existence with the peoples of the region. Abdullah Öcalan, however, resisted the challenges and did not surrender to western countries. He maintained a free thought and stand and the Kurdish people continued their efforts to overcome those hard times. As a result of this resistance and struggle, Öcalan became an actor for the co-existence of all peoples in the region and the development of a strong internal defence force against external attacks.

Leader Abdullah Öcalan has been held in aggravated isolation for 25 years in violation of all his legal rights and no news has been received from him for the past three years. This is an unprecedented practice

that has never been implemented against leaders arrested in the history of a popular revolution. He is not allowed to meet his family members or lawyers on Imralı.

Abdullah Öcalan is a thinker and a peaceful leader. If the Turkish authorities and those involved in the international conspiracy want to achieve peace among peoples, they should act not by uttering threats and imposing strict isolation but by opening the gates of Imralı. In our point of view, Abdullah Öcalan holds the key to a solution, peace and the future.

We are aware of the importance of Abdullah Öcalan's leadership and ideas that are based on the notion of a democratic nation and the pattern of free women and seek a solution to the problems in the region and the world, especially for a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question. For this very reason, we understand his role and ideas as a thinker and leader for the achievement of a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question, stability and peace.

For these reasons, we, the signatories, declare our participation and solidarity with the international campaign that demands Mr. Abdullah Öcalan's physical freedom and a peaceful and democratic solution to the Kurdish question. At the same time, we condemn all the unlawful and political cases of isolation and deprivation practised by Turkish officials. We also endeavor to expose these unlawful and immoral practices of preventing family and lawyer visits to Öcalan, and what the Kurdish people are going through. We act against the unfair and unacceptable international silence in the face of the war and massacres experienced by the Kurdish people whose territories and infrastructures are under attack."

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PYD: Join the campaign 'Freedom for Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question'

ANF | 16 OCTOBER 2023

Political parties and non-governmental organizations in 74 different cities of the world launched the "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, solution to the Kurdish question" initiative on 10 October.

The General Assembly of the Democratic Union Party (PYD) declared its support for the initiative in a statement and called for participation.

The statement said that the Kurdish question must be solved to ensure peace and added: "The Kurdish question concerns tens of millions of people in Kurdistan, the center of the conflict in the Middle East, and the key to the solution is in the hands of Leader Abdullah Öcalan, who has been tortured in isolation in Imralı Prison for 25 years."

The PYD statement said that the Treaty of Lausanne was the final stage of the plan of the hegemonic powers and added: "As a result of the Treaty of Lausanne, Kurdistan was shared among four states. Since then, genocide and massacres against the Kurdish people have been taking place. The rebellions of the people of Kurdistan who resisted oppression, cruelty and despotism did not stop."

The statement said that “Leader Abdullah Öcalan was born and grew up in a time when pains were experienced. He managed to develop the idea and philosophy of the democratic nation, which was a salve for the problem created by hegemonic powers for a century. For this reason, hegemonic powers developed an international conspiracy against him, took him hostage and handed him over to the Turkish state, which does not recognize any moral and legal values. Leader Abdullah Öcalan has been kept in absolute isolation for 25 years.”

Last week, said the statement, “the Kurdish people, with their organizations and political forces, together with the forces of global democracy working for world peace and stability and the friends of the Kurdish people, launched the 'Freedom for Leader Apo and solution to the Kurdish problem' initiative worldwide. We call on all members, supporters and all components of Northern and Eastern Syria to join this move, as we are a part of this cause and a force calling for peace and solution in Syria and the region. We believe that our people's struggle will be crowned with success and ensure the physical freedom of Leader Abdullah Öcalan.”



NGOs in North-East Syria support the international campaign “Freedom for Öcalan”

ANF | QAMISHLO | 16 OCTOBER 2023

NGOs organised under the umbrella of the Movement for a Democratic Society (TEV-DEM) in Northern and Eastern Syria have declared their support for the campaign “Freedom for Öcalan and a Political Solution to the Kurdish Question”.

“We believe that the freedom of Leader Abdullah Öcalan will end the Kurdish-Turkish war and turn a new page in the lives of both peoples and all other communities in the region,” read a joint statement released by 27 non-governmental organizations in the region on Monday.

“The campaign, which is a framework for fulfilling humanitarian and moral responsibilities and expanding resistance, is of great importance in terms of embracing the resistance of Leader Abdullah Öcalan. We hope that this initiative will expand through the participation of all relevant institutions that advocate legal and human rights,” said the statement.

The campaign “Freedom for Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question” was launched on 10 October with a central rally in Strasbourg and declarations of solidarity in over a hundred places worldwide. It demands immediate access for the lawyers and family members to PKK founder Abdullah Öcalan, who has been held hostage on the Turkish prison island of İmralı since 1999, and finally his release under conditions that allow him to play a role in finding a political solution to the Kurdish question.

The campaign includes academics, journalists, NGOs, political parties, parliamentarians, activists, philosophers, Nobel laureates, women's organisations and representatives of indigenous peoples from all continents.

TEV-DEM, founded at the beginning of the Rojava revolution, includes not only political parties, individuals and professional associations, but also private and non-profit organisations working for social, socio-political or environmental causes. These are not just Kurdish organisations. The movement unites all components of the ethnic and linguistic mosaic of northern and eastern Syria and, as an umbrella organisation of 27 NGOs, is, among others, the contact partner for the cultural associations of the Turkmen and Circassian communities, the Armenian Society Council and the Yazidi House (Mala Êzdîyan).



Tamil organisations support the global campaign for Öcalan

ANF | 16 OCTOBER 2023

Tamil organisations held a press conference at Channai Press Club in Chennai, capital of the Tamil Nadu state in India, expressing their support for the international campaign “Freedom for Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question”.

The campaign, which was launched simultaneously in over a hundred places all around the world on 10 October, unites social movements, political parties, municipalities, trade unions, activists, intellectuals and millions of Kurds and people in solidarity with the Kurdish liberation struggle worldwide around a common goal: the participation of Abdullah Öcalan in a dialogue for a just and democratic political solution to the Kurdistan question in Turkey, which has remained unresolved for more than a century.

11 representatives from Tamil organisations spoke at the press conference and demanded an end to the isolation of Kurdish people’s leader Abdullah Öcalan, and his freedom so that he can play his key role in the achievement of a democratic political solution to the Kurdish question.

The press statement was endorsed by the following organisations gathered under the roof of “Kurdish Liberation Support Association”: Tamil National Anthem, Tamil National Liberation Movement, People’s Democratic Republic Party, Tamil Desa People’s Party, Transnational Tamil Eelam Government, Tamil Nadu People’s Front, People’s Civil Rights League, People’s Democratic Youth League, Tamildesa People’s Front, Center for Protection of People’s Rights, Tamil Front.

The speakers at the press conference included: P. Maniarsan (Tamil National Anthem); Thiago (Tamil National Liberation Movement); Duraisingavel (People’s Democratic Republic Party); Tamilneyan (Tamil Desa People’s Party); Professor Saraswati (Transnational Tamil Eelam Government); Bozhilan (Tamil Nadu People’s Front); Lawyer Suresh (People’s Civil Rights League); Lawyer Salemurugan (People’s Democratic Youth League); Satish (Tamildesa People’s Front); Jimraj Milton (Center for Protection of People’s Rights); Jayaprakash Narayanan (Tamil Front)



KCDK-E joins 'Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan' international initiative

ANF | 17 OCTOBER 2023

The European Democratic Kurdistan Society Congress (KCDK-E), the largest umbrella organization of Kurdish people living abroad, held a press conference on the 10 October launch of the international initiative in over 100 cities.

The KCDK-E announced that they have joined the international initiative to demand freedom for Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish problem.

KCDK-E co-chairs, KON-MED co-chairs and co-chairs of affiliated federations attended the press conference held at Mülheim Democratic Kurdish Community Center.

The statement was read by KCDK-E co-chair Zübeyde Zümrüt, who said that they will take part in "the international campaign launched to demand the physical freedom of Abdullah Öcalan and the political solution to the Kurdish problem."

The statement said: "We salute the initiative launched on 10 October. This international initiative creates a circle around Leader Apo, who has been held captive in a solitary cell in İmralı for 25 years."

Drawing attention to the initiative, Zümrüt added: "The 'Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, political solution to the Kurdish Question' initiative is very important. This initiative, which was presented as a tremendous contribution to the Kurdish people's struggle for freedom, was carried out simultaneously in many parts of the world, including Bangladesh, Tokyo, India, Kenya, South Africa, Latin America and Europe.

In the calls made on 10 October, the ideas of the Leader of the Peoples of the World Abdullah Öcalan and the paradigm he created were embraced on an international scale. This international declaration against the international conspiracy was the first but important step in eliminating all obstacles to Leader Apo's freedom and the political solution to the Kurdish problem."

The statement continued: "It is certain that the initiative is the most decisive step in achieving success. This internationalist initiative is against the genocide, denial and surrender policies carried out against the Kurdish people in the person of Leader Apo, and is a candidate to form the basis of the 3rd World revolution. People of various nationalities, unions, institutions, women and young people declare that they are joining this initiative with a new call every day. Leader Apo needs to be allowed to meet with his lawyers and family. He needs to be released from prison in order to play his political role."

The KCDK-E said it supports "the international campaign and so do our people living in Europe, Australia and Canada, our components, our entire working structures."

People of Afrin and Shehba join the global campaign for Öcalan

ANF | SHEHBA | 17 OCTOBER 2023

The international campaign “Freedom for Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question” was launched on 10 October with a central rally in Strasbourg and declarations of solidarity in over a hundred places worldwide. It demands immediate access for the lawyers and family members to PKK founder Abdullah Öcalan, who has been held hostage on the Turkish prison island of Imralı since 1999, and finally his release under conditions that allow him to play a role in finding a political solution to the Kurdish question.

The campaign includes academics, journalists, NGOs, political parties, parliamentarians, activists, philosophers, Nobel laureates, women's organisations and representatives of indigenous peoples from all continents.

Representatives of dozens of institutions, unions, political parties, councilors, religious scholars, IDPs from Afrin and residents of Shehba held a press conference in the village of Maratê in the Ehdas district of Shehba on Tuesday and announced their participation in the campaign.

Melek Hisên, co-chair of the Afrin and Shehba Canton Assembly, read a statement which commended the international initiative taken for the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan, defining it as a humanitarian reaction of free and democratic public opinion against the international conspiracy against the Kurdish leader.

Stressing that a political solution could only be achieved through the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan, the statement called on the Kurds, Arabs, peoples of the Middle East and the peoples of Turkey and Europe to enhance the struggle to break the isolation of Abdullah Öcalan and achieve his physical freedom.

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Kurdish youth organisations join the international campaign “Freedom for Öcalan”

ANF | BASEL | 19 OCTOBER 2023

Activists from Kurdish youth organisations issued a statement in Basel on the international [campaign](#) launched on 10 October demanding “Freedom of Abdullah Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question.” The globally supported campaign demands immediate access of the legal team and family members to the Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan imprisoned in Turkey and finally his release under conditions that allow him to play a role in finding a political solution to the Kurdish question.

The joint statement of support by the Revolutionary Youth Movement (Tevgera Ciwanên Şoreşger, TCŞ) and the Movement of Militant Young Women (Jinên Ciwan ên Têkoşer, TekoJIN) was presented in Basel in Kurdish by Dilbirîn Mêrdîn, in Turkish by Yusuf Amed and in German by Michele Romito.

The statement called on all young people to actively participate in the campaign, saying the following: “For 25 years, the leader of the Kurdish people, Abdullah Öcalan, has been held incommunicado on the Turkish prison island of Imrali. The Turkish occupying state and the international powers want to normalise this state of affairs, which is contrary to international law, and silence Kurdish society. A society that has suffered decades of massacres, assimilation and wars has managed to gain its human dignity through Abdullah Öcalan.

But for the fascist Turkish state, the flourishing of Kurdish society is a nightmare, because the Kurds who organise with the Kurdish Freedom Movement insist on a democratic and diverse society without oppression and power relations. The paradigm of Abdullah Öcalan, whose basic principles are women’s liberation, ecology and autonomous democracy, questions the whole capitalist world system and is seen as a great danger against the world order. Especially in the Middle East, this contemporary paradigm has the potential to provide for international understanding and peace with a confederal structure.

Since the hegemonic powers do not want to lose control over the Middle East, they are not interested in the self-determination of the peoples and a democratic solution. That is why these international forces are silent against the solitary confinement of Abdullah Öcalan. We, as youth, declare that we will play a leading role in the struggle for the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan.”

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Democratic Syrian Youth Assembly joins “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan” campaign

ANF | HESEKE | 21 OCTOBER 2023

The Democratic Syrian Youth Assembly held a press conference in Heseke to announce it had joined the “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question” campaign launched internationally on 10 October.

Democratic Syrian Youth Assembly member Ehmed Elî said that 25 years have passed since the arrest of Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan and that an isolation that is contrary to international law, inhumane and immoral is being imposed on him in Imralı Prison.

Elî said that they fully support the international initiative “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, political solution to the Kurdish question”, and added: “The Democratic Syrian Youth Assembly, women’s organizations, all democratic youth movements, parties, civil society organizations declare their support for the initiative.

“We condemn isolation and demand physical freedom for Öcalan. We call on all people and youth organizations to support the campaign.”

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Shengal supports the global campaign “Freedom for Öcalan”

ANF | SHENGAL | 21 OCTOBER 2023

Institutions in the self-governed Yazidi town of Shengal (Sinjar) in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq expressed their support for the international campaign “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, Political Solution to the Kurdish Question”. The [campaign](#), which was launched simultaneously in over a hundred places all around the world on 10 October, unites social movements, political parties, municipalities, trade unions, activists, intellectuals and millions of Kurds and people in solidarity with the Kurdish liberation struggle worldwide around a common goal: the participation of Abdullah Öcalan in a dialogue for a just and democratic political solution to the Kurdistan question in Turkey, which has remained unresolved for more than a century.

A joint statement by the institutions affiliated to the Democratic Autonomous Administration of Shengal condemned the aggravated isolation of Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan who was forced to leave Syria on 9 October 1998 and handed over to Turkey as a result of an international conspiracy on 15 February 1999.

“Subjected to strict isolation on Imralı for the past 24 years, Leader Öcalan defined himself as a fighter of truth and proved that nothing is ever more powerful than truth and justice. Öcalan, who is considered the leader of the peoples, attains the power of truth by waging a struggle for freedom,” said the statement.

The statement also recalled the genocide of Yazidis at the hands of ISIS on 3 August 2014, which had been foreseen by Öcalan. “On the orders of the Barzani family, thousands of peshmergas fled from Shengal. while everyone turned their backs on Shengal and fled, the fighters of Leader Öcalan rushed to Shengal. The Yazidi people responded to the genocide by building their autonomous administration.”

According to the statement, all the constituents in Shengal, and the Yazidi and Arab peoples, have joined the international campaign for the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan. “It is time Leader Öcalan is freed. We believe that the isolation imposed Öcalan is executed against all oppressed peoples, cultures and beliefs. It is obvious that hegemonic powers base on the policy of war for the Middle East and the world and seek to pit peoples against one another. The policy of war means genocide to all the peoples living in our country, especially the Yazidis. Leader Öcalan is the one who shall pave the way to freedom for the peoples by frustrating the policy of war. The freedom of Leader Öcalan will start a new process in Kurdistan, Shengal and the Middle East. This is the reason why hegemonic powers aggravate the isolation of Leader Öcalan, seeking to silence him.”

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Prisons in Turkey

26-year prison sentence sought for former HDP deputy

ANF | AMED | 18 OCTOBER 2023

The hearing of the lawsuit against Musa Farisoğulları, a former deputy of the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) was held at the 10th Heavy Penal Court in Diyarbakır on Wednesday. Farisoğulları and his lawyers did not attend the hearing.

The politician faces a prison sentence of up to 15 years in prison for “membership in a terrorist organisation”, up to 7 years and 6 months for “spreading propaganda for a terrorist organisation” and up to 3 years for “opposing the law on meetings and demonstrations”. The prosecutor also seeks a penalty increase in the hearing against the Kurdish politician.

The court adjourned the hearing until 1 December to allow for a defence by Farisoğulları and his lawyers.

On 4 June 2020, HDP deputies Musa Farisoğulları and Leyla Güven were stripped of their parliamentary mandates and imprisoned. Although the two deputies had parliamentary immunities after being elected as MPs in 2018, the court cases against them were not suspended and continued. On 24 September 2019, the Supreme Court of Appeals upheld their prison sentences: nine-year prison sentence for Farisoğulları and six-year prison sentence for Güven on terrorism related charges. These sentences were within the context of the infamous witch-hunt called the Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK) main case, which started after the victory of the Democratic Society Party (DTP – one of HDP's predecessors) in 2019. Then 154 Kurdish politicians were prosecuted, among whom were the then co-chairs of the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP), its deputies, mayors, municipal council members, human rights defenders, journalists and intellectuals. On 28 March 2017, the Diyarbakır 2nd Assize Court sentenced over one hundred Kurdish politicians in the KCK case. Farisoğulları was released from prison in March 2022.

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Kurdish political prisoner İzzettin Sevilgen released after 31 years

ANF | SIIRT | 20 OCTOBER 2023

İzzettin Sevilgen has been released after more than 31 years in Turkish prisons. The Kurdish man was arrested on 15 June 1992 in Erüh district of Siirt and sentenced to life imprisonment in the State Security Court of Diyarbakır (ku. Amed) on PKK membership and separatism charges. His regular release was set

to take place on 15 June 2022. Because he did not make a confession of remorse, his release was postponed four times by the prison's administration and control committee.

On Thursday evening, Sevilgen was finally released from the detention centre in Giresun. On his arrival in Siirt today, he was enthusiastically welcomed by a large group of people. Sevilgen said that he had to leave behind friends in prison who have been resisting for decades: "They all send their regards to you. My hope is that they will all be out soon." During the welcome, accompanied by applause and trills of joy, white doves were let fly as a symbol of freedom and peace.

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Military aggression and occupation

14 areas in Şirnak declared "Temporary Special Security Zone" for 15 days

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 14 OCTOBER 2023

Şirnak Governorship announced that 14 areas including Şirnak center, Cizîr (Cizre), Silopiya (Silopi), Qileban (Uludere), Basa (Güçlükönak) and Elkê (Beytüşşebap) were declared "Temporary Special Security Zone" for two weeks.

The statement said that "Cûdî Mountain Region, Bestler Dereler Region, Kurt Mountain Region, Kureşin Region, Karaçalı T. Region, Kel Mehmet D. Region, Serin V. Region, 2088 Rk T. Region, Küçük Su Y. Region, Gabar Mountain Region, "Altın Mountain Region, İncebel Mountain Region, Oymakaya Region, Tanin Region have been declared 'Temporary Special Security Zone' between 13 October (included) 2023 and 27 October (included) 2023."

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5 Turkish soldiers and 2 mercenaries killed in HRE actions

ANF | 14 OCTOBER 2023

In a statement on Saturday, the Afrin Liberation Forces (HRE) announced that several members of the Turkish army and allied mercenaries were killed and wounded.

"The Turkish state continues its extermination attacks on our territories as part of its occupation policy. We are responding to these attacks on the basis of our right to self-defence" said the HRE.

According to the HRE statement, one soldier of the Turkish occupation forces was killed in an action in al-Bab on 9 October. Three mercenaries were wounded, and one vehicle was destroyed during the course of the action.

On 11 October, HRE fighters targeted the Dabiq base in Azaz, where three soldiers were killed and four soldiers were wounded, and a military vehicle was destroyed.

On the same day, HRE fighters repelled an attack by the paramilitary Sultan Murad Brigade on the village of Medyona in Shehba, and three jihadists were wounded.

On 12 October, HRE units carried out an action against a Turkish base in Azaz, killing one soldier and wounding another.

On the same day, a mercenary was killed in a sniper attack in Azaz. In the village of Enabê in Afrin's Shera district, two soldiers were injured in an action that targeted a Turkish base.

"In total, five soldiers of the Turkish occupation forces and two gang members were killed, eight soldiers and six gang members were wounded, two military vehicles were destroyed in the actions against the occupiers. Our actions will continue as long as the attacks aimed at genocide and annihilation continue," HRE said.



HPG: 10 Turkish soldiers were killed in Zap

ANF | **BEHDINAN** | 14 OCTOBER 2023

YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) and HPG (People's Defence Forces) continue the resistance against the invading Turkish forces in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

According to the HPG Press Center statement on Wednesday, Turkish attacks on guerrilla areas continue, facing effective response from the guerrillas.

HPG detailed the latest actions by the guerrillas and attacks by the Turkish army as follows:

Şehîd Delîl Western front in the Zap region

On 13 October, two soldiers were killed as a result of strikes by guerrilla snipers in Girê Cûdî Resistance Area.

On 13 October, YJA Star guerrillas intervened twice against helicopter activity in Girê Cûdî Resistance Area.

On 13 October, two soldiers were killed as guerrillas struck the occupation forces with medium automatic rifles in Girê Cûdî Resistance Area.

On 14 October, guerrillas hit the occupation forces in Girê Amediyê Resistance Area with medium automatic rifles, and five soldiers were killed. The Turkish forces used smoke bombs to prevent further losses in their ranks.

Zap region

On 13 October, one soldier conducting surveillance activity was killed by a YJA Star sniper in Sîda Resistance Area.

Attacks by the Turkish army

On 13 October, the battle positions in Sîda Resistance Area in Zap were bombed with prohibited explosives.

On 12-13 October, the battle positions in Girê Çarçel Resistance Area were bombed twice with drones loaded with explosives.

On 13 October, the battle positions in the resistance areas of Şehîd Delîl, Girê Cûdî and Girê Amediyê were bombed eight times with drones loaded with explosives and once with prohibited explosives.

On 13 October, Turkish fighter jets carried out six strikes on the area of Şehîd Îbrahîm in Zap, and the areas of bölgesinin Şehîd Şerîf and Kendakola in Xakurkê.

On 13 October, the regions of Zap, Şehîd Delîl and Metîna were shelled by attack helicopters. The same areas, as well as Xakurke, were also targeted by artillery attacks.

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ISIS cell dismantled in Deir ez-Zor countryside

ANF | 15 OCTOBER 2023

Within the framework of joint anti-ISIS operations, the anti-terrorism units (YAT) of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) participated alongside the international coalition in a precise security operation targeting an ISIS terrorist cell in the Al-Shahil town, located in the eastern countryside of Deir ez-Zor.

"After meticulous monitoring, the participating forces executed an airdrop and raided the hideout of the terrorist operatives, apprehending seven individuals involved in carrying out multiple terrorist acts against both our forces and civilians in the region. This terrorist cell was actively involved in supplying weapons and ammunition to other cells in the region, as well as providing financial support. Additionally, they exploited the events that transpired in the Deir ez-Zor countryside last month to carry out their terrorist activities", said the SDF Media Centre in a statement about the operation.

Various weapons, military equipment and documents were confiscated during the operation, the statement added.



Guerrillas: The enemy is not strong enough to fight alone against us

RÜSTEM KURTALAN | BEHDINAN | 15 OCTOBER 2023

Kurdish HPG fighter Bahoz Êrîş and the internationalist fighter Intikam Gelhat spoke to ANF about the Turkish state's attacks on the Medya Defense Areas and the guerrilla resistance.

In his assessment of the current situation, Bahoz Êrîş first addressed the aim of the Turkish occupation attacks and said: "As is well known, the Turkish state has been trying to occupy the guerrilla areas for a long time using various forms of attack. The Turkish army's occupation operations in the regions of Zap, Avaşîn, Xakurke, Metîna and Heftanîn have been ongoing since 2016. In winter 2021, the Gare region was also attacked. Thanks to the resistance led by Heval Şoreş, the Turkish army suffered a heavy defeat in Gare. The war in Siyanê and the other areas in Gare brought about changes in the guerrilla struggle. A new form of guerrilla warfare has emerged. The enemy attacks the guerrillas with technical strength, but we have developed the war tunnel method to make this technology fail."

Guerrilla Êrîş continued: "In the spring of 2021, the war in the regions of Avaşîn, Zap and Metina took on a more intensified form. The guerrilla fighting was concentrated on the Mamreşo, Sor and Zendura peaks and continued there. The enemy has been forced to use other techniques in the last three years. Turkey cannot defeat the guerrillas with fighter jets and drones. That's why it resorts to dirty war methods and uses chemical weapons and tactical nuclear weapons against the guerrillas.

This is how the enemy wants to take over the guerrilla positions. It has troops stationed in some areas in Avaşîn, Zap and Metina, but it does not have the strength to penetrate our positions. In 2022, our war against the Turkish occupier state has reached a peak. If Turkey was in trouble in one place and got stuck, it would attack the guerrillas elsewhere. It wanted to push the guerrillas out of the areas it wanted to occupy. With this aim in mind, the attacks were expanded in 2022. Turkey also wanted to occupy certain areas in 2023, but did not succeed."

Guerrilla Êrîş added: "Most recently, the enemy, in cooperation with the KDP, launched a new attack in Metina and the Shehid Delil Zagros area [western Zap region]. The Turkish army has soldiers stationed there. By stationing troops right next to KDP bases, he protects his soldiers from the guerrillas to a certain extent because the guerrillas operate with national sensitivity and do not want to harm Kurdish forces. For this reason, no large and effective actions are taking place near the PDK bases. The Turkish army takes advantage of this circumstance and tries to advance through bombing to take guerrilla positions.

In July, the enemy launched an invasion in the Girê Cûdî and Girê Ortê areas. Our comrades there are fighting against this invasion and defending their positions. Recently, the enemy also launched an attack on Girê Amêdî and Girê Çarçel in Metîna. It also carries out this attack with the help of the PDK. So far the enemy has gained nothing from its invasion. Turkish soldiers were stationed on some hills between the

KDP and our forces. Our friends act cautiously and do not attack with all their power. However, if the enemy attacks guerrilla positions, there will be a response.”

Gerrilla Êrîş said: “The Turkish army is making no progress against the guerrillas. The Turkish state is not in a position to fight against our comrades itself. He only fights with his technical strength. Even in winter, the techniques it relies on will be ineffective. The situation of the Turkish state will continue to deteriorate. Under these circumstances, guerrilla war performance will reach a peak. Last year, the guerrillas destroyed many enemy positions in the Girê Hekarî and Girê Cûdî as well as in the Zap region. The enemy had to flee, leaving the bodies of its own soldiers behind. In the same way, we will defeat the enemy with strong actions and prevent his advance.”

“Guerrillas deal heavy blows to the enemy”

Internationalist guerrilla Intikam Gelhat said: “As is known, the Turkish state has launched a large-scale attack on the Medya Defense Areas. There are also enemy attacks in many other mountainous regions of Kurdistan. As guerrillas, we deal heavy blows to the enemy. It will not be easy for the Turkish state. We have military and ideological preparations. We know that the enemy will undertake even larger occupation attacks. On this basis, we prepared for war. In addition, we also prepare ourselves as individuals. The enemy wants to break into the war tunnels, but we won’t allow that.”

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Iranian border guards kill a shepherd in Binarê Qendîl

ANF | QANDIL | 15 OCTOBER 2023

Iranian border guards opened fire on three shepherds grazing sheep in the highlands of Binarê Qendîl in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

The attack claimed the life of shepherd Hemed Xidir, a resident of the Rezge village in the Pishder region in Sulaymaniyah countryside. Another shepherd was injured as a result of the attack.

The body of Hemed Xidir was reportedly taken to a hospital in Rojhilat (Iranian Kurdistan) and his family has left for Iran to retrieve his body.

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Hajin Military Council successfully defuses bomb hidden in motorcycle

ANF | DEIR EZ-ZOR | 16 OCTOBER 2023

The Hajin Military Council was able to successfully defuse a bomb hidden in a motorcycle previously left on a school route in the small town of Abu Hammam.

As a result, the Hajin military council managed to prevent a possible massacre. The vehicle bomb, loaded with eight kilograms of TNT.

The region around Hajin is one of the particularly vulnerable areas in the self-governing region of Deir ez-Zor. Secret service cells of the regime, the Iranian state, as well as the armed forces of the regime and the Islamic State are active here to destabilize the region.

As recently as the end of September, there were violent clashes in this area between units of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and armed groups loyal to the Assad regime. The SDF reported at the time that several groups, including members of Iranian unofficial fighting groups, had entered the region.

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HPG: Seven Turkish soldiers died in guerrilla operations

ANF | BEHDINAN | 16 OCTOBER 2023

Seven Turkish soldiers were killed on Saturday in the western Zap region of South Kurdistan, by YJA Star (Associations of Free Women) and HPG (People's Defense Forces) guerrillas.

As the HPG press center said in a statement, the Turkish army continues to attack guerrilla positions using fighter jets, drones, helicopters, artillery and banned explosives. The HPG published the following information about the operations:

Şehîd Delîl Western Zap Region

In the Girê Cûdî resistance area, the guerrillas stopped the Turkish troops' expansion of positions three times on Saturday by attacking them using heavy weapons. A soldier was killed by a sniper as his unit attempted an advance. Late on Saturday evening, YJA Star guerrillas intervened using heavy weapons against helicopters in the airspace. A Sikorsky transport helicopter was hit and had to leave the area without dropping off troops. During the night, the YJA Star carried out another attack with heavy weapons on the occupying troops.

In the Girê Amêdî resistance area, female fighters attacked a Turkish unit with heavy weapons on Saturday morning, 14 October. Six soldiers were killed using semi-automatic weapons and three soldiers were injured. In the evening, there was another attack with semi-automatic weapons.

Metina

The Turkish occupation troops in the Girê Ortê resistance area were attacked by heavy weapons on 13 October. The guerrillas intervened using semi-automatic weapons against helicopters in the airspace over Metina. A helicopter was hit and had to withdraw.

Attacks by the Turkish army

Guerrilla positions in the Girê Çarçel resistance area in Metîna were attacked three times by explosives-laden drones on 13 and 14 October. The Turkish army used banned explosives twice in positions at Girê Ortê on Saturday. Also on Saturday, positions on Girê Cûdî and Girê Amêdî were attacked four times by drones loaded with explosives. The Turkish army also used banned explosives on at least one occasion.

The Şehîd İbrahîm area in Zap as well as Gundê Bêşîlî and Golka in Metîna were bombed by fighter jets on Saturday. There were also attacks by helicopters and artillery in Zap and Metina.



Another mass grave opened in Shengal

ANF | SHENGAL | 16 OCTOBER 2023

Throughout history, the Yazidi community has been confronted with hundreds of massacres and genocidal acts carried out against them. The biggest and most brutal ones of them, counted 74 in number, are discussed a lot and have branded the Yazidis' collective memory forever. The world knows the Yazidi people rather because of genocides than by their culture and belief – a painful reality for the Yazidis. The 74th genocidal act was carried out in the year 2014 by Daesh, the so-called Islamic State group. Without doubt this genocide caused lots of pain, trauma and deep losses within the Yazidi community. Tens of thousands of Yazidis were murdered, abducted and taken as slaves. Children were forcibly recruited as child soldiers. On top of that, hundreds of thousands of inhabitants of Shengal were expelled from their homeland. Until today, about 200.000 of them live under miserable conditions in camps in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. At least 87 mass graves have been found throughout the Shengal region so far, with most of them still due to be exhumed for taking DNA samples and making proper burials possible. Many places have not yet been cleared of mines and IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices) left behind by ISIS. All too often, these mines lead to deaths among the local population.

In the Shengal (Sinjar) region in the northwest of Iraq, another mass grave containing victims of the genocide committed by ISIS nine years ago was opened.

Yazidi religious leaders were present at the opening of the mass grave in Til Ezer on October 15.

A local resident, Sultan Mehmud, spoke to RojNews at the site of the mass grave where the bones of 8 of her family members were discovered. “Mass graves have not been opened yet because the Iraqi government is insensitive on the matter. They want to release the perpetrators with a new amnesty,” she said.

Sultan Mehmud, a witness of the ISIS onslaught in the Shengal region, said: “Bones of 8 of my family members are buried here. 38 relatives of mine are still held captive.”

Another resident, Xifşê Xidir, said: “Mass graves must be opened so that we can visit the graves of our loved ones. Nobody helps us with it.”

Hesen Ebdu stated: “Every new mass grave being opened means a new tragedy to us. The Iraqi government is yet to punish the murderers. We are against an amnesty to be granted to the perpetrators.”

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Child injured in Turkish bombing of village in Sherawa

ANF | 17 OCTOBER 2023

The attacks carried out by the Turkish state and its mercenary groups against Northern and Eastern Syria continue.

The occupation army bombed the village of Birc Qasa in Sherawa, province of Afrin Canton. One child was injured as a result of the bombardment.

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One killed, three injured in Turkish drone attack in Southern Kurdistan

ANF | HEWLER | 17 OCTOBER 2023

A Turkish drone attack in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) claimed one life and injured three on Tuesday.

According to Şêrwan Celal from Koye Health Directorate, who spoke to RojNews, the air strike by an unmanned combat drone occurred in the morning. The target of the attack was a vehicle travelling on the road near the village of Kanî Kendî, only a few kilometres northeast of the centre of Koye. Videos shared on social media of the attack site show the victims being rescued from the bombed car by civilians.

According to reports from the ground, the vehicle belonged to residents of the Maxmur Refugee Camp. The Maxmur People's Assembly announced that the driver of the car, Dilovan İşlek, lost his life while three women travelling in it were injured.

Reports say that the car of Dilovan İşlek was targeted while he was on his way back from the city of Ranya.

The İşlek family left for Koye to retrieve the body.

Attacks by Turkey in violation of international law have been routine in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) for years. The Turkish air force bombs the territory of the KRI and Iraq almost daily, especially where the guerrillas are suspected. But civilian settlement areas are also regularly attacked by the Turkish army, including the main Yazidi settlement area of Shengal and the Mexmur refugee camp. With its air terror, Ankara is pursuing a targeted displacement policy - especially through the targeted destruction of civilian infrastructure.



Seven Turkish-backed mercenaries killed, six others injured in actions by the HRE

ANF | 17 OCTOBER 2023

The Afrin Liberation Forces (HRE) claimed responsibility for a series of actions against Turkish jihadist occupation forces in north-western Syria on October 16. HRE stated that the actions, in which seven Turkish-backed mercenaries were killed and another six injured, were retaliation for Turkey's massive wave of attacks against the autonomous region of northern and eastern Syria and its population.

According to the HRE, two of the actions were directed against the same group of occupiers in the Afrin region, which has been occupied since 2018. According to the HRE statement on Tuesday, the mercenaries were targeted in an area between the villages of Birc Heyder and Kefer Nabo. An initial fire resulted in the death of two of the jihadists. As the occupiers approached the area, they were targeted a second time. This left four more mercenaries dead and three others injured. HRE also reported that four motorbikes were destroyed in the course of the actions.

In the town of Mare, which borders Tel Rifat and is part of Aleppo, HRE also took action against occupation troops yesterday. Two sniper actions left one mercenary dead and one other injured.

In the city of Jarablus, which like Al-Bab, Azaz and Rai was handed over to Turkey by ISIS in 2016, a senior member of the jihadist militia "Sultan Murat Brigade", which is also under Turkish command, was killed, according to the HRE statement.

The "Sultan Murat Brigade" belongs to the so-called Syrian National Army (SNA) - a coalition of reactionary, Islamist and fundamentalist militias that is paid, equipped and trained by Ankara and, as a proxy force of Turkey, helps maintain the occupation of parts of northern and northwestern Syria.

The HRE was founded in 2018 after the occupation of Afrin by Turkey. The resistance group fights with the aim of liberating the region and retaliating against the occupiers' continued attacks.



Five soldiers killed in actions by the guerrillas

ANF | BEHDINAN | 17 OCTOBER 2023

According to the press centre of the People's Defence Forces (HPG), five soldiers of the Turkish army were killed in guerrilla actions in the guerrilla-held Medya Defence Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) on Monday.

HPG gave the following details about the latest guerrilla actions against the Turkish occupation forces and the attacks of the Turkish army on the guerrillas:

Şehîd Delîl, Western Zap region

In the Girê Cûdî resistance area, guerrillas of the Free Women's Troops (YJA Star) shot down a drone loaded with explosives on Monday. In the Girê Amêdî resistance area, two Turkish army positions were damaged by light and heavy weapons fire on the same day.

Metîna

At Girê Çarçel, one soldier was killed in a sniper action.

In another action, the guerrillas hit and destroyed a position of the Turkish forces with heavy weapons, killing one soldier and injuring another.

One soldier was killed in a two-flank YJA Star attack on a Turkish military position. Late on Monday night, guerrillas intervened against helicopters, which were subsequently forced to leave the area.

Xakurke

Between the areas of Girê Şehîd Kamuran and Girê Şehîd Heqî, the Turkish occupation forces attempted to establish a position on Monday. Guerrillas of YJA Star struck the unit with heavy weapons, as a result of which two soldiers were killed and two others were injured. Another action with heavy weapons was directed against the occupation forces late on Monday afternoon.

Attacks by the Turkish army

A guerrilla position in the Girê Çarçel resistance area was attacked with an explosive-laden drone on Sunday. On Monday, the Turkish army carried out two attacks against guerrilla positions in Girê Cûdî and Girê Amêdî with explosive-laden drones and used prohibited explosives three times.

On 14 and 15 October, fighter jets bombed the areas of Gundê Dergelê and Gundê Mîskan in Metîna and Kendekola and Ava Lolanê in Xakurke a total of six times. The Zap and Metîna regions were bombed by attack helicopters on Monday. Both regions and Xakurke were also targeted by artillery attacks.



SDF arrests four mercenaries who provided ISIS with weapons, ammunition and bombs

ANF | 18 OCTOBER 2023

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) announced that they have captured four mercenaries in the eastern Syrian region of Deir ez-Zor.

According to a statement by SDF Media Centre regarding two separate security operations on 16 October in the town of Shahil (also Shuhail or Al-Shuhayl), the arrested mercenaries were involved in smuggling weapons.

The terrorist organization, said the SDF, was “supplying weapons, ammunition and mines to ISIS. They were committing terrorist acts against our forces and civilian institutions and disrupting the security and stability of the region.”

A Kalashnikov rifle, two hand grenades, an explosive device, cell phones, personal documents and military equipment were seized during the operations.



KCK: Attacks on the Palestinian people must stop

ANF | BEHDINAN | 18 OCTOBER 2023

The Co-Presidency of the KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union) Executive Council released a statement strongly condemning last night’s massacre in Gaza and offering their condolences to the Palestinian people.

The KCK statement released on Wednesday includes the following:

“Last night, the Israeli state launched an airstrike on a hospital in Gaza and unfortunately hundreds of people lost their lives in this attack. This attack is an attack of massacre and genocide. We would like to strongly condemn this massacre. This painful attack experienced by the Palestinian people has deeply saddened us. We are in deep sorrow and would like to express our condolences to the people of Gaza and the entire Palestinian people. Once again, we express our solidarity with the Palestinian people and their just cause. The struggle of the peoples against oppression will surely succeed and all mass murderers will be held to account.

These attacks by the state of Israel are happening in front of the eyes of the whole world. The states and hegemonic powers act according to their economic and political interests, not for the solution of the Pales-

tinian problem. Just like the Kurdish people, the approach to the Palestinian people is within this framework. None of the states and hegemonic powers are in favor of the political solution of the Palestinian question, the equal and democratic coexistence of the Arab and Jewish peoples in the Middle East, nor are they working for it. They are in the approach of using the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the current situation entirely for their own policies. These forces are as responsible and guilty for the genocidal policies against Palestine as the Israeli state. It is a complete deception for each of them to present themselves as siding with one side or the other. The Turkish state is one of those who do this the most. The concerns, worries and activities of the Turkish state and the AKP-MHP government are not to solve the Palestinian question, but to prevent a balance in the Middle East that would jeopardize the Kurdish genocide policies. It acts entirely according to this purpose.

The peoples of the Middle East and the world, knowing this approach of the states, have to continue and expand their struggle in solidarity with the Palestinian people. It is very important that the Arab and Jewish peoples, knowing this approach of the states, act in solidarity and common liberation struggle. The Kurdish people also need to emphasize their solidarity with the Palestinian people and continue their struggle in this solidarity approach. The only real solution to the problems in the Middle East is the Democratic Nation approach and mentality put forward by Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan]. It is the joint struggle of all the peoples of the Middle East, especially the Kurdish, Arab and Jewish peoples, that will realize this solution.

As the Kurdish Freedom Movement, we once again strongly condemn this massacre, offer our condolences to the Palestinian people and wish a speedy recovery to the wounded. While the peoples stand against these attacks with their struggles, the states should stop their hypocritical attitudes and stop these attacks and make efforts for the solution of the Palestinian question.”

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HSM: We have withdrawn all our forces from Maxmur Camp

ANF | BEHDINAN | 19 OCTOBER 2023

HSM: We have withdrawn all our forces from Maxmur Camp

The headquarters of the People's Defence Forces announced that all units of the HPG and YJA Star have been withdrawn from the Maxmur Camp in Southern Kurdistan. There are no more guerrilla fighters in the self-administered refugee camp.

In 2014, after the ISIS attacks in Southern Kurdistan (Northern Iraq), the guerrilla forces of HPG (People's Defense Forces) and YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) sent troops to Shengal, Maxmur and Kirkuk to defend the people of Southern Kurdistan against the Islamist invasion. Among other things, this stopped the ISIS advance on Hewlêr (Erbil). After the liberation and stabilisation of the region, the guerrilla forces were withdrawn step by step.

The headquarters of the People's Defence Forces (HSM) announced that the withdrawal of the guerrillas from Maxmur Camp has been completed. The HSM statement on Thursday includes the following:

“In the past eight years, the Turkish state has been attacking on a very massive scale. Its aim is, on the one hand, to liquidate the guerrillas and, on the other hand, to commit genocide against our people. In order to achieve this goal, the isolation [of Abdullah Öcalan] on İmralı was first tightened. Attempts were made to break the will of our people and to pacify and crush Kurdish democratic politics and democratic left movements in Turkey. The AKP government used ISIS in 2014 to implement its murderous colonial plan. But with the defeat of ISIS in Shengal, Maxmur, Kirkuk and Kobanê, these plans were destroyed. Everyone is aware of the great sacrifices made by the Kurdish people in the fight against ISIS and other Salafist groups. Our people have played a leading role on the front line together with the People’s Defence Forces to prevent ISIS from establishing an empire in the Middle East. It is a historical fact that our forces pioneered this period by encouraging people with their practice in the fight against ISIS and contributed significantly to the liberation of all humanity from this scourge.

In 2014, ISIS grew stronger and stronger. It took control of important cities such as Mosul and Raqqa and attacked numerous regions in Kurdistan. As a result, the freedom guerrillas mobilised following the call of Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan]. It is known that we intervened against ISIS in the regions of Kirkuk, Maxmur, Duhok, Lalesh, Shengal and Kobanê by sending HPG units and tried to prevent the genocide of the Yazidi community from day one. It would not have been possible to stop ISIS if we as a movement had not deployed our most experienced forces from Botan, Zagros, Amed, Garzan and Erzurum provinces to these areas. It is also common knowledge that after they had successfully fulfilled their tasks and the people there had organised themselves and were able to defend themselves, we gradually withdrew our forces from these areas. It is also known that we, as the Kurdistan Freedom Movement, already started to withdraw our HPG and YJA Star units in 2017/2018, as our people no longer needed our forces and had reached the level of defending themselves.

The last link of this historical phase is the withdrawal of our guerrilla forces from the Maxmur political refugee camp, also known as Şehîd Rustem Cûdî Camp. The leadership of our movement decided that our forces here have fulfilled their tasks and will be withdrawn from Maxmur. Since the beginning of September, we have organised the gradual withdrawal of our HPG and YJA Star forces to the Medya Defence Zones. This was done secretly for security reasons. In the meantime, we no longer have any forces left in Maxmur refugee camp.

Our patriotic people and the public should know that our forces have fulfilled their mission and there is no more need for them to continue their mission there. No one has demanded the withdrawal of our People’s Defence Forces from Maxmur to the Medya Defence Zones, and our forces have withdrawn from this area solely on the basis of an independent decision by our movement.

The forces we sent to these areas due to ISIS attacks were withdrawn from Kirkuk and its districts, from Kobanê in Rojava and from Shengal in April 2018. This withdrawal happened publicly in some areas and secretly in others due to security issues. We completed this process by withdrawing our units from Maxmur in a secure manner.

We are sure that the patriotic people of Maxmur will give the necessary importance to this decision of our movement. We firmly believe that they have acquired a national-democratic consciousness and are capable of defending themselves with the civil organisation they have developed. However, if the need should arise to take up a higher level of defence again, the Apoist militants will always succeed in reaching all areas, es-

pecially Maxmur and Shengal, under all circumstances. They will rush to the aid of our people and fulfil their responsibility in defence in any case.

On this occasion, we once again remember with respect and gratitude our martyrs of Shengal, Kobanê, Kirkuk and Maxmur who bravely resisted and repelled the attacks. They have led the fight against the mercenaries and criminal gangs of ISIS in Iraq and the Middle East. We bow our heads with respect to their memory and reaffirm our pledge to keep their memory alive in the peoples' struggle for freedom. We believe that our people, who have put up historic resistance in the path of the martyrs, will fulfil their responsibility at the highest level, and convey our respect and love to them and wish them great success in the struggle for freedom.”

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Six ISIS members captured in Deir ez-Zor

ANF | 19 OCTOBER 2023

The Press Office of the Internal Security Forces in North-East Syria released a statement about the ongoing operations against ISIS mercenaries.

According to the statement, the Special Forces of Internal Security Forces (H.A.T) carried out an anti-ISIS operation in the eastern Deir ez-Zor region on 18 October.

The operation, which was supported by the International Coalition, resulted in the arrest of six ISIS members. Two Kalashnikov rifles were confiscated during the operation.

“We will continue to fulfill our duties to the people of the region, bring cells under control and provide security in the region,” said the statement by the Internal Security Forces.

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Villages in Ain Issa and Girê Spî under attack

ANF | 19 OCTOBER 2023

Turkey continues its military aggression against northern Syria. Currently, military violence is directed against villages near the town of Ain Issa and the occupied Girê Spî (Tal Abyad). Artillery shells hit at least thirteen villages in the region on Thursday, some of them densely populated. The source of the attacks are posts of the Turkish army and its jihadist auxiliaries in the occupied zone.

The villages attacked lie parallel to the M4 road, which runs through northern Syria like a lifeline and therefore represents a strategic supply route. Settlement areas such as the villages of al-Khalidiya, al-Debs and al-Alimat were targeted by the shelling. These villages were repeatedly subjected to heavy bombard-

ment in the course of Turkey's latest wave of attacks against the autonomous region of northern and eastern Syria a fortnight ago. The M4 itself is also being bombed.

It is still unclear whether people were injured by the artillery strikes. Likewise, there is no confirmed information on the extent of the attacks. The shelling in the region is reported to be continuing. The Turkish jihadist occupation forces are again focusing on the village of Mestûr (Mastoura) near the city centre of Ain Issa. Two children aged nine and eight were killed in a howitzer attack there last week.



Autonomous Administration: Five million people affected by Turkish attacks

ANF | 20 OCTOBER 2023

The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES) has published an overview of the wave of Turkish attacks from 5 to October. A total of 44 people, including two children, fell victim to the more than 580 air and ground attacks by the Turkish army and its mercenary troops on the autonomous region. 55 were wounded.

According to the information, the attacks were directed against the civilian infrastructure and destroyed eleven power plants, two clinics, 48 educational institutions for over 8,000 children and a training center for anti-drug operations. Five million people have been affected by the attacks.

Reliant on international help

The AANES representation in Germany said: "In order to ensure stability in the region, combat the causes of emigration and make a prospect for peace in Syria possible, the AANES is dependent on international help. This applies in particular to the reconstruction of the destroyed infrastructure before winter in order to ensure the survival of the population and to be able to guarantee the right to education and health care. An international effort to end the violent escalation and return to diplomacy would also be an important contribution."

Vital facilities destroyed

The AANES statement on the attacks said: "Continuing its hostile policy and with the aim of destroying the region's economic, human and security capabilities, the occupying Turkish state attacked Kurdistan under false pretexts from October 5 to 9. Various weapons were used to destroy vital facilities and infrastructure. The aim of these attacks was to undermine the security and stability of the region and hamper AANES's development efforts. The attacks also wanted to prevent our security forces from fulfilling their defense duties and protecting our democratic project from the Islamic State and other actors."

Final assessment of the attacks

The representatives of the AANES said: “The final assessment of the attacks offers the following picture, which we hereby present to the international public as well as relevant humanitarian and human rights organizations:

1. More than five million people were affected by the attacks on the oil sector, including gas and fuel services. In total, 17 key oil sites were attacked, including the crucial Suwaydiya power plant, which supplies all northern and eastern regions. Other power plants around Tirbespiyê, Jal Agha and Dêrik were also hit.
2. Eleven power plants were attacked, affecting more than two million people in the regions of Heskê, Amûdê, Rimêlan, Tirbespiyê, Qamişlo, Dirbêsiyê and surrounding areas.
3. Two water facilities were damaged and 18 pumping stations were disabled in the Cizîrê region. This also affects the Alouk station, which is very important for supplying Heskê and the surrounding area.
4. Two hospitals in Cizîrê and Kobanê regions are completely out of operation.
5. Thousands of students were harmed and had to interrupt their education due to the attacks on 48 educational institutions. Two children died as a result of the attacks, another girl was injured and lost her legs.
6. Three industrial facilities in the Cizîrê and Kobanê regions were destroyed.
7. An academy for training security forces specializing in counter-narcotics in the Rimêlan area was completely destroyed. The work of this center to protect society from this danger was stopped and protection and education programs were interrupted.

A total of 104 civil infrastructure sites have been destroyed, damaged or out of service. A total of 580 air and ground strikes were carried out from 5 to 9 October, and these attacks covered all AANES areas. During the attacks, 44 people died and 55 were injured, including civilians, children and the 29 anti-narcotics forces who died.”

All actors in Syria must take a position

The representatives of the AANES said: “At a time when we remain committed to protecting the gains of our people, combating terrorism and building a democratic experiment in a united Syria, we call on all actors in Syria, the Human Rights Council and the United Nations Security Council and civil society organizations to take a clear position.

Turkey's practices hinder our people's efforts to combat terrorism and ensure stability. They are a threat to our shared successes in the fight against ISIS, which we are leading together with the international anti-ISIS coalition. We call for a public, impartial and transparent investigation into Turkey's practices towards our region by specialized international committees.”

Turkish war crimes must not be tolerated

The two representatives added: “Turkey is committing war crimes in our region today and these crimes cannot be tolerated. The use of violence exacerbates crises. We therefore condemn anything that leads to violence and loss of life. What is happening in Gaza, including attacks on hospitals and civilian casualties, including children, is a war crime. Everyone must strive to prevent the development of violence and resolve all issues through dialogue.

Redouble reconstruction efforts

We also call on all actors who have contributed to achieving stability with us in our regions to redouble their efforts to rebuild the destroyed infrastructure, to ensure the provision of public services and improve living conditions.

Insistence on democratic self-government

These attacks, no matter how frequent they occur, reinforce our insistence on the realization of the rights of our people, which will succeed with the strength of its cohesion between the different population groups. It is important that we rely on our people’s adherence to its democratic project, as well as its continued commitment to its institutions and security forces. With this awareness and commitment, we guarantee the failure of all plans aimed at our population.

We remember those who died and wish those injured a speedy recovery. Long live international understanding, long live the AANES, long live the Democratic Forces of Syria.

Self-government of North and East Syria, October 18, 2023”

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Turkish drone targets Kobanê

ANF | 20 OCTOBER 2023

According to ANHA, Turkey attacked a vehicle in the west of Kobanê with an Armed Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV).

While there was no information about the outcome of the attack, it was stated that a simultaneous attack was carried out with tanks on the village of Ehmed Münîr, located in the west of Kobane.

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Three YPG and SDF fighters fell as martyrs in operations against ISIS

ANF | HESEKE | 20 OCTOBER 2023

Two fighters from the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) were killed in clashes with terrorists from the Islamic State near Deir ez-Zor.

The SDF press office said in a statement on Thursday that both victims belonged to the Special Forces Command (Hêzên Komandos, HK), a special military unit of the self-defense forces “Hêzên Xweparastinê” (HXP), and had been involved in the fight against ISIS for years.

On Tuesday they were on an anti-terrorism mission in the town of Hajin, southwest of Deir ez-Zor, when clashes broke out. The SDF expressed its condolences to the families of the fallen and the public.

YPG announced the death of two fighters

The People's Protection Units (YPG), which together with the Women's Protection Units (YPJ) are the backbone of the SDF, also announced the loss of two fighters.

As the group explained in a statement, Metin Al-Qalaa died last Monday from serious injuries that he sustained days earlier during an operation against an ISIS cell in Deir ez-Zor. The fighter Bahoz Heleb died on Sunday as a result of a serious accident during operational preparations, also in Deir ez-Zor.

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Turkey continues to bomb villages of Shehba and Afrin

ANF | SHEHBA | 20 OCTOBER 2023

The Turkish state and its mercenaries bombed the village of Shewarxa in Afrin's Shera district and the surroundings of Shehba's Til Tifet district on Thursday night.

The invaders also hit the village of Şealê in Shehba.

Detailed information about the attacks could not be obtained.

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German Minister of Justice says Turkish attacks on Rojava violate international law

ANF | BERLIN | 20 OCTOBER 2023

Die Linke MP Clara Büniger brought on the agenda of the German Federal Government the attacks of the Turkish state against civilian settlements in Rojava.

Reminding that the Turkish state has been intensively bombing Northern and Eastern Syria, especially since 4 October 2023, Büniger turned to Minister of Justice Marco Buschmann, who answered the questions on behalf of the Federal Government, and said: “In these attacks, civilians, women and children were killed, and civil infrastructures were bombed. Mr. Buschmann, while talking about the attacks against Israel, you pointed out that attacks that violate international law should not go unpunished. Likewise, the Scientific Service Unit of the Federal Assembly had previously reported that Turkey violated international law with these attacks. Well, Mr. Buschmann, as the Minister of Justice, don't you think that the attacks targeting Northern and Eastern Syria constitute a violation of international law?”

Buschmann: civil areas should not be bombed

Minister of Justice Marco Buschmann answered: “From a humanitarian perspective, the issue of international law is clear and obvious. Civilian settlements should never be targeted and attacked, and civilian infrastructures should never be bombed. If such attacks occur, this would violate international law from a humanitarian perspective.”

Buschmann, a member of the Free Democratic Party (FDP), emphasized that the attacks on Northern and Eastern Syria are unacceptable from a humanitarian perspective and continued: “I do not have detailed information on this issue at the moment. However, carrying out attacks against civilian targets means violating international law.”

Clara Büniger said: “It is important that you consider Turkey's attacks as a violation of international law from a humanitarian perspective. But why hasn't the Federal Prosecutor's Office opened an investigation into these attacks yet?”

Minister of Justice Buschmann dismissed the question by saying that “the issue of whether such an investigation will be opened is within the responsibility of the independent Federal Chief Public Prosecutor's Office. I will ask what criteria they have in this regard and get back to you later.”

Two injured in Turkish attack on villages in Afrin

ANF | 20 OCTOBER 2023

The invading Turkish state launched a wave of heavy attacks on the villages of Aqîbê and Soxanekê in Afrin's Sherawa district on Friday.

According to local sources, two civilians, identified as 23-year-old Ferîde Mistefa Berekat and 29-year-old Şeyma Mihemed Receb Talib, were injured as a result of the attack.

While the villages of Tatmeraş, Tinbê and Kıştar in the Shera district were also shelled, reports are coming through of aerial activity over the region.

Further attacks by the occupation forces targeted the village of Şealê in Shehba Canton, and the village of Rebîat in Zirgan.

Afrin Canton was the westernmost canton of Rojava and North and East Syria, home to 200,000 ethnic Kurds. Though the population was overwhelmingly Kurdish, it was home to diverse religious groups including Yazidis, Alawites and Christians alongside Sunni Muslims.

On 20 January 2018, Turkey launched air strikes on 100 locations in Afrin, as the onset of an invasion they dubbed 'Operation Olive Branch.'

The Turkish Airforce indiscriminately shelled civilians as well as YPG/YPJ positions, while a ground assault was carried out by factions and militias organised under the umbrella of the Turkish-backed National Army.

By 15 March, Turkish-backed militias had encircled Afrin city and placed it under artillery bombardment. A Turkish airstrike struck the city's only functioning hospital, killing 16 civilians.

Civilians fled and the SDF retreated, and by 18 March Turkey was in de facto occupation of Afrin. Between 400 and 500 civilians died in the invasion, overwhelmingly as a result of Turkish bombing. Other civilians were summarily executed in the field.

Prior to the Turkish invasion, Afrin had been one of the most peaceful and secure parts of Syria, virtually never seeing combat during the civil war bar occasional skirmishes between YPG/YPJ and jihadi forces on its borders. As a result, Afrin offered peaceful sanctuary to over 300,000 internally displaced people from elsewhere in Syria.

SDF targets three Turkish bases in the occupied countryside of Til Temir

ANF | 20 OCTOBER 2023

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) continue their legitimate operations in response to the Turkish occupation's aggressions and attacks against the people and areas in north and eastern Syria.

According to a statement published by the SDF Media Centre on Friday, SDF units conducted precise and qualitative operations within the framework of their legitimate right to respond to the Turkish occupation and its mercenaries' attacks and aggressions.

The operations on October 17 targeted the Turkish occupation bases in the villages of Al-Arba'en, Al-Aliyah, and Al-Manajir in the occupied countryside of Til Temir town.

The operations resulted in direct casualties among the enemy's soldiers, SDF stated.



HPG: 25 Turkish soldiers were killed in actions by the guerrillas

ANF | BEHDINAN | 20 OCTOBER 2023

The Press Office of the People's Defence Forces (HPG) released a statement providing information about a series of actions carried out by the guerrillas against Turkish occupation forces to mark thirty years of YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) and in memory of the guerrilla commander Bêrîtan (Gülnaz Karataş).

According to the statement on Friday, at least 25 soldiers were killed in the actions carried out in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq). Among the military personnel killed are high-ranking members of the Turkish army.

According to the HPG, seven military tents and one position were destroyed during the actions. Five other shelters of the occupation forces were damaged.

On the other hand, two guerrillas fell fighting the occupation forces, said the HPG, adding that details of their identities would be released at a later date.

Zap

In the Zap region, the YJA Star guerrillas struck the occupation forces in the Kokerê resistance area on 16 October. In a coordinated three-front assault, the guerrillas targeted Turkish positions and military tents

with heavy weapons from two sides, while the third flank used light small arms from close range. As a result of the action, 15 occupants were killed, four tents destroyed, one completely destroyed and one position damaged.

On 18 October, contact occurred between a guerrilla group and Turkish troops at Kurojahro. The Turkish air force then bombed the area in two waves of attacks, followed by artillery fire that lasted until the following day. On 19 October, fighting broke out, resulting in the death of two high-ranking Turkish soldiers and two guerrillas.

In Sîda, the guerrillas have struck the Turkish occupation forces five times since Thursday. In one of these actions, a soldier was shot dead by a sniper. YJA-Star units targeted enemy dugouts in the area. The occupying forces on the Şehîd Delîl western front were fired upon several times with medium-weight weapons.

Metîna

Guerrillas carried out another large-scale guerrilla assault on Turkish occupation forces at Girê Çarçel near Metîna on Thursday. The action was carried out in a coordinated manner from three sides, combining different tactics. The first attack group consisted of snipers, while the second bombarded the military camp with medium-weight weapons. The third unit captured positions and tents. In total, four soldiers were killed, another wounded, three tents destroyed and as many positions hit. Later in the day, the guerrillas targeted Turkish army positions twice more.

Xakurke

In the Xakurke region, three soldiers were shot dead as a result of strikes by guerrilla snipers against the occupiers at Girê Şehîd Kamuran yesterday.

Attacks by the Turkish army

Regarding the attacks by the Turkish army in the guerrilla areas, HPG stated that the guerrillas' defence positions in the Girê Çarçel resistance area were attacked yesterday by chemical weapons as well as by drones loaded with explosives. Girê Cûdî and Girê Amêdî in Zap were attacked seven times by explosive drones, and an eighth attack was carried out with unconventional bombs. The Turkish troops also carried out artillery and tank attacks in various regions of Zap, Metîna and Barzan.

Feminicide

Many detained in police attack on Saturday Mothers in Istanbul

ANF | ISTANBUL | 14 OCTOBER 2023

Turkish police once again violently prevented the weekly demonstration by Saturday Mothers in Galatasaray Square in Istanbul. For the 968th time since its foundation in 1995, the initiative wanted to make a statement on "disappearances" in state custody and demand punishment for the perpetrators on central Istiklal Avenue. As in previous weeks, the sit-in was prevented on the basis of a ban on assembly issued by the district governor's office at the instigation of the Ministry of Interior.

When the group nevertheless approached the square in front of the Galatasaray High School, which was cordoned off by barriers and bars, they were immediately surrounded by police anti-riot units. Among them was former HDP MP Musa Piroğlu, who has been confined to a wheelchair since an accident. However, the politician was taken to a separate cauldron. Using tactical shields, the police squeezed the rest of the chained people close together. Members of the media who were observing the events were obstructed in their documentation of the police action and forcibly pushed out of the square.

Lawyer Eren Keskin, who is also co-chair of the Human Rights Association (IHD), criticised the actions of the police. She also criticised the security authorities for ignoring a ruling by the Constitutional Court by banning the Saturday Mothers' vigil. Turkey's highest court had ruled in February that the bans on demonstrations against the initiative ordered since 2018 were unlawful and rejected objections by the Interior Ministry, which justified the restrictions on freedom of assembly and demonstration by claiming that the Saturday Mothers posed a threat to public order. Since April, the group's vigils have therefore again taken place on Istiklal Avenue instead of in a small side street in front of the IHD branch. The police ignore the Constitutional Court's ruling and break up the protest week after week.

Human rights activist Maside Ocak Kışlakçı, who was successful with the constitutional complaint in favour of the Saturday Mothers, said the following under police siege: "Decisions of Turkey's highest court are binding on all organs of the legislative, executive and judicial branches, and non-compliance with constitutional provisions is a serious violation of the principle of the rule of law and the constitutional order on which this principle is based. Yet, for the past six months, we have repeatedly observed that the security authorities of this country disregard the Basic Law and declare decisions of the Constitutional Court null and void. This is a picture of shame."

At least 24 members and supporters of the Saturday Mothers were detained by the police and taken to a nearby police station. Among them are 71-year-old Hanife Yıldız, whose son Murat disappeared in police custody in Izmir in 1995 at the age of nineteen, and 72-year-old Mikail Kırbayır, whose brother Cemil

was tortured to death by the military junta in 1980. The detainees are facing charges for allegedly violating official regulations.

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Afrin-Shehba Women's Assembly develops projects to empower displaced women

ANF | SHEHBA | 19 OCTOBER 2023

Afrin-Shehba Women's Assembly has been developing and realizing projects for women who were forcibly displaced from Afrin to Shehba in 2018 following the occupation of their homes by the Turkish state and Turkish-backed factions.

Aiming to promote women's economic empowerment, the assembly has opened two kindergartens, a restaurant called 'Jiyan' and a tailor workshop in Shehba since 2018.

JINHA women news agency spoke to Emîne Mele Hesên, chairwoman of the assembly, and to women involved in the projects.

In March 2018, thousands of people were forcibly displaced from Afrin due to the occupation of the Turkish state. "Displaced people have faced many challenges especially due to the siege imposed by the Syrian government. Despite everything, displaced women keep resisting. We aim to empower displaced women economically by developing projects. The aim of the projects is to support these women against high prices and poverty," said Emîne Mele Hesên.

Speaking about the projects that have been put into practice by the assembly, Hesên said: "We opened two kindergartens in the Serdem and Berxwedan IDPs camps in Shahba. These kindergartens aim to support working mothers. We also opened a restaurant called 'Jiyan' (Life) to provide financial support to displaced women. All employees of the restaurant are displaced women cooking traditional foods. The aim of these projects is to promote women's economic empowerment. In addition, we opened a tailor workshop with the support of the Afrin Liberation Association. We had to close the workshop because we suffered from the lack of materials due to the siege. However, we plan to reopen it soon."

Gulê Xelîl, a mother of two, works at the kindergarten opened in the Serdem camp. She said: "We take care of children from 8am to 4 pm. My husband is sick and cannot work, so I earn a living for my family by working here. I thank the Women's Assembly for supporting women."

'I work for my children'

Suzan Qasim is an employee of the Jiyan Restaurant. She said: "I have to work to meet the needs of my children. I leave my children at home and come here to work every day. At the restaurant, we cook and serve cheaper traditional food."



58-year-old woman detained in Batman

ANF | BATMAN | 19 OCTOBER 2023

Police forces stormed the house of 58-year-old Kurdish woman Mekiye Sağlam in Batman province on Thursday. The woman was taken into custody for allegedly “spreading propaganda for a terrorist organization”, meaning the PKK.

During the search in the house, the police seized the photo of Pelda Sağlam (Arîn Dersim) who fell a martyr during the fight against ISIS in Kobanê in 2014.



26 detained in police attack on Saturday Mothers in Istanbul

ANF | ISTANBUL | 21 OCTOBER 2023

The Saturday Mothers have once again been prevented by Turkish police from demonstrating in Galatasaray Square in Istanbul to draw attention to the fate of their relatives who disappeared in state custody and to demand punishment for the perpetrators. The women and their supporters were stopped on their way to their rally site, 26 people were detained and taken away with their hands tied behind their backs.

The Saturday Mothers were supported this week by well-known personalities, including lawyer Eren Keşkin, the chairperson of the Human Rights Association (IHD), as well as the HEDEP (Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party) MPs Cengiz Çiçek, Celal Fırat and Özgül Saki, TIP (Workers' Party of Turkey) MP Ahmet Şık and the former HDP (Peoples' Democratic Party) MP Musa Piroğlu.

While journalists were forcibly pushed back, the police also tried to prevent HEDEP MP Özgül Saki from going to the encircled relatives of the disappeared. Saki protested against the unlawful action of the police and was only let through after she warned against criminal consequences. Meanwhile, the demonstrating group threw carnations at the cordoned-off Galatasaray Square, vowing the continuation of the struggle for justice. Cengiz Çiçek, HEDEP MP and co-spokesperson of the HDK (Peoples' Democratic Congress), protested against the unlawful police assault and said that the Saturday Mothers represent the conscience of society and their consistent resistance deserves great respect.

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 in rubbish dumps or in well shafts. Neither the police nor the judiciary have taken any measures to investigate the “unsolved murders”.

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 authorities ignore the ruling and have been violently attacking the Saturday Mothers and their supporters every week for months.

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Human Rights Violations

Kobanê Trial to continue on Monday with new hearing

ANF | ANKARA | 14 OCTOBER 2023

A new hearing in the Kobanê Trial will take place on Monday. At Friday’s hearing, attention was drawn to the unlawfulness of the case.

Lawyer Çiğdem Kozan emphasized that her client Ayla Akat Ata was wiretapped illegally while she was an MP, and that the prosecutors and judges who decided to wiretap statements that did not contain criminal elements were dismissed on the grounds that they were FETO members.

The last session of the 36th hearing of the Kobanê Case, in which 108 politicians, 18 of whom are imprisoned, are under trial, was held on Friday.

Politician Ayla Akat Ata attended the trial held by Ankara 22nd High Criminal Court in the courtroom on Sincan Prison Campus. Sebahat Tuncel and Lawyers Association for Freedom (ÖHD) lawyers also attended.

Figen Yüksekdağ was also connected to the hearing via Audio and Video Information System (SEGBİS).

The court adjourned the hearing until Monday at 10 am.

The Kobanê Case

The Kobanê Case was filed in 2020 against 108 people, including the HDP's former co-chairs, Mr Selahattin Demirtaş and Ms Figen Yüksekdağ, current co-chair Ms Pervin Buldan, several current and former HDP deputies and mayors, and all the members of the HDP's Central Executive Board of 2014.

This case was launched as a counter move by the Turkish government just two weeks after the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights made its final judgment demanding the immediate release of Selahattin Demirtaş. The indictment in the Kobanê Case is based on a Twitter message posted by the HDP on 6 October 2014. This called for democratic protests in solidarity with the people of Kobanê, the Kurdish town in Northern Syria that was fighting against the attacks of ISIS, and also against Turkey's embargo on the town. The prosecutor is calling for all the defendants to be given aggravated life sentences (without parole) 38 times for the crimes of "destroying the unity of the state and the integrity of the country" and "premeditated murder" of the people who lost their lives in the Kobanê protests. Seventeen politicians are currently being held in pre-trial detention for this case.

The Kobanê case is closely linked with the closure case filed against the HDP, for which it serves as a pretext. In the closure case, the prosecution is mainly based on the alleged role and responsibility of the HDP in the murders that occurred during the Kobanê protests in 2014.

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Police detain people following raids on containers in Hatay

ANF | HATAY | 14 OCTOBER 2023

This morning, the police raided the containers housing earthquake victims in Defne, in Hatay. It was stated that the goods inside the containers were scattered and the container doors were destroyed during the raids.

Many people, including Human Rights Association (IHD) Hatay Branch Board Member Salman Altınöz, were taken into custody during the raids. The detainees were handcuffed behind their backs and beaten.

In addition, the police raided Eğitim Sen Samandağ Branch in Samandağ, as well as some containers. A number of people were taken into custody.

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15 European youths detained in Urfa and sent to Repatriation Center

ANF | 14 OCTOBER 2023

Fifteen young people who came to Turkey from different European countries to attend the congress of the Greens and Left Future Party (Green Left Party) in Ankara on October 15 were taken into custody in Urfa on 12 October during a demonstration against the Turkish state's ongoing genocidal campaign against North-East Syria, according to the Mezopotamya agency (MA).

According to MA, the detained European activists have been sent to the Repatriation Center today. Their names are as follows: Ariel Castagnieri, Federico Pastoris, Francesca Fabozzi, Luigi Botta, Lucia Troiani, Caroline Förster, Marin Nathan Gutierrez, Friederike Gilhaus, Kim Aileen Utsch, Thao My Nguyen, Fridolin Wagner, Laura Schölzel, Sarah Marisa Baecker, Marvin Brinkmann, and Taraneh Sanaei Parvar.

Before being sent to the Repatriation Center, the group was initially taken to the Emin Çavuş Police Station in the Haliliye district. They were kept in police vehicles with their hands cuffed behind their backs for three hours.

The activists reportedly filed complaints against the police officers who allegedly used violence against them during their statements at the police station. Ariel Castagnieri claimed that a police officer stole his gold necklace during the onslaught.

Caroline Förster stated that the police officers who assaulted her caused her injury by removing the glucose monitoring device from her arm.

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Green Left Party 4th Congress kicks off in Ankara

ANF | ANKARA | 15 OCTOBER 2023

The 4th Congress started at the Atatürk Indoor Sports Hall with the slogan "For Freedom Again".

Foreign delegations and representatives

Many foreign delegations and representatives are attending the Congress. Among them are Basque MP Oihana Etxebarrieta Legrand, BASTA General Secretary Franziska Stier, French Left Party co-chair Pierre Barbier, Elizabeth Doussain Puyraud from the French Left Party, Parliamentarian Ilona Szatmári Waldau from the Swedish Left Party, MEP Nikos Papandreou, MEP Socialist Democrats Jörgen Siil, Jódís Skúladóttir, Mireille Court from the French New Anti-Capitalist Party, Primet Raphaëlle from the French Communist Party, Mahmod Ahmad from the Norwegian Socialist Left Party, Liv Müller Smith Sivertsen from the Norwegian Red Party, Mina Jack Tolu, Hakan Taş from Die Linke.

Also present are Antonia Tilly, Pınar Ecevitoglu and Yasemin Ahi from the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Turkey Representation, Julia Bartman from the Heinrich Böll Turkey Representation, Valentina Škafar from the European Left Group and Janet Sawaya from the National Democracy Institute.

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Green Left Party to be renamed as HEDEP

ANF | ANKARA | 15 OCTOBER 2023

The congress of the Green Left Party began in Ankara on Sunday. The party congress is attended by thousands of people from all over Turkey. Because there is not enough space in the event hall, the congress is being broadcast via a large screen in front of the Atatürk Sports Arena. Before the start of the event, there was dancing inside and outside, and the slogan “Bijî berxwedana Rojava” (Long live the resistance in Rojava) could be heard again and again. In the hall, central demands such as “Democratic solution to the Kurdish question”, “No to isolation, peace now”, “Democratic constitution” and “System change instead of climate change” are displayed on banners.

At the congress, around 800 delegates will elect the new co-chairs and the party council consisting of eighty members, and the members of the disciplinary and arbitration committees will also be determined. As previously announced, the Green Left Party, which contested elections for the first time in May due to the threat of a ban on the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), will rename itself at the congress. The new name is Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (Halkların Eşitlik ve Demokrasi Partisi, HEDEP).

Representatives of civil society organisations such as DTK (Democratic Social Congress, tr. DTK) and HDK (Peoples' Democratic Congress) as well as various parties such as DBP, HDP, DP, SYKP, ESP, TIP, TÖP, EHP, EMEP, Sol, CHPG, DEVA, TSIP, DSIP, Azadî, KKP, KSP and PDK-T are participating in the congress.

Many foreign delegations and representatives are attending the Congress. Among them are Basque MP Oihana Etxebarrieta Legrand, BASTA General Secretary Franziska Stier, French Left Party co-chair Pierre Barbier, Elizabeth Doussain Puyraud from the French Left Party, Parliamentarian Ilona Szatmári Waldau from the Swedish Left Party, MEP Nikos Papandreou, MEP Socialist Democrats Jörgen Siil, Jódís Skúladóttir, Mireille Court from the French New Anti-Capitalist Party, Primet Raphaëlle from the French Communist Party, Mahmod Ahmad from the Norwegian Socialist Left Party, Liv Müller Smith Sivertsen from the Norwegian Red Party, Mina Jack Tolu, Hakan Taş from Die Linke. Also present are Antonia Tilly, Pınar Ecevitoglu and Yasemin Ahi from the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Turkey Representation, Julia Bartman from the Heinrich Böll Turkey Representation, Valentina Škafar from the European Left Group and Janet Sawaya from the National Democracy Institute.

Speaking here, Meral Daniş Beştaş, who was elected president of the council, said: “The enemies want to destroy our struggle for freedom but nobody can achieve to choke our march for freedom which we inherited from our history and will keep going until the last drop of blood.”

Speaking about the incommunicado detention of Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan, who has not been heard from for 31 months now, Beştaş stated: “Mr. Öcalan is held in isolation. We will smash this isolation and the PKK leader Öcalan will attain his physical freedom. We trust our people and their struggle. We say “no to isolation” and “yes to peace”. We will continue to advocate for the equality and fraternity of peoples against vicious policies. We stand with the people of Palestine who are under attack at the moment. Attacks against the Kurds are also going on, with the invaders seeking to annihilate our color, voice and language. We salute our friends who are waging a struggle under harsh conditions. We did and will never bow to repression. This congress of ours is for freedom.”

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Co-chairs and executive members of HEDEP elected

ANF | ANKARA | 15 OCTOBER 2023

The Green Left Party held its grand congress in Ankara on Sunday with the participation of thousands. The party, which was renamed as the Peoples’ Equality and Democracy Party (Halkların Eşitlik ve Demokrasi Partisi, HEDEP), has elected Tülay Hatimoğulları Oruç and Tuncer Bakırhan as its new co-chairs. The party’s council of eighty members was also renewed, as were the members of the disciplinary and arbitration committees.

Tülay Hatimoğulları

Tülay Hatimoğulları Oruç was born in 1977 in Samandağ in the southernmost province of Hatay. An economist by training, she comes from an Alawite family and has been politically active since her school days. During her studies at Anadolu University in Eskişehir, she was involved in campaigns to revive the Arabic language and culture in the settlement areas of the Alawite community. She is one of the co-founders of the Çağdaş Sanat Atölyesi (Contemporary Art Workshop), which has been the first address for Arabic-language teaching in theatre and music since 1995, and participated in the establishment of the Research Institute for Arab Peoples in the Middle East, which was founded in 2015.

Tülay Hatimoğulları Oruç has always been active in the feminist movement as well. In 2000, she was involved in the founding of the Istanbul Women’s Academy Amargi, which has been instrumental in establishing relations between the women’s organisations that emerged organisationally from the Kurdish women’s movement in Turkey and other feminist organisations in the country through its “Projects for the Gathering of Women”. In the following years, she also worked for the “Peace Council Turkey”, a civil initiative working for a political solution to the Kurdish question.

Politically, Tülay Hatimoğulları Oruç is in the tradition of the socialist left. In 2011, she was a delegate at the founding of the HDK (Peoples’ Democratic Congress), the organising body of hundreds of groups and political activists from which the HDP (Peoples’ Democratic Party) emerged in 2012. She is a co-founder of the Socialist Reconstruction Party (SYKP), which is a component of the HDP, and was its co-chair between 2016 and 2018. In 2018, she resigned from this position after being elected to the Turkish National Assembly as the HDP’s candidate for the Adana constituency. She was re-elected to parliament in the general election last May. She is in charge of the Peoples and Religious Communities Commission.

Tuncer Bakırhan

Tuncer Bakırhan is a Kurd. He was born in Kars in 1970 and graduated from Uludağ University in Bursa with a degree in economics. He became politicised in the course of state oppression in Kurdistan. He first became active in Kurdish politics at the age of nineteen, working at the communal level for the People's Labour Party (HEP), which was founded in 1990. The HEP is the original party whose successor the HDP represents today. In 1991, it succeeded in sending 22 Kurdish deputies to parliament in the parliamentary elections through a joint list with the "Social Democratic People's Party" (SHP). However, the HEP came under heavy attack from the very beginning. No sooner had it been founded than a wave of terrorist attacks began against the party and its members in Northern Kurdistan. The perpetrators: death squads of the Turkish state. In 1992, the HEP was banned.

Several successor parties to the HEP, including the Democracy Party (DEP), were also banned. In 1994, the People's Democracy Party (HADEP) was founded. Tuncer Bakırhan led the provincial association in Kars until this party was also banned. In the 2002 parliamentary election, he ran for the successor DEHAP. Although he won most of the votes, it was not enough for a seat in the National Assembly in the end, as DEHAP failed to meet the nationwide electoral threshold of ten percent. Bakırhan subsequently took over as party president. In 2005, he resigned from the post after DEHAP dissolved and decided to join the Democratic Society Party (DTP).

Tuncer Bakırhan spent several years in prison, the first time during the so-called KCK operations in 2013. The following year, he was elected mayor of his native town of Siirt for the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP), which was founded after the DTP was banned. In November 2016, he was removed from office by order of the Ministry of Interior and arrested on terror charges along with numerous other politicians, including former HDP co-chairs Figen Yüksekdağ and Selahattin Demirtaş. He spent three years in pre-trial detention - unjustly, as the European Court of Human Rights ruled in 2021 and ordered Turkey to pay compensation because the accusations against Bakırhan were clearly political in nature. In the meantime, the Turkish judiciary had sentenced him to almost eleven years in prison for alleged membership of the PKK. Bakırhan has been a member of the Turkish parliament since May.

HEDEP Party Council

Delegates in Ankara today elected the following members to the HEDEP Party Council: Aysel Batyar Önsel, Bahattin Karaman, Hülya Kavuk, Öztürk Türkdoğan, Berdan Öztürk, İbrahim Akın, Perihan Pakize Sinemillioğlu, Berkat Kar, İdil Uğurlu, Recep Demirci, Beybün Aslan, İlknur Birol, Sami Evren, Beyza Zeyno Bayramoğlu, Kemal Bülbül, Selçuk Odabaşı, Burcuğül Çubuk, Kerem Fırtına, Selda İlgöz Kocayığıt, Bülent Uyguner, Livan Orman, Sema Koç, Cabbar Leygara, Lütfü Kaya, Semiha Şahin, Canan Çalağan, Mahfuz Güleriyüz, Semra Kıratlı, Canan Kebeç Özkan, Mediha Yüksel, Senem Eriş, Cemile Türhallı Balsak, Mehmed Ali Yavuz, Serhat Eren, Derya Arslan, Mehmet Bozgeyik, Servin Kararkoç, Diyadin Fırat, Mehmet Rüştü Tiryaki, Several Ballıkaya Çelik, Ebrü Günay, Mehmet Saltoğlu, Sevtap Akdağ Karahalı, Edanur İbrahimoglu, Melis Emine Tantan, Sezai Temelli, Elif Bulut, Metin Kılıç, Sinem Seven, Emirali Türkmen, Muhammed Ayten, Şakire Şeyda Ataş, Ender İmrek, Murat Gökdağ, Tayip Temel, Evgil Türker, Murad Mıhçı, Tülay Korkutan, Fatma Çelik, Musa Piroğlu, Umut Vedat Açar, Fatma Koçyığıt Öner, Naciye İskender, Ümit Küçükbayatlılı, Funda Buyruk, Nevroz Şanlı, Ünal Yusufoglu, Hacı Erdemir, Nuray Özdoğan, Vedat Çınar Altan, Halime Bayram, Onur Hamzaoglu, Vezir Coşkun Parlak,

Hatice Betül Çelebi, Ömer Görünmek, Yüksel Mutlu, Hatice Doğan, Hülya Ateş, Özlem Gündüz and Özcan Teker.

Members of the Disciplinary and Conciliation Committees

The elected members of the Disciplinary Committee are: Cumhur Ege, Garip Kandemir, Zeynep Nilgün Salmaner, Emine Akyazılı, Hüseyin Gözen, Eylem Arzu Kayaoglu and Tülay Kılınç.

The elected members of the Conciliation Committee are: Aylin Hacaloğlu, Ayşe Erdem, Nevzat Onuk, Ayşe Elif Ela Hasanoglu and Mehmet Salih Yıldız.



Internationalist youth delegation deported from Turkey reports mistreatment by security forces

ANF | HAMBURG | 15 OCTOBER 2023

The fifteen members of a youth delegation from Germany, France and Italy who were detained in Turkey are back in their countries of origin after being deported. However, the activists who travelled from Germany to Turkey had to undergo questioning by the Federal Police after their arrival at Hamburg airport on Saturday evening. Below we publish a press release by “Ronahî - Youth Centre for Public Relations” on the facts of the case and a video statement by the group:

Yesterday, on the evening of 14 October 2023, the European delegation, which was arrested in Turkey, held in custody for three days and then deported, landed back in Germany, Italy and France.

At the airport, the delegates were met by their families, friends and other people who expressed their solidarity with banners and slogans. Before the German delegates could leave the airport, they were detained and questioned by the federal police immediately after their arrival.

The new interrogation by the federal police, immediately after three days in custody and a gruelling transfer to a prison more than 1500 kilometres away, led to great incomprehension among all those involved. The one-hour interrogation came close to a repetition of the interrogation on the Turkish side and led to re-traumatisation. After their interrogation, the victims were given a protocol, which, however, only very vaguely describes the course of the interrogation. They reported that questions about the political background of the participants as well as about the political parties in Turkey were only asked informally and were not reflected in the minutes. Parts of the transcript seem to have been removed with scissors before being handed over.

The delegation members are doing well under the circumstances. All of them have suffered visible injuries from the violence of the Turkish security authorities. A video statement was recorded on the spot in Germany, Italy and France.

The German, Italian and French nationals had entered Turkey on 7 October as part of a political delegation trip at the official invitation of the Youth Council of the Green Left Party on the occasion of the party's congress in Ankara on 15 October.

On 12 October, during a joint press statement by the HDP, DBP and Green Left Party against the Turkish attacks on northern and eastern Syria, they were detained in Urfa and remained in custody for three days.

One delegate stated: "We were passed through various instances of the Turkish regime and from the first police station we had no lawyer, no translator and no contact with the outside world. We had no right to speak to a judge or to a trial, which means we spent three days in absolute uncertainty about what was going to happen to us and who knew about where we were."

Those affected also reported mistreatment by Turkish security forces: "But it was not only psychological violence that we experienced there, in the form of harassment, psychological pressure and psychological violence in all forms, but also very clearly physical violence. We were beaten, we were choked, we were kicked, male friends were beaten up naked and I think this also shows how little rule of law there is in Turkey."

Another delegate said that their arrest and unlawful treatment by the Turkish state must be seen in the light of current world political events. The violent actions of Turkish security forces against individuals who publicly oppose Turkey's attacks on northern and eastern Syria and northern Iraq, which violate international law, should not be seen separately from Turkey's military operations, said a member of the delegation. "The Turkish state is simply concerned with silencing all voices for democracy and human dignity."

The statement of the deported delegates continued: "We were all there because we are interested in the Kurdish question and wanted to experience at first-hand what this means for the local population. In any case, we have now been able to experience at first-hand what arbitrariness the people there are subjected to and how any opposition to the war is simply put down. When we then see how the German state cooperates with the Turkish state and that Annalena Baerbock met yesterday with Hakan Fidan, who is now Foreign Minister but was for years the head of the Turkish secret service and is responsible for enormous torture, house searches and arrests, we ask ourselves: Where is the solidarity? Where is the responsibility of the German state?"

The delegates ended their video statement with an appeal: "We call on all people in German society who think something of democratic values and freedom of the press, all journalists, all members of the Bundestag (German Parliament) to take a clear stand and oppose Turkey's war of aggression against the Kurdish population but also against the Turkish regime."

In the coming days and weeks, the delegates want to comprehensively process their experiences and make what happened to them, supplemented by further details, available to the public.

Four people taken into custody after the Green Left Party congress

ANF | ANKARA | 16 OCTOBER 2023

Four people were taken into custody in Ankara on the orders of Ankara's chief public prosecutor's office. They were accused of carrying out propaganda for a “terrorist organization,” the governor of Ankara said in a statement on Sunday evening. Specifically, the accusation was that the four carried banners with the photo of Abdullah Öcalan at a congress of the Green Left Party and shouted slogans in favor of the Kurdish People's Leader, who has been imprisoned in Turkey since 1999.

It is not yet known who those arrested are. It is also unclear where they were taken after their arrest.

The Green Left Party held its fourth congress in Ankara on Sunday and renamed itself the People's Party for Equality and Democracy (HEDEP).

Tülay Hatimoğulları Oruç and Tuncer Bakırhan were elected as co-chairs. In speeches after the election, the gender-balanced dual leadership of HEDEP advocated the abolition of the isolation regime on İmralı, where Öcalan has been held as a political hostage since his abduction in 1999. Negotiations aimed at a solution to the Kurdish question were demanded and supported by the delegates and guests at the congress.

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Police take 15 people into custody in Ankara

ANF | ANKARA | 17 OCTOBER 2023

As part of an investigation carried out by the Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, many houses were raided in the morning.

At least 15 people were taken into custody as a result of the raids. The investigation was launched on the basis of the accusation of “propaganda of an illegal organization” during the Ankara Newroz celebration held in 2022.

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Italian internationalists deported from Turkey speak of their experience

ANF | TURIN | 19 OCTOBER 2023

After 15 internationalists on their delegation travel in Turkey and Kurdistan got arrested for participating in a legal press conference by the Green Left Party, they were in police custody for three whole days. On the 14th of October, they eventually got deported back to their home countries.

On the 18th of October, the 5 young Italian students and workers gave a press conference about the delegation and their detention in Turkey.

Journalists from various national newspapers (ANSA, Corriere della sera, L'Espresso, il manifesto,...) and a lawyer who is known for the case against Abdullah Öcalan took part in the press conference.

The internationalists talked about what they witnessed during their travel through Turkey and Kurdistan and described especially the strength of the Kurdish movement. Lucia, a young woman who participated in the delegation described how impressed she was by the Kurdish society that they were able to meet: "We saw the strength of a people that never stops building up democratic structures even though facing a state that continuously tries to destroy them. They are unstoppable."

Another participant condemned the ongoing attacks of the Turkish state against North and Eastern Syria and Rojava.

The delegates described their detention in a Turkish police station and detention centers, narrating the violence and abuse to which they were subjected. One young woman described it as follows: "They used different kinds of violence against us, not only physical but also psychological violence. While interrogating us, they once pretended to be psychologists, but they were police. They said that they wanted to see our mental health but in reality, it was an interrogation and they tried to get information about us."

The journalists asked a lot of questions about the violence. One of the delegates said that for her the worst thing was to see her friends getting abused and beaten up during the numerous body searches or while they were alone in the bathroom. They also described how the Turkish state always abuses people in a way that it does not leave a lot of marks on the body. Still, all of them have bruises and scratches on their bodies.

The delegates made one thing clear to the Italian press: what happened to them was just a fraction of what Kurdish people, journalists, and political activists have to deal with every day in Turkey. They told how the Turkish police and state abused them exposed the truth about relations between Turkey and Europe.

Delegation member Luigi said that in the deportation centre, a European and a Turkish flag were flying side by side and there was a sign saying, "Funded by the European Union". The young activists declared that they would continue their commitment with determination to publicize the fascism and violence of the Turkish state in Italy.

Lawyer Gianluca Vitale stated that what happened to the internationalists in the last few days is very explicative of the systematic violation by authorities towards who is demonstrating or simply informing people.

“No convictions were given, and procedures were not followed. The gravity of this is related to the violation of the freedom of speech, in the context of a legitimate and ordinary event, coherent with a democratic system,” he said.

The lawyer pointed out that: “What happened after is that these young people didn't have the opportunity to really understand what was happening. They were brought from one corner of the country to the other. They immediately lost contact with their lawyers, who were the only ones who could inform and protect them.”

The lawyer noted that international pressure from Italy, France and Germany was very important to understand what was going on and to obtain their immediate release.

“I think it is important to continue to keep attention high and to demand the respect of rights of people, internationalists and locals. It is the only way through which we could get to a normal management of the situation,” the lawyer added.



Kurdish refugees detained in Slovakia go on hunger strike in protest at inhumane treatment

ANF | 20 OCTOBER 2023

Dozens of Kurdish refugees, who were arrested in the town of Medved'ov at the Slovakia-Hungary border, have gone on a hunger strike.

In a message through their lawyers, the Kurdish refugees stated that they began a hunger strike on October 19 in protest at their detention and ill-treatment.

The Kurdish refugees are held in the Medved'ov Detention Centre, where some of them have already spent months. They are not provided with information as to why they were detained or how long it will last.

According to reports, the police intervened in the ward of the refugees with dogs, forcing them to end the strike.

The detained refugees state that they are denied the right to communication and forced to wear prison uniforms and to pay for food given to them.

The refugees also denounce problems with hygiene and express concerns over the risk of infectious diseases. They do not have access to translators or legal and social services either.

In a statement about their conditions, the refugees said: “We are on hunger strike for our freedom. We are subjected to psychological violence and inhumane treatment. We are denied all our fundamental rights. There is no translator and our complaints are not taken into consideration. We are exposed to racism and humiliating treatment. We have no access to legal representatives or human rights organisations. For these reasons, we went on a hunger strike on 19 October 2023, which will continue until we are granted our freedom and basic human rights.”

The refugees continued: “We are supposed to be allowed to exercise outdoors for an hour a day, but this is also prevented. We are not allowed to communicate with our relatives and misinformation is provided about our situation on purpose. The camp director has not provided us with information on the legal justification or duration of our detention here. They are trying to discourage us from applying for asylum and FRONTEX officers force us to ‘voluntarily return’ to the countries where we have fled from.”

The refugees called on the director of Medved'ov Detention Centre, Kristian Kodai, to stop the inhumane conditions imposed on them, vowing to continue the hunger strike until they are granted their basic rights and see their demands answered.



KDP forces detain 15 young Yazidi people going from Shengal to Lalish

ANF | SHENGAL | 21 OCTOBER 2023

In Shengal, Cema Eid has been celebrated on Thursdays and Fridays for more than a month.

On the occasion of this holiday, Yazidis celebrate by renewing their domes, which are their sacred places of pilgrimage, and hanging the crescent crown on the dome wherever they are.

The renovation of the domes is followed by pilgrimages to Lalish. According to the Yazidi belief, every Yazidi must go to Lalish at least once, make the pilgrimage, and be baptized there from the water of the white fountain.

Visits to Laleş within the scope of the Eid began to be accepted as of 6 October. Yazidis from all over the world come to Lalish and visit the Şêxadi tomb.

15 young people, some of whom from the institutions of the Shengal Autonomous Administration, were detained by KDP forces.

According to the information received, young people were detained under the pretext of identity control and taken to the public order offices. The young people were heavily harassed in Duhok and were told to

act as informers for the Turkish intelligence agency MIT and the intelligence agency Parastin affiliated with the KDP.

According to the information shared by the Shengal Autonomous Administration, 8 of the 15 young people detained were released, while 7 were taken to Zirgan Prison in Duhok.

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Opinion

Kurds are forcing the blind world to see the truth and hear their demand for a life in dignity

AMARA HARUN | BEHDINAN | 16 OCTOBER 2023

The Kurdish people resist the most modern war technology day and night, from F-16 fighter jets to killer drones to tanks and artillery. They take to the streets without pause. They were burned in the Amûdê cinema and deprived of their identity, but still have not forgotten their language and culture. Despite the Baathist policy of the “Arab belt”, the people of Rojava have not lost their social structure. The people have always renewed themselves and continued to grow with their deep roots. These people continue to stand firm today.

Those who follow Öcalan will not submit under any circumstances

Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan, totally isolated on the prison island of Imralı today, said: “I am as lonely as my people.” This loneliness has become our life teacher. The reasons for our loneliness are revealed within the four walls of his cell in Imralı. The reason for his isolation is the same as for the isolation of the entire Kurdish people. But just as Leader Öcalan did not accept slavery, those who follow him will not accept slavery either. They are ready to sacrifice anything. The people who follow this path are facing one of the biggest NATO armies in Rojava today. Maybe they will have nothing to eat, maybe nothing to drink, but they will not submit under any circumstances. That is their honourable and dignified stance.

The immorality of the war can no longer be covered up

Hasn't Turkish President Erdoğan changed the entire Turkish agenda? We have seen the Turkish occupation army attacking grain silos and civilian targets. The AKP/MHP regime loudly accuses Israel of attacking mosques. When the Turkish army attacked Rojava with F-16 fighter jets, not only were pages of the Koran stained with blood, but cemeteries in Rojava were also bombed. One cannot justify the attacks on Rojava and agitate against Israel's attacks at the same time; the regime will not be able to hide the immoral nature of this war.

Collaborators stand by and support the Turkish state

Unfortunately, there are also collaborators who stand by and support the Turkish state. The Turkish rulers know this traitorous line and have used it at all times. Although Rojava has never been attacked so violently before, the traitors have entered into a race to condemn the acts of the brave fighters who sacrificed their lives for freedom most harshly. They have not said a single word about the attacks of Turkish colonial fascism and their media has ignored them. Whenever the Kurds are in danger of drowning in blood, these opportunists see the chance to make a profit.

No one can break this free will

No matter what they do, this cause has already won. The Kurds are forcing the blind world to see the truth and hear their demand for a life in dignity. They do not depend on anyone. The enemy and its collaborators are now falling into the pit they dug with their own hands. They are stumbling before the will of the Kurdish people, which is echoing throughout the world. No one can break this free will. With this stand, Rojava will be victorious.

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Ibrahim: After meeting Öcalan I knew nothing would be the same again

NUJIYAN ADAR | QAMISHLO | 17 OCTOBER 2023

The Kurdish people's leader, Abdullah Öcalan, stayed in Syria for almost 20 years and had a profound influence on the people of Rojava. The PKK organized society and, in particular, strengthened women's self-confidence. Sultan Ibrahim is one of these women. She talked to ANF about her life.

The now 75-year-old from Qamishlo got to know about the Kurdish struggle for freedom in 1990. Two of her sons joined the guerrillas. Her son Barzan Ibrahim (Memo Ibrahim) had joined in 1992 and was killed in Botan in 1995. Her other son is still fighting today. Sultan Ibrahim spoke about how she met Abdullah Öcalan in Lebanon and Damascus and about his influence on developments in Rojava.

'His lifestyle touched me deeply'

Ibrahim described how she first got to know the PKK. "Back then, - she said - I didn't know these people as an apoist movement or PKK. In the early days they were known only as 'students'. I met the Apoists when the friends [a term used for members of the freedom movement] came to our house. The first friend who came to stay with us was Heval Saliha. At that time, we were afraid that if the Baathist regime found out about it, it would put our lives in danger. At first I rejected what Heval Saliha said because I was afraid. The friends also had a house in our neighbourhood. They were very poor. They had no sugar for their tea and no food. My husband knew them. He secretly brought them tea, sugar, salt and food. They were very honest and respectful people with pure hearts. Heval Saliha's visit to our house and the struggle

of these young people who had left their homes and lived hungry and thirsty touched me deeply. We knew neither Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] nor the PKK. Later we realized that they were Rêber Apo fighters. We hadn't reached such awareness back then, we had just seen the lifestyle of the students and were impressed."

Working among people

After a while, Ibrahim joined the works of the freedom movement: "I participated in organizing the works in the neighbourhoods of Hilko and Korniş in Qamishlo. We went from house to house and mingled with people. We kept going to the families who didn't open their doors, introducing ourselves and getting them to accept us. We didn't give up so easily. We went to each family and told them about the struggle. We held meetings and collected material support to carry out activities."

Ibrahim also had the opportunity to meet Abdullah Öcalan several times in Lebanon and Damascus. She said: "He talked for a long time. He described the reality of the people and the enemy. He spoke and looked us in the eyes. He said that the Kurdish people cannot survive without fighting, not even for a second. He tried to make it clear to us that the enemy's attacks would not stop, that there would be great sacrifices, and kept asking us if we were ready. He had a way about him that made us ready to fight."

He gave powerful speeches expressing love for the country and emphasizing the importance of a free country. He also made many statements about the importance of women. He linked the organization of the people, the consciousness and its rebellious potential with the level of organization and activity of women. He said that not a single person should remain idle and that everyone must do what they can. Rêber Apo woke the people from a deep sleep and showed us the truth about our enemy. He awakened the people from their sleep of death. After meeting him, I took part in the work with greater enthusiasm. I promised that things would never be the same again. My house had become the home of the Hevals, it had turned into a real camp."

'Our anger against the enemy grew'

Ibrahim continued: "We were a marginalized people, a marginalized community. With the presence of Rêber Apo, we began to ask ourselves why and for whom we live. We knew how to live, we understood what struggle meant, we knew how to obtain our rights. With our awareness created, we were no longer afraid of the Baathist regime. The attacks, torture and arrests did not intimidate us. We knew that if we wanted to protect our people and our country, we had to face the enemy's attacks."

He awakened the consciousness of a people and did incredible things as a leader. For this reason, his departure from Syria inevitably had an impact on the people, but the work did not stop. On the contrary, our anger towards the enemy increased. This led to the development of struggle and resistance. We owe the fact that we are still standing today, that we are still alive, that we were not exterminated, to Rêber Apo."

Omer: Silence encourages Turkish attacks

NUJIYAN ADAR | RAQQA | 19 OCTOBER 2023

Since the beginning of October, the Turkish army has increasingly attacked the civilian infrastructure and the civilian population in Northern and Eastern Syria. Numerous civilians were killed as well as many members of the defense and security forces. Despite the war crimes and the illegality of the attacks under international law, the international community remains silent.

Adalet Omer, chairwoman of the Women's Council of the Autonomous Administration of Northern and Eastern Syria, spoke to the ANF about the situation of the region in the international context. Omer said: "Our people, despite the mendacity and hypocrisy of the world, resist and overcome the difficulties of war. If you say you want to live freely, then resistance is the only way."

"The attacks never stopped"

Omer placed the current attacks in a broader context, saying that "the attacks carried out by the Turkish state that began on 5 October, targeted the livelihoods of the population. Because it was civilian settlements and vital infrastructure that were targeted. The Turkish government officials openly declared to the world that these places would be attacked, and they did so. The civilian population was attacked. In addition, security force facilities that ensure stability in the region were attacked. For example, an Asayish anti-drug unit was attacked, and 29 of its members killed. The attacks were intended to drive out the population and thus make it easier to occupy the region. Turkey wants to expand its occupied regions and draw borders in accordance with the Ottoman National Pact (Misak-i-Milli). The Turkish state is trying to change the demographic composition of the region by expelling the people who have lived on this land for centuries. At the same time, mercenaries and their relatives are being settled in the occupied areas in place of the original residents. With the help of such mercenary groups, the Turkish state wants to realize its plans and projects in the region. At the same time, the attacks are being intensified and continued."

"This project is feared because it is not based on domination"

But expansionism is not the only goal, said the Autonomous Administration representative: "The people here live in unity and solidarity. The people manage the region themselves and make decisions for themselves. It is a system in which the people organize themselves and do not need a government. This project is not a project of domination mentality. This is precisely why the project of the democratic nation, based on self-government, is feared. A war is being waged against a system of self-empowerment and organization of society. Because the control of the ruling systems over the people is becoming weaker. To prevent this model from becoming even stronger, the population will be massacred and the region's infrastructure will be destroyed."

"The hegemonic powers are silent"

Omer spoke of Turkey's responsibility for the persistence of the crisis in Syria since the beginning of the 'Arab Spring' and said: "The Turkish state supported mercenary groups and criminal gangs of all kinds, thus plunging the region into a permanent crisis and catastrophe. The mercenaries and their supplies came

to the region via Turkey. Currently, Turkey continues to support these mercenary groups in the occupied territories. The settlement of mercenaries and the attacks by the occupiers violate international law. Unfortunately, there is silence about the attacks, rapes, looting and massacres of the population in the occupied territories. This silence continues even in the face of the current serious attacks. The international powers do not even respect the laws that they themselves wrote. The Turkish state has completely broken international law. In which city or country is so much destruction taking place? In which country are residential areas and civilian facilities attacked and civilians massacred? Who is silent about this? These are the questions. But when it comes to Northern and Eastern Syria, everyone is silent. This silence means enabling the Turkish state to commit further crimes. This is nothing other than complicity. Because this system in which people organize themselves affects the interests of the hegemonic powers. To the extent that people in this system become self-aware and organize themselves. People in other countries also feel moved by it and are no longer willing to remain silent in the face of those in power. If people organize themselves, class society will be broken. That's why people shouldn't organize themselves and develop their own will. A conscious society that organizes itself can live without a state. This has already been proven in Northern and Eastern Syria. For this reason, states try to create a weak and enslaved society that is easy to rule. States, which have always tried to manipulate society, have taken control of even the simplest basic needs of society, such as bread and water. However, the system established in Northern and Eastern Syria has undermined this power-based politics throughout society."

"The US and Russia want to shape the region according to their interests"

Omer also commented on the US and Russian plans for the region, and said: "They are trying to shape not only Northern and Eastern Syria, but also the Middle East according to their plans and projects. Their main goal is to profit from the resources of the Middle East. We can clearly see in this context that they are trying to prepare the ground for religious, ethnic and cultural clashes between peoples. Turkish fascism's attempts to invade and intervene in the self-governing regions in Northern and Eastern Syria are aimed at creating the basis for an internal Kurdish-Arab conflict. This is particularly true in the Deir ez-Zor region. On the other hand, although many states are members of the international anti-ISIS coalition, they are also in some ways complicit in many war crimes that occur in the region. The Turkish state continues to try in many areas to weaken the system of self-government that has been created. By weakening the region, the hegemonic powers are trying to strengthen their own strength. That is why the peoples of the Middle East need the project of the democratic nation as much as bread and water. The democratic nation system is the only one in which peoples can freely live their language, culture, traditions and customs. Many countries have already tried to intervene in the Middle East using a variety of methods, but instead of solving the problems, they have only deepened them. The solution to the problems in the Middle East is not war. There is a system here in which no one kills or denies anyone else and in which everyone can live with their own language and culture."

"If you want to live freely, then you have to resist"

Omer said: "The Turkish attacks have continuously increased in recent years. This goes hand in hand with a new plan to occupy the region. In response to the attacks, people took to the streets and gave a clear signal of resistance. The people said that no matter what happened, they would not leave their country. This people has a great fighting spirit. It has been in a struggle since the beginning of the revolution and continues to organize. Despite the hypocrisy of the world, our people resist by overcoming all the problems of war. If you say you want to live freely, the only way is resistance. This fight will grow more and more."



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