

THE IMRALI POST

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

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Contents

Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan.....	2
‘Freedom for Öcalan’ vigil in Strasbourg on its 592nd week.....	2
Families of Öcalan and three fellow prisoners on Imrali apply for a visit to their relatives.....	3
Joint appeal for peace calls for an end to the isolation of Abdullah Öcalan.....	5
international campaign “Freedom for Öcalan and a political solution for the Kurdish question”.....	7
Avesta: The internationalist campaign for Öcalan should not be limited to just statements.....	7
Zenûbya Women’s Community Assembly joins “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan” international campaign.....	8
Culture and art organisations in Rojava support the global campaign “Freedom for Öcalan”.....	8
Arab youths in Shengal join the international campaign “Freedom for Öcalan”.....	9
People of Kobanê support the international campaign “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan”.....	10
Danieli: Now is the time for freedom for Abdullah Öcalan.....	10
Assembly of Arab Components in Shengal promotes action demanding freedom for Öcalan.....	11
Council of Martyrs’ Families in Euphrates Region supports the global campaign “Freedom for Öcalan”.....	12
Prisons.....	13
Call for solidarity with hunger striker Dora at panel against ban on PKK in Stuttgart.....	13
Jailed for 29 years, seriously ill political prisoner admitted to intensive care unit.....	13
Prisoner Tanhan suffers pulmonary embolism.....	14
Military aggression and occupation.....	15
Killers of KNK Hewlêr Representative still free, says Bülbün’s brother.....	15
Two soldiers killed in actions by the guerrillas.....	16
Clash between KDP peshmergas and Iraqi troops in Maxmur.....	17
Explosion in Qamishlo causes death of a woman.....	17
Northern and Eastern Syrian Internal Security Forces capture 6 ISIS mercenaries.....	18
Statement about the clash between KDP peshmergas and Iraqi troops in Maxmur.....	18
Government of Kyrgyzstan repatriates over eighty ISIS women and children from Hol and Roj camps.....	19
HPG: 8 soldiers killed in ongoing guerrilla resistance against Turkish occupation forces.....	21
Israeli air forces target Damascus posts in South Syria, killing 8 soldiers.....	22
HPG guerilla Şoreş Andok finally buried after two years wait.....	22
Pinheiro: Turkish attacks on SDF-held areas affect hundreds of thousands of civilians.....	23
Turkish attack injures a civilian in Ain Issa.....	24
Turkey establishes new bases in southern Kurdistan.....	25
Turkish warplanes target vehicle in Sîdekan.....	26
Turkish drone targets military post belonging to Damascus government forces in Manbij.....	26
8 Turkish soldiers killed in guerrilla actions in Northern and Southern Kurdistan.....	26

Turkish bombing injures a child and a woman in Dêrik.....	28
More Turkish soldiers killed in actions by the guerrillas.....	29
42 people detained in operation to combat drugs in Raqqa countryside.....	30
Operations by SDF in Raqqa: one ISIS operative captured.....	30
Residents of village under military siege for three months forced to leave their homes.....	31
Femicide.....	32
Women in Düsseldorf call for the release of Abdullah Öcalan.....	32
Two female journalists sentenced to prison for reporting on the killing of Jina Amini.....	33
‘The guerrilla will be victorious in the spirit of Bêrîtan’.....	34
Beritan, a symbol of the PKK’s resistance.....	35
YJA Star guerrillas: Commander Bêrîtan is an example.....	36
YPJ Commander Rohilat Efrin: Bêrîtan’s line of resistance is our foundation.....	37
Women in Frankfurt vow common fight against femicides.....	39
Special units of YJA Star send message to mark 31st anniversary of martyrdom of Bêrîtan.....	40
Many detained in renewed police attack on Saturday Mothers in Istanbul.....	41
Human Rights Violations.....	42
HEDEP Co-Chair calls for an end to Israeli attacks on Gaza and Turkish attacks on Rojava.....	42
Police take DBP Party Assembly Member Gültepe into custody.....	43
Political extermination campaign continues unabated.....	43
Five people imprisoned in Siirt.....	44
Police search HDP Cizre District building.....	45
No news from 5 workers from Maxmur taken into custody by KDP forces.....	45
Up to 15 years in prison sought for journalist Beritan Canözer.....	45
MFRR report: Journalists in Turkey are faced with trumped-up charges.....	46
Journalist Kaygusuz sent to prison.....	48
Demir: The opposition in Turkey is just as dishonest as the regime.....	49
13 youngsters detained in Amed.....	51
HEDEP executive Ateş taken into custody for her posts on social media.....	51
Spokesperson of HEDEP Youth Council in Mersin detained.....	51
LAUNCHING THE PEOPLE’S ACADEMY OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.....	52
Interview.....	53
Paula Martin Ponz: Isolation is a cruel obliteration of the most basic human rights.....	53
Bayık: Our main work is to carry the international initiative for Öcalan to the conclusion!.....	55

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Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

‘Freedom for Öcalan’ vigil in Strasbourg on its 592nd week

ANF | STRASBOURG | 25 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. There has been no contact with Abdullah Öcalan and his three fellow prisoners, Hamili Yıldırım, Ömer Hayri Konar and Veysi Aktaş in Imrali Island Prison in the Turkish Sea of Marmara since March 2021.

A group from Liege, Belgium took over the permanent vigil on its 592nd week. The activists stated that the isolation imposed on Abdullah Öcalan is an international plot and targets the entire Kurdish people. They vowed to continue their actions until the freedom of Öcalan is ensured.

The group also commended and expressed their support for the international campaign "Freedom for Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question" which was launched with press conferences in over a hundred places all around the world on 10 October. 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 Imrali 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.

The group called for strong participation in the campaign and unity of the Kurds to achieve their freedom.



Families of Öcalan and three fellow prisoners on Imrali apply for a visit to their relatives

ANF | 27 OCTOBER 2023

There has been no news from Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan for over 2,5 years and there is absolute isolation imposed on him.

Abdullah Öcalan's brother Mehmet Öcalan and his guardian Mazlum Dinç, Ömer Hayri Konar's brother Ali Konar, Hamili Yıldırım's brother Polat Yıldırım and Veysi Aktaş's sister Melihe Çetin applied to the Bursa Chief Public Prosecutor's Office to visit their relatives.

Families also applied to the Directorate of Imrali F Type High Security Closed Penal Institution through the Bursa Chief Public Prosecutor's Office.

Concerns over the situation of Öcalan increased after the Executive Council Member of the Kurdistan Democratic Communities Union (KCK), Sabri Ok [said](#) in an interview on the Kurdish TV Channel Sterk TV on July 8 that threatening letters had recently been sent to Abdullah Öcalan anonymously via the Imrali prison administration.

Lawyers are requesting to meet with Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan twice a week. However, applications for visits are systematically left unanswered. In some cases, months later, lawyers are informed

that disciplinary action has been taken against the Kurdish people's leader and therefore no visit can be granted.

Conditions of extraordinary isolation

The İmralı F Type High Security Closed Prison was built specifically for Abdullah Öcalan in February 1999 and has since been operated based on a special status and through special practices.

Under the so-called aggravated execution regime, Abdullah Öcalan and his fellow prisoners, Hamili Yildirim, Ömer Hayri Konar and Veysi Aktaş, have been held under conditions of extraordinary isolation for a long time, 24 years in terms of Öcalan and eight years each in terms of other inmates.

Despite all their attempts, lawyers from the Istanbul-based Asrin Law Office, which represents Abdullah Öcalan and his three fellow prisoners, have not been able to receive even a single sign of life from their clients since 25 March 2021. They could not obtain any information regarding their health status, their detention conditions, their legal situation in 2022. It has been 29 months that their clients have not been heard from in any way.

Öcalan held in a single cell since 1999

According to the "[2022 Annual Assessment Report on Rights Violations and the Current Conditions in İmralı Island Prison](#)" released by Asrin Law Office on 15 February 2023, Abdullah Öcalan has been held in a single cell in İmralı Island Prison since 15 February 1999. For the first ten years, he was the only prisoner in the island prison. In November 2009, new cells were added to the prison and five other prisoners were brought in. Nevertheless, Öcalan continued to be kept in solitary confinement 23 hours a day on weekdays and 24 hours a day on weekends.

Until 2011, Öcalan's right to see his lawyers was limited to one hour one day a week, but in fact, he was constantly prevented from availing himself of this limited right, with the authorities alleging the pretext of "adverse weather conditions" or a "technical defect" of the coaster going to the island. In the twelve years since 27 July 2011, he has only been able to see his lawyer five times, between May and August 2019. The last of these five meetings took place on 7 August 2019.

Since 2014, Öcalan has received five visits from family members. His brother's visit to the prison on 3 March 2020 marks Öcalan's last direct contact with his family. Also, in 24 years, he communicated with the outside world via telephone on only two occasions (on 27 April 2020 and 25 March 2021). During the last phone call on 25 March 2021, the connection was lost after only two minutes and could not be restored. Öcalan has not been heard from since.

Joint appeal for peace calls for an end to the isolation of Abdullah Öcalan

ANF | AMED | 28 OCTOBER 2023

78 personalities, including politicians, journalists, intellectuals and artists, presented their declaration “Appeal for Peace” calling for a democratic and peaceful solution to the Kurdish question.

The gathering in Taksim, Istanbul was monitored by a large number of journalists, including from the international media, and attended by representatives of non-governmental organisations, academics, politicians, authors and artists, in addition to signatories.

The opening speech was made by the Human Rights Association (IHD) Honorary President Akin Birdal, and the declaration was read out by human rights activist Nimet Tanrikulu, one of the signatories.

The declaration recalled the “resolution process” seeking a democratic and peaceful solution to the Kurdish question between 2013-2015, which, it said, achieved an environment of social tranquility and peace for the first time in Turkey and witnessed important developments, but ended up in failure.

The declaration stated that the negotiations held on Imrali (prison island where Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan is kept in captivity) within the knowledge of the government were among the most vital factors that created this peaceful environment.

The declaration listed the developments in the mentioned period of time as follows: a special law was enacted for this dialogue process, a Committee of Wise People was established by the government, the ‘Peace and Solution Process’ in Turkey was discussed and reports were prepared in line with the Committee of Wise People’s work throughout the country, a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question was proven possible, and people offered full support.

The most basic feature of this process was the fact that the main interlocutor of talks was Abdullah Öcalan, as suggested by the Kurdish side, it noted.

The declaration pointed out that the country ended up in a spiral of conflict and multiple crises, mainly an economic crisis, after the failure of the Peace and Solution Process in 2015.

“This process, which has deepened more and more since 24 July 2015, and continued in the lands of Turkey, Iraq and Syria, has come to the point of weakening, corrupting and consuming the country in political, legal, economic, moral and cultural aspects. The regime in Turkey evolved into a completely authoritarian one. On the other hand, the political and social opposition in Turkey couldn’t prevent this transformation, which fed on a deadlock on the Kurdish question. As the authoritarian government exerted its influence on political opponents, the judiciary was politicized more and more, and the policy of imprisonment became a key means of repression. This period, which was shaped in line with the political ambitions of the regime, got to such a point that even the existing laws cannot be implemented any more, as is seen

in the case of Imrali Island Prison. There has been a serious deviation from national and international legislation, jurisprudence and norms of law.”

The declaration continued: “In the face of all these truths, the construction of social peace is the foundation ground of a democratic system before anything else. It falls on the political parties in the Parliament of Turkey and pluralist, inclusive and dynamic social movements to take action for peace. Opposing the policies of war pursued by the social opposition and the parliament and pushing for a democratic solution and peace will support and consolidate both grounds mutually.”

The declaration stated that building peace is the most urgent duty of humanity in the reality of the Middle East, which has today turned into a fireground, and condemned all the unlawful practices in Palestine, North-East Syria, Iraq, Karabakh and Ukraine.

“Remaining silent on these policies which lead to deaths and forced displacement, is a result of the lack or impotency of politics for peace. Social issues can only be resolved by taking dialogue, reconciliation, equality, justice and freedom as references. Our effort is to seek peace and to find the courage to take its path. Peace will enable the building of social health, which will make us stronger as a whole.”

“As was proven during the attempts to build peace between 1923-2015, Abdullah Öcalan is the main interlocutor who can take initiative and produce a solution. Öcalan, who has a critical role in a democratic and peaceful solution to the Kurdish question, has been deprived of all his constitutional and legal rights for 32 months. His family and lawyers can receive no news from him. We highlight the need for an end to this unlawfulness and respect for his rights. We believe that Öcalan will provide major contributions to the socialization of peace, the building of which is of historic importance for Turkey. On this basis, we call on the government to end the unlawful practices of isolation. We invite the political and social opposition to strengthen the politics for peace. As has been proven by the latest developments, the worst peace is better than the most righteous war.”

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

Avesta: The internationalist campaign for Öcalan should not be limited to just statements

ANF | BEHDINAN | 22 OCTOBER 2023

KCK General Presidential Council Member Sozdar Avesta said that the “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, Political Solution to the Kurdish Question” campaign should not be limited to statements.

Avesta added: “The campaign should continue with different, new and creative ways-methods and should spread to all continents and it should continue in time.”

The international campaign was launched on 10 October 2023 led by trade union representatives, political parties, social organizations and personalities such as philosophers and Nobel laureates, on all continents and in 74 cities all over the world.

The text of the campaign said: “The Kurdish issue has been present for centuries. The Turkish state is leading a policy of oppression, and therefore the Kurdish issue has not been resolved in Turkey nor in any country of the Middle East. The policy of the Turkish occupation republic has deprived millions of Kurds of their basic civil and political rights. It has resulted in the loss of tens of thousands of lives, the displacement of millions, and the strengthening power of racists, religious fanatics and autocracy.

This is connected to serious local and global issues that affect the lives and safety of millions. Therefore, if it is resolved, it will have an effect on all the world. Kurdistan is divided into four states: Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. This campaign is international, because the Kurdish problem itself is an international issue.

This campaign has been launched internationally, because Leader Öcalan’s case is also international. The torture used against him is by the hegemonic forces of the world. The case of Leader Öcalan is not the case of one person, it is the case of a people who have faced oppression and genocides, and the case of the whole region.”

Zenûbya Women's Community Assembly joins "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan" international campaign

ANF | RAQQA | 23 OCTOBER 2023

Trade unions, political parties and civil society organizations from 74 different countries of the world announced the "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, solution to the Kurdish question" campaign on 10 October.

The Raqqa Branch of the Zenubya Women's Community Assembly announced its support for the campaign and called on other organisations to join in a press conference organized at the Municipality Stadium. As well as members of the Assembly, the press conference saw the participation of the Syrian Women's Council, and members of the Raqqa civil society organizations.

Sewsen Xelef, spokeswoman of Zenubya, read the statement and said: "We salute the Imrali resistance carried out by Leader Abdullah Öcalan, who has been in a great struggle against the international conspiracy for years."

The statement added: "We support the international campaign. We raise our voices as women and demand freedom for Leader Abdullah Öcalan. The whole world should know very well that the key to resolving the historical crisis in the Middle East and bringing peace to the region lies in Imrali."

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Culture and art organisations in Rojava support the global campaign "Freedom for Öcalan"

ANF | QAMISHLO | 23 OCTOBER 2023

Culture and art organisations in Rojava expressed their support for the international [campaign](#) launched on 10 October demanding "Freedom of Abdullah 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.

Hîlala Zêrîn Movement, Culture and Art Association, Union of Artists, Committee of Intellectuals and Literators and Mesopotamia Culture and Art Movement made a joint press statement in front of the Mihemed Şêxo Culture and Art Centre in Qamishlo on Monday.

The joint statement was read by Gulbihar Omer, co-chair of the Mesopotamia Culture and Art Movement.

The statement pointed out that the crises and massacres experienced in the Middle East are a result of the policies pursued by hegemonic states. It said that the monist nation-state mindset, which refuses diversity, is the biggest obstacle to peace in the region.

The statement stressed that the Rojava revolution, inspired by the ideas and philosophy of Abdullah Öcalan, gathered all peoples, groups, ethnic groups and religions under a roof, and this experience created a governing model that sets an example to the entire world.

Remarking that “the Democratic Nation model is the only model to save the people of the region”, the culture and art organisations called for participation in the international campaign for the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan.



Arab youths in Shengal join the international campaign “Freedom for Öcalan”

ANF | SHENGAL | 24 OCTOBER 2023

Arab youths in the Yazidi town of Shengal (Sinjar) in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq expressed their support for the international [campaign](#) launched on 10 October demanding “Freedom of Abdullah 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.

The Initiative of Arab Youths in Shengal made a statement on Tuesday and pointed out that: “Leader Apo (Abdullah Öcalan) is the leader of peoples. Leader Apo taught the peoples that the path to peace and freedom passes through the will for a free life.”

The statement read by Emîra Hemed said: “Leader Apo revealed the will for the co-existence of peoples and faiths against ethnic and religious conflicts. He made a great effort for the protection of ancient peoples and faiths in the Middle East. He taught them how to govern and defend themselves.”

The Initiative of Arab Youths called on the federal government of Iraq to recognize the will of the Autonomous Administration of Shengal, vowing to do their best to this end.

The statement continued: “The isolation executed on Leader Apo is imposed on all peoples in the Middle East. Hegemonic powers are deepening the ethnic and religious conflicts among peoples for their own interests. This means exposing all the peoples in the region to a genocide. It is only Leader Apo who can prevent this genocidal policy. His freedom will start a new era in the Middle East. Hegemonic powers are

subjecting him to isolation to prevent his voice from reaching the peoples. This is why the freedom of Leader Apo is the freedom of peoples.”

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People of Kobanê support the international campaign “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan”

ANF | KOBANE | 24 OCTOBER 2023

People of Kobanê expressed their support for the international [campaign](#) launched on 10 October demanding “Freedom of Abdullah 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.

Hundreds of residents of the canton gathered at the Şehit Egîd Square in the city centre displaying the photos of Abdullah Öcalan and chanting “Bê Serok Jiyan Nabe” (No Life Without the Leader).

Addressing the crowd, Sara Xelîl, Member of the Democratic Union Party (PYD) Women’s Council in the Euphrates Region, stated that the will of people in North and East Syria is based on the ideas of Abdullah Öcalan. She pointed out that the resistance of the Kurdish leader frustrated all the dirty policies pursued by foreign actors.

Speaking after, the Co-Chair of the Girê Spî Canton, Hemîd El Ebd, said: “We should enhance the struggle and resistance to make sure that Leader Abdullah Öcalan attains his rights.”

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Danieli: Now is the time for freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

SERKAN DEMIREL | ROME | 25 OCTOBER 2023

Lawyer Franco Danieli, who is a supporter of the international campaign launched to demand “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question”, told ANF that the campaign should be expanded further.

Franco Danieli, who served as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy in the governments headed by Massimo D’Alema in 1998-2000 and Romano Prodi in 2006-2008, protested the aggravated isolation imposed by the Turkish state on Abdullah Öcalan and called for action to achieve his freedom.

Danieli underlined that the aggravated isolation imposed on Abdullah Öcalan is a violation of international humanitarian law and added: “Turkey’s actions are determined by the international law of the Council of Europe and the United Nations, which is the basis of all democratic societies in the world and under which it is a signatory. It must accept democratic standards. Turkey does not accept these basic democratic principles, such as individual freedoms or the inalienable rights of every individual. As in the case of Abdullah Öcalan, Turkey does not comply with many international agreements to which it is a signatory.”

Öcalan cannot continue to stay in prison

Danieli said: “The conditions in Imralı Prison, where Abdullah Öcalan is detained, are terrible. I believe it is time for Abdullah Öcalan to be released from prison and regain his freedom.”

EU is silent about isolation

Emphasizing that Europe shares responsibility for the isolation conditions imposed on the Kurdish people’s leader, as it was for his capture, Danieli said: “There is always a conflict between human rights and national interests. This situation has always been at the basis of relations between states. Relations of interest between states make many human rights violations in those countries invisible. Today, the European Union is providing funds to Erdogan to prevent refugees from coming to Europe. However, it ignores the human rights violations taking place in Turkey. The silence regarding the conditions of Abdullah Öcalan stems from these relations between the EU and Turkey.”

Freedom campaign must grow

Danieli expressed his support for the “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, a political solution to the Kurdish question” and said that this campaign should be further expanded. “Very important intellectuals, including Noam Chomsky, have been working for years to make it possible for Abdullah Öcalan to regain his freedom. We support this campaign. Now is the time for Abdullah Öcalan to be free. For this reason, I believe that voices from all over the world must be raised for the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan.”

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Assembly of Arab Components in Shengal promotes action demanding freedom for Öcalan

ANF | SHENGAL | 26 OCTOBER 2023

A tent was set up within the scope of the international initiative launched to demand freedom for Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan. The action was organized by the Assembly of Arab Components living in Shengal.

Many people and opinion leaders from Arab villages participated in the protest, visiting the tent set up in the Mam Zeki Garden in Geliyê Shilo.

In the statement made on behalf of the Assembly, a call was made for freedom for Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan and autonomy for Shengal.

The statement said: "Leader Öcalan served all the people living in the Middle East and that is why he was taken prisoner. A heavy isolation is imposed on him to prevent him from continuing to serve the people. As a component of Shengal, we support the international initiative 'Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, political solution to the Kurdish Question'."

The protest will continue with various actions and events for three days.



Council of Martyrs' Families in Euphrates Region supports the global campaign "Freedom for Öcalan"

ANF | KOBANE | 26 OCTOBER 2023

The Council of Martyrs' Families in Euphrates Region in North-East Syria expressed their support for the international [campaign](#) launched on 10 October demanding "Freedom of Abdullah 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.

In a press statement in Kobanê on Thursday, the Council expressed its readiness for any activity to ensure the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan.

The statement read by martyr Baran Dogan's brother Mezlûm Nebî stated that "the strict isolation executed by the Turkish state, which subjects Abdullah Öcalan to arbitrary disciplinary measures, is against international law."

The Council pointed out that practical steps must be taken to expand the international campaign.

The Council vowed to enhance the struggle to ensure that Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan attains his freedom and a just solution is found to the Kurdish question.



Prisons

Call for solidarity with hunger striker Dora at panel against ban on PKK in Stuttgart

ANF | STUTTGART | 23 OCTOBER 2023

At the panel held on the occasion of the ban imposed on the PKK in Germany 31 years ago, a call for sensitivity was made for prisoner Mazlum Dora, who went on hunger strike a month ago against the arbitrary and ill-treatment of Kurdish political prisoners.

The ban on the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which came into force in Germany on 26 November, 1993, is entering its 31st year.

A panel was held in Stuttgart ahead of the anniversary of the ban that criminalized Kurds living in Germany and deprived them of many political and social rights.

In addition to Kurds living in Stuttgart, Heilbronn and Esslingen, many Germans also attended the panel.

Speaking at the panel were Lawyer Heike Geisweid and Axel Oswald, who dealt with various PKK cases, and German Bundestag MP Gökay Akbulut from Die Linke.

Gulistan Ateş, a member of Heilbronn Democratic Kurdish Community Center, opening the panel, pointed out that Kurdish prisoner Mazlum Dora is continuing the hunger strike he started in Stammheim High Security Prison last month against the arbitrary and ill-treatment of Kurdish political prisoners, and said that his health was gradually deteriorating.

Gulistan Ateş said that Dora went on hunger strike on 21 September and called on people for sensitivity. Various Kurdish activists told about the persecution they suffered because of the ban.

Jailed for 29 years, seriously ill political prisoner admitted to intensive care unit

ANF | 24 OCTOBER 2023

Political prisoner Cemal Tanhan has been admitted to the intensive care unit at the state hospital in Bolu due to acute deterioration of his health. The 68-year-old prisoner was sentenced to life imprisonment for alleged separatist activities and has been in Turkish prisons for 29 years. His daughter Ayşe Tanhan learned of his transfer from a phone call in prison after she called the administration several times in the past few days to be able to talk to her father, who is seriously ill. Today, she was told that Tanhan had been taken to hospital because of breathing difficulties and was receiving treatment in the intensive care unit.

Ayşe Tanhan demands that her father be released due to his poor health. “My father will die otherwise. He must be released immediately and given medical treatment under appropriate circumstances. As a family, we are ready to do anything so that he can be treated. I appeal to the public and those in authority: Don't let my father die,” said Ayşe Tanhan.

Cemal Tanhan was tortured after his arrest, and the consequences continue to this day. He has consciousness disorders and sometimes does not know where he is. In the 29 years of his imprisonment, he has contracted multiple diseases and suffers from pulmonary oedema, diabetes, increased blood pressure, cardiac insufficiency, intervertebral disc problems, inflammation in his legs and hearing loss, among other things. He is dependent on a wheelchair. According to a forensic medical report from April, Tanhan needs inpatient cardiological treatment. Still, the Istanbul Forensic Medicine Institute classifies Cemal Tanhan as fit to stay in prison.

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Prisoner Tanhan suffers pulmonary embolism

ANF | ISTANBUL | 27 OCTOBER 2023

The legal association ÖHD said that the condition of political prisoner Cemal Tanhan is worsening. The 68-year-old suffered a pulmonary embolism in Bolu prison. His lawyer Şükrü Alpsoy learned this from the state hospital where Tanhan was admitted after a circulatory collapse on Tuesday.

“In order to ensure optimal care, the head physician of the İzzet Baysal Clinic arranged for our client to be transported to a better-equipped hospital in Eskişehir,” Alpsoy said.

In Turkish prisons for 29 years

Cemal Tanhan has been in prison for almost three decades, and has been held in Bolu maximum security prison since 2006. He was arrested in Izmir in 1994 and sentenced to life imprisonment on “separatism” charges. Tanhan suffers from a variety of illnesses, including pulmonary edema, diabetes, high blood pres-

sure and heart failure, as well as spinal disc problems, inflammation in his legs and hearing loss - the long-term effects of severe torture he suffered after his arrest.

The 68-year-old, who is in a wheelchair, should receive inpatient cardiology treatment. The Istanbul Institute of Forensic Medicine came to this conclusion last April. Yet Tanhan has not been released.

Lawyers applied for release

Lawyer Şükrü Alpsoy has applied to the Bolu Prison Public Prosecutor's Office for Tanhan's release: "The ÖHD demands that our client's remaining prison sentence be suspended due to his obvious health condition."



Military aggression and occupation

Killers of KNK Hewlêr Representative still free, says Bûlbûn's brother

ANF | 22 OCTOBER 2023

Kurdistan National Congress (KNK) Hewlêr Representative Deniz Cevdet Bûlbûn lost his life as a result of a gunshot wound in Hewlêr city of the Federated Kurdistan Region on 18 September. KNK co-chair Ahmed Karamus explained that although they had previously reported the threats to KDP officials and public order forces, no precautions were taken.

The brother of KNK Representative Deniz Bûlbûn, Hîşyar Bûlbûn, said that the Kurdistan Region Government has not made any statement to date and no one has been detained or charged with the murder of his brother.

Speaking to Rojnews, Hîşyar Bûlbûn said that his brother was a Kurdish teacher and fought for the Kurdish language.

Bûlbûn said that no one had been taken into custody since the murder, and that the Regional Government, which did not share any information with the public, remained silent. Bûlbûn said: "The murder of a civilian in Hewlêr raises questions. A terrorist attack is being carried out. However, the attacker is still free. This situation poses a great danger for all citizens in South Kurdistan."

Bûlbûn called on the Regional Government and relevant institutions to "immediately find those who murdered Deniz and share with the public who is behind this killing."



Two soldiers killed in actions by the guerrillas

ANF | BEHDINAN | 22 OCTOBER 2023

The press centre of the People's Defence Forces (HPG) issued a statement on the ongoing guerrilla resistance against the Turkish invasion in the Zap region and an action carried out by the guerrillas in Northern Kurdistan in August.

According to the statement, two soldiers of the Turkish army were killed, a military tent was destroyed and several positions as well as a construction machine of the occupation forces were damaged, while a Turkish army drone loaded with explosives was shot down at Girê Cûdî. On the other hand, the Turkish army continues to use prohibited explosives and drones against guerrilla positions in the Medya Defence Zones.

HPG provided the following details:

Serhed

In the Gilîdax area in the Ağrı province of northern Kurdistan, a Turkish army soldier was killed by a guerrilla sniper on 14 August.

Şehîd Delîl, Western Zap region

In the Girê Cûdî resistance area, the Turkish occupation forces have been struck by the guerrillas seven times with heavy and semi-automatic weapons in the past two days. The movements of Turkish troops were stopped, and two enemy positions were damaged. On 20 October, guerrillas of YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) shot down a drone loaded with explosives over the area.

In the Girê Amêdî resistance area, one soldier was killed in a sniper attack on 20 October. On the same day, guerrillas carried out eight actions with heavy and semi-automatic weapons, hitting three positions. On 21 October, YJA Star guerrillas hit Turkish troops from two flanks with semi-automatic weapons, damaging two positions.

Zap

In the resistance area of Sîda, a construction machine used by the Turkish army to demolish guerrilla positions was hit by the guerrillas with heavy weapons fire on 20 October. On 21 October, a military tent was destroyed with heavy weapons and a position was damaged.

Attacks by the Turkish army

In Sîda, the Turkish army used prohibited explosives on 21 October. In Metîna, a guerrilla position in the Girê Çarçel area was bombed twice by explosive-laden drones. On the other hand, Girê Ortê was shelled

with prohibited explosives 19 times on 19, 20 and 21 October. The guerrilla positions on Girê Cûdî were attacked four times with explosives-laden drones on 21 October.

The Şehîd Îbrahîm area in the Zap was bombed by fighter jets on 21 October. Further airstrikes by helicopters, as well as artillery attacks were carried out on various areas in the regions of Zap, Metîna, Xakurke and Barzan on Friday. Artillery shells also hit these regions.

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Clash between KDP peshmergas and Iraqi troops in Maxmur

ANF | MAXMUR | 22 OCTOBER 2023

Iraqi troops have been stationed in the areas from where guerrillas of the People's Defense Forces (HPG) have recently retreated.

According to reports from the ground, clashes erupted between the Iraqi troops and peshmerga forces of the KDP, the ruling party in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Reports are coming through of injuries on both sides. Some bullets have hit houses in the Şehîd Rûstem Cûdî Refugee Camp.

The fighting is reported to be ongoing.

The headquarters of the People's Defence Forces (HSM) announced on 19 October the withdrawal of the guerrillas from Maxmur Camp, stating: "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."

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Explosion in Qamishlo causes death of a woman

ANF | QAMISHLO | 23 OCTOBER 2023

The Press Center of the Northern and Eastern Syria Internal Security Forces issued a statement about an explosion that occurred in a vehicle near the Quwetlî Junction on the Kornîş road of Qamishlo at around 3 pm on Sunday.

The statement said: “On 22 October, a vehicle (Hyundai Jeep) exploded in the city of Qamishlo. As a result of the explosion, a woman died and a man was injured. The injured person was taken to hospital for treatment.

Our forces took the necessary security measures in the area where the explosion occurred, moving citizens away for their safety. After the fire was extinguished, it was determined that there was another unexploded mine in the vehicle. The mine was defused by our expert friends.

Our forces have launched a comprehensive investigation to capture and prosecute those responsible for the explosion.”

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Northern and Eastern Syrian Internal Security Forces capture 6 ISIS mercenaries

ANF | 23 OCTOBER 2023

The Northern and Eastern Syria Internal Security Forces Press Center said that 6 ISIS mercenaries were captured in an operation carried out in the west of Deir ez-Zor.

The statement said: “Our special forces captured 6 ISIS mercenaries as a result of a special operation carried out in the west of Deir ez-Zor on 22 October.

Our forces affiliated identified the locations of the mercenaries following research and information gathering activities on ISIS cells involved in bomb attacks and killings. In the successful operation, our forces captured 6 mercenaries and seized weapons and ammunition, including 2 Kalashnikov guns, 1 Brno gun, 1 hunting weapon, 2 White weapons, one 9mm pistol, 14 magazines, an ISIS flag, 1 binocular, Kalashnikov bullets and PKC ammunition.

Our forces continue their monitoring efforts to neutralize mercenaries. We call on all our people to report any suspicious activity that threatens the peace and security of our region.”

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Statement about the clash between KDP peshmergas and Iraqi troops in Maxmur

ANF | MAXMUR | 23 OCTOBER 2023

The headquarters of the People's Defence Forces (HSM) announced on 19 October the withdrawal of the guerrillas from Maxmur Camp, stating: "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."

Fighting erupted on Sunday between the peshmerga forces of the KDP, the ruling party in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and the Iraqi troops that have recently been stationed in the areas from where guerrillas of the People's Defense Forces (HPG) have recently retreated.

In a statement about the confrontation, the Mosul Governor's Office reported that the fighting took place between the KDP peshmerga and units of the Iraqi 14th Brigade at around 16:30 on October 22.

The Mosul Governor's Office stated that Iraqi troops have been stationed at the military points evacuated by the HPG on Mount Qereçox in Maxmur region.

The KDP asked the Iraqi troops to leave the area and hand it over to their forces. Iraqi troops' opposition resulted in a confrontation between the two sides.

One KDP peshmerga fighter died and three others were wounded in the clash, as well as six Iraqi soldiers, some seriously.

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Government of Kyrgyzstan repatriates over eighty ISIS women and children from Hol and Roj camps

ANF | QAMISHLO | 24 OCTOBER 2023

The Kyrgyz government has repatriated 21 women from Northern and Eastern Syria who joined the Islamic State years ago. The Autonomous Administration (AANES) also handed over 62 children of ISIS supporters into the care of the government delegation that traveled from Bishkek and was led by Kyrgyzstan's Foreign Office diplomat Bakit Kadyrov.

According to Fanar al-Kaeet, deputy co-chair of the AANES Department of Foreign Affairs, this was the third repatriation of Kyrgyzstan nationals this year. Previously, a total of 154 women and children of ISIS were repatriated to their homeland in August and February.

The signing of the handover protocol between the AANES and Kyrgyzstan was attended by Lana Hesén, representative of the Women's Defense Units (YPJ), and Xalid İbrahim from the Autonomous Administration steering committee. ANHA news agency reported that during the meeting, both sides discussed relations between the AANES and the Republic of Kyrgyzstan as well as security policy aspects. Al-Kaeet focused on Turkey's attacks in the region and pointed out that Turkish military violence in recent weeks had destroyed almost all of the infrastructure in Northern and Eastern Syria.

More security in Rojava also means more security everywhere else

"The Turkish attacks not only lead to a destabilization of the region, but at the same time they also mean a strengthening of ISIS and a further escalation," emphasized the AANES official. He criticized Turkey for fueling the war in Syria with its attacks that violate international law and exacerbating the humanitarian crisis in the country. "This political and human disaster could have been prevented. The silence of the international community has helped this to happen," said Al-Kaeet, emphasizing that the AANES is an important factor in the fight against ISIS and other jihadist groups, and adding that "more security in this region also means more security everywhere else."

More missions planned

Bakıt Kadyrov found words of support for the Autonomous Administration's call for the United Nations to send a fact-finding commission to Northern and Eastern Syria to investigate Turkey's war crimes. He also thanked the AANES for its "good cooperation" in the repatriation of Kyrgyz women and children previously held in camps such as Roj and Hol, and praised the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) for their "sacrifice" and continued commitment in the fight against ISIS. In addition, Kadyrov announced that further repatriation missions were already being planned.

ISIS members in North Eastern Syria

Since the dismantling of the territorial rule of the Islamic State in March 2019, the Autonomous Administration in Northern and Eastern Syria has been confronted with more than 10,000 imprisoned ISIS mercenaries from around sixty different countries - around 2,000 of them come from Western countries - and tens of thousands of family members, some of whom are quite dangerous. Around 50,000 people are currently housed in Hol camp near Hesekê alone. Most come from Syria and Iraq, others from Europe, the Caucasus, North Africa and the Middle and Far East. About half are minors, many of the children are under twelve years old and are indoctrinated in Islamist ideology. This makes camp one of the most dangerous places in the world. Roj camp currently houses around 2,300 ISIS women and their children.

Most repatriations to former Soviet republics

Nevertheless, appeals from the Autonomous Administration to the international community to shoulder their responsibility and bring back their citizens held in Northern and Eastern Syria have gone almost unheard for years. Most of them joined the ISIS caliphate at the height of the Syrian war. So far, only very

few countries of origin have been willing to take their nationals back. Countries in Central Asia are leading the repatriation of ISIS prisoners. More than half of all repatriations from the AANES took place in former Soviet republics. So far, Kazakhstan has repatriated 710, Russia 481, Uzbekistan 339, Tajikistan 254 and Kyrgyzstan 237 nationals. France is in sixth place on the list with 226 repatriated nationals, followed by Kosovo (123), Germany (108), the Netherlands (62) and Belgium (45).

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HPG: 8 soldiers killed in ongoing guerrilla resistance against Turkish occupation forces

ANF | BEHDINAN | 24 OCTOBER 2023

According to the statement released by the Press Office of the People's Defence Forces (HPG) on Tuesday, at least eight members of the Turkish occupation forces were killed in the latest actions carried out in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

The actions were carried out on the occasion of the 30th founding anniversary of YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) and in memory of Bêrîtan (Gülnaz Karataş), a guerrilla commander, who fell in southern Kurdistan on 25 October 1992.

HPG provided the following details of the actions in the past two days:

Heftanîn region

YJA Star guerrillas struck the occupation forces on Girê (Hill) Şehîd Berxwedan in the Xantûr area with heavy weapons on 22 October. Four soldiers were killed in the action, while one of their positions and a surveillance camera that had been installed in the compound were destroyed.

Zap region

In the region of Zap, the guerrillas have carried out a series of actions against Turkish occupiers in the last two days. Most of the actions were directed against the occupation forces in the Girê Cûdî resistance area, which lies on the western front of the region.

As a result of the strikes by the guerrillas, three soldiers were killed. In addition, the expansion of military positions and helicopter activity in the region were stopped, while two surveillance cameras were struck and damaged. Besides, attempts by enemy troops to advance in the area were thwarted several times by the use of heavy and medium weapons.

In Girê Amêdî, YJA-Star units struck several positions of the Turkish army, four of which were severely damaged. One soldier was injured by a guerrilla sniper, and another died in the course of another action in which medium-weight weapons were used.

Attacks by the Turkish army

HPG also reported continued attacks by the Turkish army in the guerrilla areas, some of which were carried out with outlawed weapons. In the area of Sîda in Zap, the defence positions of the guerrillas were attacked with unconventional bombs on 22 October. In Metîna, the Turkish army used drones loaded with explosives against guerrilla positions in Girê Çarçel twice in the last two days.

The defence positions of the guerrillas in Girê Ortê were attacked at least 25 times with prohibited bombs during the same period. “Black smoke came out after the impacts, the ordnance used spread an odour reminiscent of detergent,” stated the HPG. Unconventional bombs were also used three times against positions in Girê Amêdî in Zap. Girê Cûdî was bombed four times by drones loaded with explosives.

In addition, HPG reported strikes by attack helicopters as well as artillery attacks in the regions of Zap, Metîna, Xakurke and Barzan. The Stûnê area in Avaşîn was bombed nine times by combat aircraft on 18 October.



Israeli air forces target Damascus posts in South Syria, killing 8 soldiers

ANF | 25 OCTOBER 2023

According to the official media affiliated with the Damascus government, at around 01.45 local time on Wednesday, the Israeli army took off from the occupied Golan and hit Syrian army posts in the Deraa region.

It was reported that 8 Damascus soldiers were killed and 7 were injured in the attack.

The Israeli army reported that it bombed military infrastructure in Syria in retaliation for the rockets fired towards Israel on Tuesday.



HPG guerilla Şoreş Andok finally buried after two years wait

ANF | VAN | 25 OCTOBER 2023

The remains of Şoreş Andok (Kasım Kaya), one of the two commanders who were killed on 21 July 2021, in clashes with the Turkish army in the Arzep areas of Agirî's Panos and Glîdax, were received by his family.

The remains of Andok were taken to Erzurum Forensic Medicine Institute after his death and buried in the Cemetery of the nameless.

His family used all legal remedies to retrieve Kaya's remains for more than 2 years, but had not received a positive result until this week, when it was called by the prosecutor's office and asked to collect the remains. On Monday, the family brought the remains to Van and buried them at Karşıyaka Cemetery in Rêya Armûşê district.



Pinheiro: Turkish attacks on SDF-held areas affect hundreds of thousands of civilians

ANF | 25 OCTOBER 2023

Paulo Pinheiro, Chair of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, spoke about "the largest escalation of hostilities in Syria in four years".

There appears to be total disregard for civilian lives in what are often tit for tat reprisals, said Pinheiro, and stressed that there can be no justification for deliberately attacking civilians.

The UN official commented on the latest wave of Turkish attacks on SDF-held areas in North-East Syria "in apparent retaliation for an attack that injured two members of Turkish security forces in Ankara on 1 October, destroying and damaging power and water stations, affecting hundreds of thousands of civilians."

The action in question targeted the Security General Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs near the Parliament in capital Ankara on 1 October. The sacrificial action was carried out by a team affiliated with the Brigade of the Immortals, according to the People's Defense Center (HSM) Headquarters Command.

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan held a press conference on 4 October, claiming that the attackers came from Syria. Fidan vowed to carry out attacks on the autonomous region of northern and eastern Syria and declared the entire infrastructure and energy supply of the "PKK/YPG in Iraq and Syria" as a legitimate target. "I advise third parties to stay away from PKK/YPG facilities and people," said the Turkish foreign minister.

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) General Commander Mazlum Abdi denied the Turkish allegations and said: "The perpetrators of the Ankara attack did not pass through our regions as Turkish officials claimed. We are not a party to the civil conflict in Turkey and we do not encourage the escalation of this conflict. Turkey's search for excuses to legitimize its ongoing attacks on our regions and launch a new military offensive increases our deep concern. Targeting the infrastructure and economic resources of the region and its populated cities is a war crime. Therefore, we call on the guarantor parties and the international community to take appropriate positions against these recurring threats and ensure peace and stability in the region."

The SDF Media Center also issued a statement to reject “all the allegations made by Turkish officials about the crossing of the perpetrators of the attack on the Turkish capital, Ankara.”

The statement denied the “untrue repeated accusations”, which, it said, come “as a continuation of the cycle of false accusations that Turkey has always pursued during the recent period to divert attention from its internal problems and crises and pave the way for the crimes of ethnic cleansing and genocide against our people.” SDF vowed that: “Our forces reiterate their steadfast commitment to ensuring internal and regional security.”

Pinheiro also spoke about the attack on a graduation ceremony at the Homs Military Academy that killed and injured scores on 5 October. He said that the retaliation by Syrian forces in just four days of ground shelling over greater Idlib resulted in the death and injury of some two hundred civilians and affecting medical facilities, schools and markets.

“The longstanding lack of respect for fundamental international humanitarian law norms in Syria not only kills and maims victims on all sides in Syria, it has undermined and eroded the very essence of the international protection system and we are seeing the results today in other ongoing conflicts,” said the UN official.

Pinheiro continued: “The demonstrations in Suweyda remind us that Syrians have not given up on their freedom to peacefully assemble and claim their rights. All parties must respect the Syrian people’s freedoms of opinion, expression and assembly, and recognise their legitimate aspirations and human rights. This is key to ending the conflict.”

Calling for action by the international community, Pinheiro added: “It is critical that the human rights and legitimate demands of the Syrian people, including victims and survivors, are central to all your diplomatic efforts. Turning our backs on them, or just simply maintaining the status quo, perpetuates rather than relieves their misery. The international community can and must do much more.”



Turkish attack injures a civilian in Ain Issa

ANF | 25 OCTOBER 2023

The invading Turkish army launched a new wave of attacks in the district of Ain Issa on Wednesday.

According to reports from the ground, the attacks are directed against neighborhoods to the west of Ain Issa, the village of Mişêrfê and the grain silos to the north of the district.

The ongoing bombardment caused injuries to a 26-year-old local named Beşar Ehmed.

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

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

One of the areas occupied by Turkey in northern Syria is the region of Girê Spî. The formerly multicultural, self-governing region was occupied by Turkey in October 2019 and has been controlled by the Turkish intelligence service and jihadist mercenaries since. According to the Girê Spî Cantol Council, more than 100,000 people had to flee the region after the Turkish invasion. People loyal to the Turkish regime are resettled in their place as the Turkish state is pursuing an intensive settlement policy, systematically expelling the Kurdish population from the occupied areas.

Earlier this month, Turkey launched a so-called “air-ground offensive” against north-eastern Syrian autonomous territory, justifying the aggression with an attack by the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) in Ankara on 1 October, when two PKK guerrillas carried out a sacrificial action in front of the Turkish Interior Ministry in the highly secured government quarter.

The Turkish air terror, which Ankara justifies with the right to self-defence, specifically targeted the vital infrastructure of the civilian population of northern and eastern Syria. More than two million people have since been cut off from basic services, and the energy infrastructure of Hesekê, Qamişlo and Amûdê has been almost completely destroyed.

Attacks on the civilian population or civilian infrastructure constitute war crimes. The international community ignores this open breach of international law and lets Ankara have its way in its war against the Kurds without consequence. Not only in Syria, but also in Iraq, Turkey is given a permanent green light for war crimes.



Turkey establishes new bases in southern Kurdistan

ANF - 25 OCTOBER 2023

Turkey is reportedly establishing more military bases in southern Kurdistan (the Kurdistan Region of Iraq). According to a RojNews report based on local media, bases were established two days ago in the mountains of Gelî, Amêdî and Hekarî as well as in Çarçela. This brings the Turkish army closer to the Medya Defence Zones controlled by the PKK guerrillas.

Military units of the South Kurdistan’s ruling party, KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party), act together with the Turkish army. An unnamed source in the Peshmerga ministry is said to have stated that the purpose of the new bases is to monitor the movements of the guerrillas and to increase military pressure.

The Turkish state has increased its military presence in southern Kurdistan more than ever in recent years and maintains dozens of bases from which helicopters and drones take off on attack flights. Thousands of soldiers are stationed in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. In addition, there are locations of the Turkish intelligence service (MIT) and a broad network of agents.

There are up to ten military bases in the vicinity of Sheladize alone. The town is located thirty kilometres away from the town of Amadiya in Duhok governorate. A large part of the villages in this area is now empty due to continued Turkish attacks, and entry is forbidden. In April, two villagers were killed by a Turkish airstrike while collecting herbs. In early 2019, there was an uprising in the town against the Turkish occupation forces, and dozens of people were arrested.

The KDP and the government of Southern Kurdistan show no reaction against the military occupation by Turkey. The Iraqi government in Baghdad expresses at most verbal reactions.

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Turkish warplanes target vehicle in Sîdekan

ANF | HEWLER | 26 OCTOBER 2023

The Turkish army bombed a vehicle in the village of Dadîniye, located on the Binarê Goşînê Mountain in the Biradost district of Sîdekan in the province of Hewlêr.

While it is not known whether anyone was killed or injured by the bombardment, the villagers cannot approach the area due to the mobility of warplanes.

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Turkish drone targets military post belonging to Damascus government forces in Manbij

ANF | 26 OCTOBER 2023

In a written statement, the Manbij Military Council stated that a drone belonging to the Turkish state targeted a military post belonging to the Damascus government forces in the village of Boxiz in the west of Manbij.

The Military Council said that two Damascus forces soldiers were injured in the attack.

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8 Turkish soldiers killed in guerrilla actions in Northern and Southern Kurdistan

ANF | BEHDINAN | 26 OCTOBER 2023

The Press Centre of the HPG (People's Defence Forces) released a statement providing information about the latest actions carried out by the guerrillas against the Turkish army in the north and south of Kurdistan.

“The Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla continues its resistance against the occupiers and its effective actions in many places, from Serhed to the Medya Defence Zones. In the actions carried out with Apoist sacrifice and new-age guerrilla tactics, eight occupants were punished and two surveillance cameras, two positions and a tent were destroyed. In addition, seven other positions, a surveillance camera and a grenade launcher were damaged,” said the HPG statement on Thursday.

According to the statement, Turkish fighter jets have bombed the Medya Defence Zones in Southern Kurdistan (Northern Iraq) 26 times in the past two days. In addition, guerrilla positions were attacked 34 times with prohibited explosives, chemical gas and drones loaded with explosives. According to HPG, the guerrillas did not suffer any casualties.

HPG gave the following details of the guerrilla actions and the attacks by the Turkish army:

Serhed

Guerrillas of the YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) hit the Aybeg base in the Doğubeyazıt district of Ağrı from three flanks on 24 October. The base is located in the Gîlîdax area in the Serhed region. In the coordinated guerrilla action, two soldiers were killed by snipers while leaving a surveillance tower. At the same time, the base and towers in the surrounding area were hit by semi-automatic weapons and two surveillance cameras were destroyed. The YJA Star dedicated the action to their commander, Hêjar Zozan, who was martyred in Serhed in April.

Southern Kurdistan

Four soldiers were killed in an action by the YJA Star guerrillas who targeted the Turkish occupation forces at Girê Şehîd Heqî in Xakurke on Wednesday. Heavy weapons fire also left two positions and a military tent destroyed. On 24 October, the occupiers in the resistance area of Sîda in the Zap region were struck by the guerrillas with heavy weapons.

In the resistance areas of Girê Cûdî and Girê Amêdî in the western Zap region, two soldiers of the Turkish army were killed by guerrilla snipers in the past two days. The YJA Star stopped several advance attempts of the invading forces with heavy weapons on 24 October. In a series of actions with semi-automatic and heavy weapons, several positions, a grenade launcher and a surveillance camera were hit by targeted fire.

Attacks by the Turkish army

The Turkish army's attacks with prohibited explosives, chemical gas and drones loaded with explosives were directed against guerrilla positions at Girê Çarçel and Girê Ortê in Metîna and Girê Cûdî in Zap.

Airstrikes by fighter jets targeted Şehîd Îbrahîm in Zap; Girê Bahar in the west of the Zap region; Girê Reşîd, Girê Zengil and Deşta Kafya in Gare; Golka in Metîna; Berdeqaşo, Şehîd Adil, Girê Roj, Balayan and Kortek in Qendîl; and Goşînê and Berbizina in Xakurke. The regions of Zap, Metîna and Xakurkê were also attacked by helicopters and artillery, while the area of Barzan was also shelled by artillery fire.

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Turkish bombing injures a child and a woman in Dêrik

ANF | 27 OCTOBER 2023

The invading Turkish state once again shelled a civilian settlement in North-East Syria on Friday.

The attack targeted a house in the Azadî neighborhood of the Dêrik city in Qamishlo Canton. 11-year-old Ehmed Şahîn and 39-year-old Evîn Xelîl were injured in the attack and hospitalized.

On 5 October, Turkey carried out its heaviest attacks on civilian infrastructure in northeastern Syria for a long time. Numerous armed drones and fighter jets entered the autonomous region's US-controlled airspace and bombed vital facilities such as substations and electricity distribution stations, water pumping stations, oil and gas production facilities as well as petrol stations, dams, factories, a camp for displaced persons and several villages. Among other things, the energy infrastructure of Hesekê, Qamişlo and Amûdê was destroyed, and large parts of the regions are cut off from electricity.

The wave of attacks came after Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan named "the infrastructure of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the People's Defence Units (YPG) in Iraq and Syria as legitimate targets" and claimed that the two guerrilla fighters involved in the sacrificial action against the Interior Ministry in Ankara on 1 October had been trained in northern Syria and had entered Turkey from there via the highly secured border.

The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES) submitted a dossier about the crimes committed by the Turkish state forces during the latest wave of attacks against North-East Syria.

According to the dossier, the Turkish state carried out 304 air and ground attacks on 224 locations, which included 211 attacks by artillery and heavy weaponry, and 83 strikes by drones and fighter jets.

The attacks were directed against gas and oil facilities/fields, power plants, water stations, healthcare centers, as well as the vicinity of the Washukani and Roj Camps, and dozens of villages, causing massive material damage. 47 people lost their lives, including 5 from the Kobanê, and 55 others were injured as a result of the attacks. The material damage to the infrastructure in the region is estimated at 56 million dollars.

In a statement on 26 October, Human Rights Watch (HRW) said that drone strikes by Turkish Armed Forces on Kurdish-held areas of northeast Syria between October 5 and 10 damaged critical infrastructure and resulted in water and electricity disruptions for millions of people.

“By targeting critical infrastructure across northeast Syria, including power and water stations, Turkey has flouted its responsibility to ensure that its military actions do not aggravate the region's already dire humanitarian crisis,” said Adam Google, deputy Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. “People in al-Hasakeh city and its surroundings, already facing a severe water crisis for the past four years, must now also bear the brunt of increased bombardment and destruction, exacerbating their struggle to get essential water supplies,” HRW stated.

According to the autonomous administration, damage to infrastructure caused by attacks that took place between October 5 and 10 impacted an estimated 4.3 million people in northeast Syria with at least 18 water pumping stations and 11 power stations rendered non-operational.



More Turkish soldiers killed in actions by the guerrillas

ANF | **BEHDINAN** | 27 OCTOBER 2023

In a statement on Friday, the Press Office of the People's Defense Forces (HPG) reported that three members of the Turkish occupation forces were killed in actions by the guerrillas.

According to the statement, the three soldiers were killed by guerrilla snipers in the Zap region of Medya Defense Zones on Thursday.

Guerrillas of YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) struck the Turkish forces at Girê Cûdî twice with heavy weaponry on 26 October. One soldier was killed by a guerrilla sniper and one military position was heavily hit and damaged.

On 26 October, guerrillas struck the Turkish occupation forces at Girê Amêdîyê who were involved in the construction of a military road with support from the armed forces of the KDP, the ruling party in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Two soldiers were killed by guerrilla snipers, and the activity of heavy construction machinery was halted.

Another guerrilla action in Girê Amêdî on the same day was directed against a camera surveillance system installed by occupation troops in the area and left it damaged.

Regarding the continued attacks by the Turkish army against guerrilla areas, HPG reported an attack by drones armed with explosives against the defence positions at Girê Çarçel in Metîna on 26 October.

On the same day, the occupation forces used chemical gas and unconventional explosives against the guerrilla positions in Girê Orte four times.

In addition, HPG reported nine attacks by fighter jets yesterday. The areas bombed were Girê Bahar on the western front of Zap, Deşta Kafya in Gare, and Ava Lolanê and Kendakola in Xakurke.

Today, attack helicopters shelled the western section of the Zap region. On the other hand, the regions of Zap, Şehîd Delîl and Metîna were attacked by artillery.



42 people detained in operation to combat drugs in Raqqa countryside

ANF | RAQQA | 27 OCTOBER 2023

The General Command of the Internal Security Forces (ISF) in North-East Syria released a statement providing information about an operation carried out in Raqqa countryside.

According to the statement on Friday, an anti-drug operation dubbed “Hemze Beg Martyrs Vengeance Campaign” was launched in Raqqa in memory of 29 ISF members who were martyred as a result of a Turkish attack on the Anti-Drug Units Academy in Derik on 8 October.

Eli Hesên, a member of the ISF General Command, stated that the ISF conducted the operation to uphold their responsibilities and loyalty to the martyrs who fell in an aerial attack by the Turkish state in the region of Hemze Beg.

Eli Hesên said that the operation on 27 October night aimed at preserving public peace and combatting drug networks. 42 drug dealers and users were taken into custody in the operation, while a large quantity of drugs and weapons were confiscated.

The materials confiscated during the operation include the following: 557 thousand Captagon pills, 60 bunches of opium leaves used in drug production, 2 Kalashnikov rifles and 13 magazines, 261 Kalashnikov bullets, 3 rifles and 6 magazines, 53 handgun bullets, 41 BKC bullets, 5 el handgrenades, 2,700 kg crystal pills and 23 mobile phones.

Remarking that the operation was the first phase in the Hemze Beg Martyrs Vengeance Campaign, Eli Hesên added: “Our operations will continue until social peace is achieved. The cooperation of the population and their forces is of vital importance for the maintenance of security and stability.”



Operations by SDF in Raqqa: one ISIS operative captured

ANF | 28 OCTOBER 2023

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) issued a statement about the capture of an ISIS terrorist in Raqqa.

The statement said: “On 26 October our Anti-Terrorism Units (YAT), supported by air surveillance from the International Coalition, conducted a security operation in the heart of Raqqa city, targeting the terrorist Muhannad al-Dandah aka Abu Muhammed al-Muahid. The man was an official in an ISIS terrorist cell, and he was responsible for providing the ISIS cells with the intelligence to carry out terrorist acts targeting military points and civil institutions in the region.”

The statement said: “Our forces successfully raided the building where the terrorist was hiding and apprehended him and confiscated the following equipment: Smartphones /7/; Mobile phone /1/; Personal documents and IDs; Wi-Fi Router /1/

Our dedicated forces, in close partnership with the International Coalition, will persistently pursue ISIS cells in the region to eliminate them and maintain security and stability in the region.”

— ★ —

Residents of village under military siege for three months forced to leave their homes

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 28 OCTOBER 2023

The blockade and de facto ban imposed by the Turkish army in the village of Bilbês in Beytüşşebap (Elkê) have continued for three months now.

Following Turkish military attacks on the areas of Red Deresi, Öküzburun Tepe, Siyahçeşme Dere and Ballı Deresi in the vicinity of the village, the governorate of Şırnak banned entry and exit in and out of the village twice from 29 July to 23 August.

While the ban remained in place, soldiers stormed many houses and detained villagers amidst military deployment, aerial attacks and prohibition of locals from getting out of their homes and grazing their sheep and cattle.

In the face of the ongoing de facto ban, inhabitants complaining about never-ending repression and military siege intend to leave their village.

Speaking to Mezopotamya agency (MA), residents of the village said: “Soldiers are still stationed in the rural areas. They storm our houses whenever they wish, and conduct detailed searches. There is a ban in the entire village and we are not even allowed to take care of our cattle. Most of us have already sold their ani-

mals and left the village, and the rest have started to do so. We are faced with forced displacement and evacuation of the village. There were 30 houses in the village and the household of 10 has already left. The others will also leave soon before the winter begins.”

The village of Ormaniçi (ku: Bana) in the Güçlükönak district has also been under military siege since late July after the eruption of skirmishes between the Kurdish guerrillas and Turkish soldiers. A de facto state of emergency has been in place in the village since and there is a ban on entering and leaving the village. The residents who make a living from animal husbandry are not even allowed to take care of their gardens and they have been forced to take their cattle to other villages.

The inhabitants of the village said that their village has been under military siege for three months. They expressed that they cannot enter their gardens until they are granted ‘permission’.



Feminicide

Women in Düsseldorf call for the release of Abdullah Öcalan

ANF | DÜSSELDORF | 22 OCTOBER 2023

The Kurdish women’s movement held an international forum in Düsseldorf with the slogan “Freedom will win”.

Around 300 women from Germany, France, Switzerland, Sweden, Catalonia, Italy, the Basque Country and other places took part in the event.

Members of the Kurdish women’s movement in Europe (TJK-E), the Eastern Kurdish women’s association KJAR, the movement of militant young women (Jinên Ciwan ên Têkoşer, TekoJIN), the Alevi association FEDA, the Yazidi women’s council, women’s organizations from the autonomous region of northern and eastern Syria, the Academy of Democratic Modernity, internationalist initiatives and the KOMAW association, in which relatives of the fallen are organized, attended the event.

Women’s liberation and the influence of Abdullah Öcalan

The forum was moderated by Gülistan Ike. At the first session, Gönül Kaya (TJK-E) spoke about the perspectives on women’s liberation presented by Abdullah Öcalan and the implications in the Middle East. Kaya said that Öcalan’s isolation in Turkish custody goes against his paradigm and the women’s liberation struggle.

Lawyer Raziye Öztürk from the Asrin Legal Office, which represents Abdullah Öcalan and his three fellow prisoners on the prison island of İmralı, explained the illegality of their solitary confinement conditions, which are neither covered by Turkish nor international law and are open violations of universal standards.

Öcalan last had contact with his lawyers in August 2019, and written or telephone communication is also not possible. Raziye Öztürk particularly pointed out the responsibility of the European Committee against Torture (CPT), which is the only institution that has the opportunity to inspect detention centers in Council of Europe member states at any time.

Feminist scholar and activist Yanira Hermida Martin and many representatives of the participating organizations, spoke about the influence of Abdullah Öcalan on the women's movement and expressed their support for the international campaign "Freedom for Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question" launched on 10 October.

A joint statement by the participants called for Öcalan's release and called for participation in the campaign.



Two female journalists sentenced to prison for reporting on the killing of Jina Amini

ANF | 22 OCTOBER 2023

The Iranian judiciary announced the sentences in the cases against journalists Elaheh Mohammadi and Nilufar Hamed, who were among the first media workers in Iran to report on the killing of Jina Mahsa Amini in Tehran on 16 September 2022.

Branch 15 of the Islamic Revolutionary Court ruled that the two journalists were found guilty of three separate crimes.

Elahe Mohammadi was sentenced to 6 years in prison for "collaboration with the enemy state of the U.S."; to 5 years for "plot to endanger national security", and to 1 year for "propaganda against the state".

Nilufar Hamed was sentenced to 7 years in prison for "collaboration with the enemy state of the U.S."; to 5 years for "conspiracy against national security" and to 1 year for "propaganda against the state".

The two journalists were also banned from membership in political parties, organisations and associations for up to two years.

Background

Jina Mahsa Amini was arrested by the morality police on 13 September 2022 on one of Tehran's streets for wearing her hijab "inappropriately".

Less than two hours after being taken to the Morality Police building on Vozara Street in Tehran, she was taken to Kasra Hospital in an unconscious state due to the severity of the blows to her head inflicted by the officers.

According to published reports, Amini was brain-dead when she was hospitalised. She died three days later, on 16 September, at Kasra Hospital in Tehran.

Although the Islamic Republic, as usual, announced Amini's cause of death as "a heart attack caused by an underlying illness", her family rejected this claim, insisting that their child was perfectly healthy before her arrest.

Several eyewitnesses among the detainees in the same van that took Amini to a detention centre, later confirmed that police officers used violence and beat the young woman severely, fracturing her skull.



'The guerrilla will be victorious in the spirit of Bêrîtan'

RÜSTEM KURTALAN | BEHDINAN | 22 OCTOBER 2023

Guerrillas from the Free Women's Troops (YJA Star) spoke to ANF on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the death of ARGK guerrilla fighter Beritan (Gülnaz Karataş). Bêrîtan Hêvî was a guerrilla commander and pioneer of the Women's Army who threw herself into an abyss in Southern Kurdistan (Northern Iraq) on 25 October 1992 to avoid falling into the hands of the KDP, which collaborated with Turkey.

Because of her exceptional courage and her passionate character, Beritan became a historical figure for the Kurds. Songs were written and innumerable newborns were named after her. Her life was portrayed in the movie "Beritan" by Kurdish director Halil Dag in 2006.

YJA Star guerrilla Zelal Mêrdîn said that Bêrîtan Hêvî was a symbol of freedom, stating: "Comrade Bêrîtan's action had repercussions everywhere and left a lasting impression on our people. Her name is still legendary among the people. Her action became a voice against treason. Influenced by Comrade Bêrîtan's action, those who betrayed their roots and people laid down their weapons. Comrade Bêrîtan defeated the line of betrayal and opened a new page in the history of Kurdistan."

Zelal Mêrdîn pointed out that thousands of guerrillas are today inflicting blows on the enemy in the spirit of Bêrîtan Hêvî today. She continued: "We are resisting the Turkish state which persists in invading the lands of Kurdistan, which, we, however, will never leave to the occupiers. The followers of the KDP's course of betrayal should know that we will continue our actions against the invading Turkish state. On the other hand, the Turkish state should know that its collaboration with the KDP will achieve no results because the sacrificial fighters of Leader Apo (Abdullah Öcalan) are committed to their cause for freedom."

YJA Star gerillası Bêrîtan Serhat stated: "Comrade Bêrîtan's action had a broad repercussion because it did not only defy the limits of courage and sacrifice, but also played a major role on the path of women's freedom. Comrade Bêrîtan was new in the organization, but she developed herself very quickly and proved

her commitment. Knowing Comrade Bêrîtan is knowing the reality of women. This was also the reason why I joined the struggle. I was impressed a lot when I watched the film about her. We considered Comrade Bêrîtan to be a pioneer and that led me to the ranks of the struggle for freedom.”

Serhat continued: “The struggle of women reached a peak thanks to Comrade Bêrîtan. As her successors, we will carry our resistance to the highest level.”

Dicle Efrîn said: “It is thanks to Comrade Bêrîtan that the women’s army and the will of women emerged. She did not exert an influence on the women’s struggle within the PKK alone. She was also the source of inspiration to the oppressed women in social sphere. Comrade Bêrîtan played the greatest role in the struggle of women. She manifested a stand and gave a message against betrayal. She is the most concrete example of the resistance of free women.”

Dicle Efrîn continued: “Our resistance takes its basis from Comrade Bêrîtan. We will consolidate the army of women, the foundations of which were laid by her. We call on everyone to get to know Comrade Bêrîtan, to take her commitment and will as an example and to take a stand against betrayal. Our stance is clear. We will make no concessions on our struggle against betrayal and the invading Turkish state.”

— ★ —

Beritan, a symbol of the PKK’s resistance

ANF | 25 OCTOBER 2023

On 25 October 1992, a Kurdish female guerrilla, Gülnaz Karataş (nom de guerre: Beritan), was encircled by a group of KDP peshmergas on a hilltop in Xakurke, Southern Kurdistan.

The peshmergas were collaborating with the Turkish army as a part of a large-scale operation against the PKK. With the support of the Turkish army, the peshmergas attacked a PKK position in Xakurke. Despite being outnumbered and outgunned, Kurdish guerrillas continued to resist.

Gülnaz Karataş was one of the few female fighters at that time. She joined the PKK in May 1991 and had limited experience of guerrilla warfare. Her group was defending a hilltop position. She ordered her team to withdraw to a safer location. She fought until her last bullet.

When the peshmergas realized that Beritan had no more ammunition left, they started to move closer. The commander of the peshmergas called on her to surrender. She did not respond.

The peshmerga commander got closer and closer, talking to her constantly to convince her to surrender. When he saw Beritan, she was standing on the edge of a rock. Instead of surrounding the peshmergas, she made a quick move and threw herself off a cliff. She chose to die with dignity rather than surrendering.

After her refusal to surrender, Beritan became a legend in Xakurke. Her story was told by the peshmergas who tried to capture her. Most of them laid down their arms and stopped fighting against the PKK after what Beritan did.

Because of her exceptional courage and her passionate character, Beritan became a historical figure for the Kurds. Songs were written and innumerable newborns were named after her. Her life was portrayed in the movie “Beritan” by Kurdish director Halil Dag in 2006.

Her grave was discovered in 2005. Her body was transferred to a guerrilla-controlled area and reburied with a huge ceremony.

BERITAN

Gülnaz Karataş, Beritan, was born in Solhan, a district of Bingöl province, in 1971. Her family is originally from Dersim. She attended school in Elazığ and wasn't aware of her Kurdish identity until she was 18 years old.

She was arrested for her activism in 1990 but released soon after. She joined the PKK on May 9, 1991 in the Cudi mountains, Şırnak. Because of her bravery, she was sent to the area of Şemzînan (Şemdinli) in 1992 as commander of a small force.

When the Turkish operation against Southern Kurdistan started, Beritan was in Xakurke. She fought a fierce battle against the Turkish army and collaborators. On 25 October 1992 she threw herself off a cliff instead of surrendering.

As a one-year-old guerrilla fighter, Beritan established military and ideological standards, especially for the women's movement, and became a great symbol for the PKK's resistance.

With her suicide, she showed every woman that an alternative choice is possible against oppression, patriarchy, betrayal and surrender.

— ★ —

YJA Star guerrillas: Commander Bêrîtan is an example

AMARA HARUN | BEHDINAN | 26 OCTOBER 2023

31 years ago, on 25 October 1992, guerrilla commander Bêrîtan Hêvî (Gülnaz Karataş) fell as a martyr in South Kurdistan.

The ‘Southern War’, in which Bêrîtan died, broke out after the proclamation of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region in northern Iraq on 4 October 1992. When regional and global actors, above all the Turkish state, gave the green light to a federal system, the southern Kurdish parties PUK and KDP demanded a joint war against the PKK in return. As a result, the forces of South Kurdistan went to war alongside the Turkish army against the PKK guerrillas. The aim was to push the guerrillas primarily from the Heftanin, Zap and Xakurke regions.

Surrounded by KDP peshmerga fighters in Xakurke, Bêrîtan refused calls to surrender. She fought to the last bullet, destroyed her weapon and jumped to her death from a rock to avoid being captured. Her action has since been seen as an example of Kurdish women's determination against betrayal and surrender.

Shortly after Bêrîtan's death, the first steps towards establishing a women's army were taken. Today, the Free Women Troops (YJA Star) play a leading role in the guerrilla struggle in Kurdistan. ANF talked to three YJA Star guerrillas about what they have in common with Bêrîtan and her resistance.

Arjîn Roj: Comrade Bêrîtan refused to surrender

Guerrilla Arjîn Roj said that the 1992 war broke out due to attacks by the KDP and PUK and was based on treason. "This war lasted for forty days. There were leading female guerrillas. Comrade Bêrîtan had a special position at that time. She fought like a commander because she knew and understood the ideology of Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan]. Comrade Bêrîtan never met him, but she read a lot and internalized his ideology. She knew what the will of free women meant. Her personality did not allow for surrender. When she was asked to surrender, she jumped off a rock. She did not accept betrayal and surrender."

"The YJA Star was founded on the battle line of friends like Bêrîtan, Sema, Zilan and Gulan. The women's associations were created with the intention that the courage and abilities of women should never remain in the shadow of men. Delal, Bêrîtan, Azê, Çavrê and Gulan became symbols of the resistance of free women. Women who join us from different places around the world also find their freedom on this line. They come to us based on the philosophy of Rêber Apo. The YJA Star has existed for thirty years. Our fight today is based on this legacy."

Barîn Nûjîn: Bêrîtan symbolizes the YJA Star

Barîn Nûjîn said: "Comrade Bêrîtan was our leading figure. Thanks to her, the women's associations were founded. She was a leader and commander in life, friendship and war, always focused on women's liberation. When she fell, the associations of free women were founded. For us, she is a symbolic figure that gives us strength in life. Your life gives us strength. Delal Amed, Ronahî, Zilan and many others, whose names I can't even list, were also our leading figures. Thanks to them, a strong stance has emerged. We draw our strength and our conviction from the philosophy of Rêber Apo. As women's organizations, with this philosophy we have a strong stance both in life and in war. Comrade Bêrîtan had this attitude. We take her as an example."

Dunya Havîn: So that the line of treason does not win

Guerrilla Dunya Havîn said: "The 1992 war was waged on betrayal and against the will of women and the achievements of the Kurdish people. Comrade Bêrîtan dealt with the philosophy of Rêber Apo. She took a stand so that the line of treason did not win. When she was asked to surrender and given promises, she refused. She did not accept Kurds betraying Kurds. She didn't surrender. Because she didn't want her weapon to fall into the hands of the traitors, she kissed and destroyed it before jumping. With this willpower and conviction, we will also enforce the physical freedom of Rêber Apo."

YPJ Commander Rohilat Efrin: Bêrîtan's line of resistance is our foundation

HIVDA HEBUN | QAMISHLO | 26 OCTOBER 2023

Bêrîtan Hêvî has become a symbol of hope and resistance. The guerrilla commander was encircled by KDP peshmerga 31 years ago, on 25 October 1992, and refused to surrender. Instead, she resisted to the last bullet, destroyed her weapon to prevent it from falling into enemy hands, and threw herself off a cliff to avoid capture. She became the symbol of the women's army that was founded shortly afterwards. Rohilat Efrîn from the General Command of the Women's Defence Units (YPJ) spoke to ANF about the significance of Bêrîtan today.

The YPJ commander pointed to the legacy left by Bêrîtan and said, "We congratulate the women of the Middle East and the world on the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Free Women's Army. Just as the women's army has represented the will of the free woman in the past and in the present, it will continue to do so in the future. If we look at the history of humanity, there have been many attacks on society, its will and culture, and on women's identity. Around the world, many women's movements and individual women have risen up, resisted and fought patriarchy. Many women were tortured in this resistance, hundreds were burnt to death. But the wave of women's resistance and struggle against the patriarchal system continued.

"The women's army is more than a military organisation"

In terms of Kurdish reality, this means that the freedom movement, which organised itself under the leadership of free women against a fascist mentality that suffocated society in a system of slavery, built a women's army 30 years ago. This process continues to this day. Of course, the women's army should not be seen only as a military organisation. An army of free women means creating independent ideological, organisational, philosophical and women's studies knowledge and consciousness. It is necessary to look at the women's army in this light. Over the past 30 years, the women's army under the leadership of YJA Star has left a deep impression on women in the Middle East and around the world. It has a great effect on women who are enslaved and subjected to unjust and despotic systems. In this sense, the women's army is an expression of a counter-movement, a voice against injustice and inequality. It has given willpower to women who could not stand up for themselves, who could not defend their rights themselves, who could not express themselves in their own language and culture, and in the light of Rêber Apo's [Abdullah Öcalan's] philosophy, it has become for the benefit of all women in the world. Women all over the world have recognised and redefined themselves in this philosophy."

"YPJ has been fighting in the line of Bêrîtan for eleven years"

Rohilat Efrîn spoke about the many internationalist women who have joined the YPJ and continued: "The YPJ has been waging a great struggle for eleven to twelve years. It is a continuation of the thirty-year legacy of the free women's army and its great resistance. We have been fighting against the attitude of denying peoples' languages and cultures, occupying cities and trampling on people's livelihoods and values for years. From Kobanê to Afrin to Serêkaniyê, the YPJ has waged a great struggle against ISIS. ISIS has

received support behind the scenes from many international powers and states. ISIS has been particularly aggressive against women. In contrast, the YPJ took a leading position in the struggle. Without a doubt, the YPJ has drawn its strength from the legacy of 30 years of women's resistance. Many women of different identities and backgrounds have participated in this struggle in Rojava. Women from many parts of the world joined the ranks of the YPJ and became pioneers of this spirit of resistance. The YPJ has defeated the most ruthless of dark forces in Rojava as an army and as a movement. They have become an identity and have made their voice heard in the world. They stand for a culture of resistance. This resistance has had an impact on many women and women's movements. These movements are coming to the fore today.

“Bêrîtan's action was an action of freedom against the line of betrayal”

Comrade Bêrîtan's resistance against the betrayal continues to have an effect until today. Comrade Bêrîtan carried out an action of freedom against the surrender imposed by the traitor mentality. The action of Comrade Bêrîtan means the following for us: Comrade Bêrîtan said to a power like the KDP, which has been following the line of betrayal for years, ‘You will surrender to us, not we to you’. The line of Comrade Bêrîtan is a line that we are implementing ideologically, organisationally, militarily and in every way. It is a line that brings together all women who oppose treason and will never surrender to it. Just as Besê and Zarife did not surrender to the occupiers in the history of Kurdistan, Comrade Bêrîtan grew up with the culture they had created and built her resistance on it. She clearly showed that wherever surrender and betrayal are imposed, there must be resistance and a culture of never surrendering.

Today, the YPJ puts up the greatest resistance against all occupying powers on the basis of this heritage. It has developed a culture, idea and philosophy from this heritage. The YPJ will continue to uphold this stance in the future. However, the KDP's course based on betrayal and surrender against the line of resistance also continues to this day. The Turkish state attacks our areas and cities every day. We have thousands of martyrs and will continue to have martyrs every day. The KDP takes its place as a collaborator alongside this occupying power. It wants to spread a line of surrender among our people and our defence forces. It attacks the achievements of the resistance in Rojava. Of course, all women and our people in Rojava should take a stand against this course. The surrender to be imposed on us by the enemy means the eradication of our land, culture and values. The strongest reaction and the strongest stance against this betrayal is to oppose it in struggle and in insisting on the right path. People like Bêrîtan are great examples of this in our history. We as YPJ have been resisting and fighting for eleven years, and even today the line of resistance is our guide. We are convinced that with this attitude and determination, our people will also persist in the line of resistance.”



Women in Frankfurt vow common fight against femicides

ANF | FRANKFURT | 27 OCTOBER 2023

According to incomplete counts by the One Billion Rising initiative, as of 21 October 2023, at least 159 women and girls have been murdered this year and 120 women have been injured, some critically. Many of the murders and attempted murders involve acts committed by men against partners, ex-partners and/or children. These acts are still trivialized as “family or jealousy crimes” and “partnership violence”. But

they are based on contempt for women and hatred. They are patriarchal hate crimes that can only be combated if they are named as such. Women's movements have been working in this sense for years. In Frankfurt am Main, the Amara Women's Council organized an event together with Women Defend Rojava under the slogan "Common fight against femicides".

During the event, among others, an activist from the AG Process Support for the Femicide of Besma A. spoke. The group has been following the trial of Besma A.'s murder for the past two years.

27-year-old Besma A. was murdered by her 51-year-old husband, Cemal A., in their apartment in Göttingen three years ago. The man was sentenced to 13 years in prison for murder and illegal possession of weapons. The women criticized, among other things, the fact that the court repeatedly relativized gender-specific violence and even failed to classify the crime as a gender-specific homicide in the reasons for the verdict. The activists reported on their initiatives on the streets to raise awareness of the issue of femicide.

The platform representative emphasized the importance of raising public awareness of the issue of femicide, as "partner violence" is never gender neutral.

Zeynep Zelal spoke on behalf of the Kurdish women's movement in Europe, TJKE. She reported how the TJKE is trying to combat the patriarchal attitude in society through campaigns, organizational and information work and how it has already managed to change a lot in society. Zelal pointed out how necessary it is, in addition to raising awareness among women, to combat the patriarchal mindset and the institutions of patriarchy. This requires, she said, increased organization. She once again publicized the campaign of the Kurdish women's movement under the slogan "With Jin, Jiyan, Azadî for the women's revolution" and called for broad participation.



Special units of YJA Star send message to mark 31st anniversary of martyrdom of Bêrîtan

AMARA HARUN | 27 OCTOBER 2023

Special forces of the YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) sent a message from the war tunnels in the Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) on the occasion of the 31st anniversary of the death of freedom fighter Bêrîtan Hêvî (Gülnaz Karataş). The guerrilla commander was surrounded by KDP Peshmerga 31 years ago, on 25 October 1992, and refused to surrender. Instead, she resisted to the last cartridge, destroyed her weapon so that it would not fall into enemy hands, and threw herself from a rock to avoid being captured. She became a symbol of the women's army that was founded afterwards.

'We struggle with the attitude of Comrade Bêrîtan'

The statement from the women fighters resisting the Turkish army in war tunnels said: "We salute the 30th anniversary of the founding of our women's army. We warmly greet Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan], who did a great deal for the founding of the Women's Army. By bowing before our immortal commander,

Comrade Bêrîtan, we bow in respect to all the martyrs of the revolution. We take the example of Comrade Bêrîtan, who fought the enemy to the last bullet and refused any surrender. Before she took her last breath, she threw herself into the arms of freedom. With this attitude she struck the enemy in the heart. Martyr Bêrîtan defines the line of our struggle. As a YJA star, we fight in the footsteps of Comrade Bêrîtan, Delal Amed, Leyla Sorxwîn and Axîn Muş.”

‘We are everywhere’

The message continued: “The enemy should know that as YJA Star, we are everywhere, sometimes on the tops of mountains, sometimes just a breath away from them. Sara and Rûken’s successors will never stop. We will follow the path of our commanders, Zilan, Bêrîtan, Ruken and Sara, until our last breath. No matter how much the enemy attacks us, no matter how many forbidden weapons he uses, he will not succeed against the guerrillas. He can never break our will. Today, the guerrillas led by YJA Star are inflicting heavy blows on the enemy. Our people should also know this: our actions against the enemy will continue. We will not stop until isolation is broken, until our country is liberated, until Rêber Apo regains his physical freedom. The forces of treason collaborating with the enemy must now stop. That was also Comrade Bêrîtan’s demand. We also have the right to live freely in our country with our culture, language and history. We appeal to young women; they should no longer accept living in a system of rapists. Our people in Bakur are known for their resistance and uprisings to this day. They should be wary of the enemy’s special wars. As YJA Star fighters we will never give up our fight. As a force, we are ready to make any sacrifice for Rêber Apo and our people. We face all kinds of attacks and we will resist.”



Many detained in renewed police attack on Saturday Mothers in Istanbul

ANF | ISTANBUL | 28 OCTOBER 2023

Turkish police have again attacked the Saturday Mothers in Istanbul. The relatives of people who have disappeared in state custody and their supporters wanted to demand clarification and the punishment of the perpetrators for the 970th time today in the central Galatasary Square, and around twenty people were taken into custody. The rally site was besieged by security forces in advance, as it is every Saturday. When the relatives of the disappeared, accompanied by human rights activists, the HEDEP MP Kezban Konukçu and the HDP politician Musa Piroğlu approached the square, they were surrounded by the police and handcuffed and taken away using force. Journalists were pushed back by the police and prevented from doing their work. HEDEP MP Kezban Konukçu was also forcibly pushed back when she tried to document the police operation.

The Human Rights Association (IHD) has shown solidarity with the Saturday Mothers in several cities in Turkey and publicly read out the statement that was prevented by force in Istanbul. Every week, the Saturday Mothers focus on a case of disappeared persons in state custody. This week, the case of Huseyin Toraman was presented. Toraman was abducted in Istanbul in 1991 and has been missing since. The IHD

branches in Urfa, Van, Adana, Antalya and Izmir demanded a complete investigation of the case and the conviction of those responsible.

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

HEDEP Co-Chair calls for an end to Israeli attacks on Gaza and Turkish attacks on Rojava

ANF | ANKARA | 22 OCTOBER 2023

The Women's Council of the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (HEDEP) met for the first time in Ankara to discuss current political developments and the demands of the coming period. The Co-Chair of HEDEP, Tülay Hatimoğulları, gave an introductory statement in which she commented on the attacks on Palestine and Rojava, among other things, and criticised the hypocrisy of the Erdogan government.

Tülay Hatimoğulları said that two million people are struggling to survive in a confined space due to the Israeli attack in Gaza: “It is not possible to accept the attacks on Gaza. Women’s souls and bodies are being shattered in this war. We have already seen how women’s bodies have been exposed in this war and what kind of policies are being pursued. The systematic rape of women’s bodies has been used as a method in wars throughout history.”

At the same time as the attacks on the Gaza Strip, the north and east of Syria were also bombed, said Tülay Hatimoğulları and continued: “In Rojava, power plants, hospitals, petrol stations, schools and residential areas were bombed. Five million people were targeted by these attacks. Israel wants to expel the Palestinians living in Gaza into the desert, even though Egypt does not accept this. While the government of Turkey opposes this, it has done the same in Afrin. The 2018 invasion displaced the Kurdish population and worked on a major demographic change in Afrin. Now this project is meant to be extended to all of Rojava. We cannot accept this. In the Middle East, there are two fundamental wounds that are a seething problem: one is the Kurdish question and the other is the Palestinian question. Until these two problems are resolved on a democratic basis outside the nation-state understanding through a confederal administration, the region will not be at peace.”

The HEDEP Co-Chair continued: “Israel must urgently stop the attacks on Palestine, equally the Erdogan region must stop the attacks on Rojava. All armed elements of Turkey must immediately withdraw from Syria. The key to solving the Kurdish question through peaceful and democratic methods must be found, especially in Turkey, and we must build a process in which the Kurdish people can live peacefully, equally and fraternally in the four parts of Kurdistan and this is constitutionally guaranteed. Let us all stand together with the Kurdish people and the Palestinian people more than ever.”

In order to end the war, HEDEP appeals to women all over the world, especially in the Middle East, Tülay Hatimoğulları said: “We can create a peace action together by crossing borders and joining hands in an internationalist sense. The whole world, especially the Middle East, desperately needs this. We women can stop the bloodshed with our solidarity and struggle.”

Hatimoğulları also commented on the aggravated isolation regime imposed on Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan who has been held in a solitary cell on İmralı Prison Island since 15 February 1999, and subjected to total incommunicado imprisonment over the past three years, denied meetings with his lawyers and family members.

Hatimoğulları highlighted the importance of Öcalan and his freedom for the resolution of the Kurdish question and other problems experienced by the people of the region. “Women in Turkey and Kurdish women should join hands and pave the way for peace,” she said.

Police take DBP Party Assembly Member Gültepe into custody

ANF | ISTANBUL | 23 OCTOBER 2023

Some houses in Istanbul were raided by Turkish police in the morning. Democratic Regions Party (DBP) Party Assembly Member Ali Gültepe and Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) Member Cüneyt Yeşilyurt were taken into custody during the raids. Gültepe and Yeşilyurt were taken to the Istanbul Police Department.



Political extermination campaign continues unabated

ANF | 23 OCTOBER 2023

The AKP/MHP regime in Turkey continues its campaign of political destruction to eliminate the Kurdish and democratic opposition. Five politicians and activists of the HDP (Peoples' Democratic Party) and its Kurdish sister party DBP (Democratic Regions Party) and a journalist were taken into custody on Monday for yet unknown accusations.

Nafiye Bal, editor of the Kurdish weekly daily Xwebûn, was taken into custody today following a police raid on her flat in Amed (Diyarbakır). Nafiye Bal was taken to the provincial police department and referred to the courthouse.

In Muş, HDP provincial co-chair Bermal Nergiz was detained after police stormed her flat and conducted a detailed search this morning. Nergiz was taken to the provincial police department.

In Istanbul, several flats were simultaneously stormed and meticulously searched by units of the Counter-Terrorism Department early this morning. Ali Gültepe of the DBP party council and HDP activist Cüneyt Yeşilyurt were taken into custody and brought to Istanbul police headquarters. Lawyers' circles said that the number of detentions could increase further in the course of the day.

In Tekirdağ province, west of Istanbul, Rıdvan Ulaşman, co-chair of the Ereğli district branch of the HDP, and Niyazi Artun, a member of the HDP executive committee in the Çerkezköy district, were detained today. Further detentions are also expected here, according to reports.

In Turkey, detention operations against the democratic opposition take place daily. Those who are politically, socially or civically active never know when they go to sleep whether the door of their flat will be smashed by the police in the morning. Often, it is also Kurdish civil society and media activists who are targeted. In Amed, Selahattin Kaygusuz, a journalist working in Batman, has been in police custody since Thursday. He is apparently being investigated on suspicion of "terror" support, and a transfer to the public prosecutor's office is planned for today. The case is connected to incriminating statements made by the key witness, Ümit Akbıyık. The former HDP activist has already incriminated hundreds of opposition figures in order to enjoy immunity from prosecution. The names were usually provided by the police.



Five people imprisoned in Siirt

ANF | SIIRT | 23 OCTOBER 2023

Five people were taken into custody on October 19 in an operation carried out by the police and military forces in the İdil district of Şırnak province in line with an investigation launched by the Chief Public Prosecutor's Office in Siirt.

The detainees, who included HDP (Peoples' Democratic Party) General Provincial Council Member Adnan Bel, were referred to Siirt Courthouse today.

All the five detainees were remanded in custody for "membership in a terrorist organization", "aiding and abetting a terrorist organization" and "disseminating propaganda for a terrorist organization".



Police search HDP Cizre District building

ANF | CIZRE | 24 OCTOBER 2023

The Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) building in Cizre (Cizîr), in the province of Şırnak, was raided by Turkish police in the morning.

During the raid, a computer, a booklet called "Blockade in Cizre" and a photograph of Mazlum Doğan were confiscated.

It was learned that the raid was carried out within the scope of an investigation launched by the Şırnak Chief Public Prosecutor's Office.



No news from 5 workers from Maxmur taken into custody by KDP forces

ANF | MAXMUR | 24 OCTOBER 2023

On 17 October, a Turkish drone targeted a vehicle belonging to refugees from Maxmur in the Koyê district of Hewlêr and killed Dilovan İşlek.

Zagros Atalay, Muhammed Nuri Avcı, Muhammed Şirin Avcı, Ahmet Baytaş, Bêwar Baytaş, from Maxmur, were working in Baghdad. They went to collect the body of Dilovan İşlek, but were detained by KDP forces at the checkpoint called Bîrebas in Hewlêr.

After receiving information that they were detained, the families of the 5 workers went to the center where they were held and asked about the fate of their relatives. The KDP forces, who initially denied the five were in their custody, eventually said that they handed them over to the Hewlêr Public Order forces. The families are very worried.



Up to 15 years in prison sought for journalist Beritan Canözer

ANF | AMED | 25 OCTOBER 2023

The trial of the Kurdish journalist Beritan Canözer began at the 10th Heavy Penal Court in Diyarbakır (ku. Amed) on Wednesday. The correspondent of the all-female news agency JinNews is accused of being a member of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party). Canözer is one of four Kurdish media workers arrested at the end of April. This followed a nationwide operation against the Kurdish opposition and civil society, in the course of which around 200 people were taken into custody, including politicians from the Green Left Party and the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), lawyers and activists from the arts and culture. More than sixty people were subsequently arrested for membership of or support for the PKK, taking them out of circulation just weeks before the parliamentary and presidential elections. The entire case is based on statements made by the key witness, Ümit Akbıyık, a former HDP member who incriminated around 800 opposition members in order to enjoy immunity from prosecution.

Beritan Canözer was in pre-trial detention for two months and was released in June. She attended the trial accompanied by her lawyer, Muharrem Erbey. The witness was included in the trial via the video conferencing system (SEGBIS). The trial was observed by the Association of Mesopotamian Journalists Association (MKG), Dicle Fırat Journalists Association (DFG) and the Media and Law Studies Association (MLSA).

The prosecution is demanding a prison sentence of between seven and a half and 15 years for Beritan Canözer. The defendant explained in court that she had not met the key witness personally and only knew about his involvement in the HDP Youth Council from the media. In the indictment, articles written by her were listed as evidence for the prosecution, the journalist said and continued: "These articles are reports with clear sources. I am known as a journalist, and I do not practise this profession in secret. I have been accused in the past because of my articles and acquitted. I mainly report on women and children. We are the voice of women and children who are murdered, raped and abused. I talk to women politicians about this, and I don't discriminate. Journalism and written articles are not a crime. I reject the allegations against me."

The witness, who was also unable to corroborate the allegations, argued that he had met the defendant in 2018 at the HDP headquarters in Amed when she wanted to do a report on a concert. He claimed that Canözer had reported on the HDP Youth Council and had been seen in Sur together with "members of

the organisation”. He alleged she had also taken young women from the HDP Youth Council to the Jine-olojî Academy. “That's all I have to say,” said the key witness. The trial was adjourned until 8 December.

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MFRR report: Journalists in Turkey are faced with trumped-up charges

ANF | 25 OCTOBER 2023

The Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR) publishes the latest edition of the consortium's [monitoring report](#), compiling and analysing all media freedom violations recorded on Mapping Media Freedom between January and June 2023 in all EU Member States and candidate countries.

In the six-month period, the MFRR partners recorded 575 media freedom violations in European Union Member States and candidate countries, involving 844 individuals or media outlets. 307 of those took place in EU Member States, while 268 occurred in candidate countries.

The current monitoring report offers an overview of the media freedom situation across the EU and candidate countries in the first half of 2023, and it starts with a thematic chapter on the crackdown on independent media in Turkey amidst devastating earthquakes and national elections that took place at the beginning of the year, followed by a chapter on the war in Ukraine and its repercussions on media freedom.

Highlights from the MFRR report in the Turkey chapter are as follows:

The large-scale crackdown on press freedom and systemic repression of independent media in Turkey continued in the aftermath of the devastating February earthquakes and in the run-up to the presidential and parliamentary elections in May.

Within the reporting period, the MFRR documented a record number of press and media freedom violations in the country – 136 cases involving 172 persons or media entities.

Arbitrary arrests and imprisonment as tools of oppression

Legal incidents remained the most common threat to press freedom in Turkey, making up nearly half (44.9%) of the recorded cases. Arbitrary arrests, criminal charges, and convictions were continuously used to intimidate journalists and silence critical and independent reporting.

Accusations of terrorism, “insulting public officials”, “insulting the president” and “openly inciting people to hatred and enmity” were often used in the trumped-up charges against journalists. Turkey remained one of the biggest jailers of journalists in the world. At the time of publishing, 21 journalists were imprisoned.

In April, at least 10 Kurdish journalists were arrested during coordinated dawn raids across Turkey that targeted the homes and offices of 126 people, including journalists, lawyers, rights defenders, political

activists, and artists in 21 provinces in relation to anti-terror investigations led by the Diyarbakır Chief Public Prosecutor's Office.

The raids took place in the run-up to the parliamentary and presidential elections in Turkey, which were held on 14 May, and represented another step in the systematic harassment and intimidation of journalists reporting on issues of public interest, in particular those of Kurdish descent.

On several occasions, journalists, including foreign reporters, were blocked from entering Turkey, or detained while attempting to leave the country.

Journalists covering earthquakes and elections subjected to physical violence

Journalists in Turkey were often subjected to physical violence, especially by private individuals, while covering the elections and earthquake-hit areas. Public officials and their security guards were also behind several physical assaults on journalists.

Instead of protecting press freedom, RTÜK continues targeting free media

Turkey's government-controlled media regulator, the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), continued sanctioning media outlets in a discriminatory manner due to their critical reporting, especially on the earthquakes and elections. The sanctions consisted of monetary fines and temporary bans on TV programmes.

Turkish courts issued access blocking orders on hundreds of news articles and social media posts, and due to the large volume of these violations, not all of them could be recorded on MapME.

Verbal harassment of reporters covering earthquake aftermath

In the aftermath of the devastating February earthquakes, reporters were repeatedly obstructed from carrying out their work in the disaster areas, most often by the police, but also by private individuals and public authorities. Journalists also faced severe verbal harassment and threats from citizens while reporting from the earthquake zone.

Politicians, pro-government media, and RTÜK publicly discredited, threatened, and intimidated independent news outlets and journalists, especially over their critical reporting of the earthquake aftermath. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan threatened widespread retaliation for spreading "disinformation" about the earthquakes, and RTÜK chairperson Ebubekir Şahin intimidated and targeted journalists and broadcasters covering the disaster on several occasions.

Access to Twitter (X) limited during critical times

Soon after the earthquakes, local sources reported that access to X, formerly known as Twitter, was temporarily blocked by the government. Turkish authorities also arbitrarily denied journalists' accreditation to the earthquake areas, and later on, multiple reporters were prevented from covering the voting processes in different cities.

Ahead of the national elections in May, X announced that, in compliance with legal requests from Turkey, the platform would limit access to certain content within the country. The specific accounts affected and the specific details of the legal request were not disclosed to the public. Twitter CEO Elon Musk defended the restriction by stating that “the choice is [to] have Twitter throttled in its entirety or limit access to some tweets”.



Journalist Kaygusuz sent to prison

ANF | AMED | 26 OCTOBER 2023

Selahattin Kaygusuz, a media worker with Yeni Yaşam daily newspaper, was remanded in custody on Wednesday.

Kaygusuz was taken into custody at his house in Batman on 20 October as a result of the testimony of a witness, Ü. A.. The man is the witness in the files of more than 600 people.

Kaygusuz was brought to Amed, where the investigation was launched from.

After giving his statement at the Diyarbakır Provincial Police Department’s Counterterrorism Unit, Kaygusuz appeared in court four days later.

The Peace Criminal Judgeship decided to remand Kaygusuz in custody on charges of “membership in a terrorist organization.”

Repression against journalists

State repression, accusations of alleged support for terrorism or insulting the president, hindrances to research and threats on the street: all of this is part of everyday life for free press journalists in Turkey. Anyone reporting from the Kurdish regions of the country is under special observation by the authorities and the judiciary. According to the Dicle Fırat Journalists’ Association (DFG) “September report on attacks against journalists”, the number of journalists imprisoned in Turkey rose to 63 last month. This means that Turkey remains one of the largest prisons for media professionals in the world.



Demir: The opposition in Turkey is just as dishonest as the regime

ANF | ISTANBUL | 27 OCTOBER 2023

The behavior surrounding the Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip exposes the hypocrisy of Turkish politics, from the government to the opposition. While Israeli attacks on mosques, hospitals and civilian facilities in Gaza are unanimously condemned, the opposition supports the Turkish army's attacks on civilian infrastructure, prayer houses and hospitals in Rojava.

The President's Office's request to extend the mandate for the army's foreign missions in Iraq and Syria for another two years was approved with a broad majority of 357 votes to 164. Only HEDEP opposed the application. The CHP also did not agree, but explained that this was not because of its opposition to cross-border operations, but because the request also included the presence of "foreign soldiers" in Turkey. In doing so, it joined the expected coalition of warmongers against Rojava and South Kurdistan.

Turkey wants to isolate Rojava and drive out the Kurdish population

Esengül Demir, co-spokeswoman of the Peoples' Democratic Congress (HDK), analyzed the role of the opposition in the war in an interview with ANF. She first described the dimensions of the attack on Rojava and spoke of the embargo against the self-governing region that has been in place for years. In this way, Turkey is trying to completely cut off Rojava from South Kurdistan, which is controlled by a KDP puppet government that is loyal to Turkey. Demir said: "Turkey is trying to put international pressure on Rojava and drive out the Kurdish population through attacks. It is pursuing a special form of politics to bring the entire region under its control. It uses its possibilities to prevent certain decisions in international organizations such as NATO and the United Nations."

"The new life there is under attack"

Esengül Demir said that "Turkey is able to obtain permission from international powers to enter Rojava's airspace and carry out attacks with drones. With its attacks, which are particularly aimed at representatives of grassroots democratic self-government, Turkey is targeting the new life that has been built in Rojava. In addition, the Turkish Foreign Minister openly announced that he would attack Rojava's civil infrastructure and energy supplies indiscriminately. This openly announced war crime was carried out on a large scale from 4 October."

Attacks on food storage facilities

Esengül Demir said that Turkey's position on Israel's attacks on Palestine is clear and has been expressed in its public statements. She added that, on the one hand, Turkey was protesting against the deaths of civilians in Palestine, but on the other hand, it was carrying out exactly the same attacks against Rojava. Demir said: "If you protest against the deaths of civilians and believe that international law of war has been violated, then the reaction must be the same everywhere, no matter where in the world such crimes occur. But Turkey carried out attacks on food storage facilities, water supplies and hospitals on the same days as

Israel attacked Gaza. A year ago, data was published showing how women, children and dozens of civilians lost their lives in a Turkish attack on a hospital. The images of children whose bodies were burned in the Turkish attacks were sometimes used as if they were from Palestinian hospitals. Some of them were even presented as images of Israeli attacks.”

“The opposition in Turkey is also lying”

Esengül Demir criticized the fact that the opposition in Turkey is behind the government’s hypocritical policies and is jointly trying to deceive the world public. The HDK spokeswoman recalled the Turkish parliament’s adoption of the extension of the foreign mission mandate to continue the war in Syria and Iraq and said: “While the opposition in its own parliament passes a war resolution to invade and attack the territory of another country, they loudly condemn Israel. The opposition parties in Turkey not only ignore the attacks on Rojava, but have actually supported the government’s stance towards Rojava since 2013. Even during the recent attacks, they did not take a position against Turkey’s decision and referred to the Foreign Minister’s statement. This shows that the opposition stands behind the Turkish state and the government and has the same view of the Kurds and Kurdish politics as all previous governments in Turkey. It is clear that the opposition will not take a stand against it. This opposition, protesting against Israel, remains deaf, dumb and blind when it comes to Rojava. The opposition therefore plays a role in the attacks on Rojava. Not only the government, but also the opposition bears responsibility for these attacks and the continuation of the war policy, because they support the attacks, do not protest and make decisions that legitimize them.”

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13 youngsters detained in Amed

ANF | AMED | 27 OCTOBER 2023

13 youngsters were taken into custody in Amed (Diyarbakır) on Friday in an operation conducted by police teams from Diyarbakır Security Directorate.

The operation was based on the allegations that a new youth organisation named “YNCK” would be established and carry out actions in the central Sur district on 29 October, the hundredth anniversary of the founding of the republic.

The detainees are accused of alleged membership in the organisation. They have been taken to the provincial police department.

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HEDEP executive Ateş taken into custody for her posts on social media

ANF | HATAY | 28 OCTOBER 2023

A raid was carried out this morning on the house of Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (HEDEP) Party Assembly (PM) member Hülya Ateş in Iskenderun, in the province of Hatay.

After the raid, Ateş was taken into custody for allegedly making “terrorist propaganda” on her social media. She was taken to Iskenderun District Police Department.

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Spokesperson of HEDEP Youth Council in Mersin detained

ANF | 28 OCTOBER 2023

Mazlum Kaya, spokesperson of the HEDEP (Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party) Youth Council in Mersin, was kidnapped, battered, threatened and forced to become a spy by the police on 20 October.

Kaya was taken into custody following a police raid on his house early this morning. While the reason for the detention was not disclosed, Kaya was taken to the provincial security directorate.

On the other hand, HEDEP Beylikdüzü district administrators Zemin Gökçe, Emrullah Şenyüz and Nurten Demir were detained in Istanbul during house raids yesterday morning and taken to the provincial police directorate.

While the detained HEDEP members were expected to see their lawyers today, their detention period has been extended for another 24 hours.

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Interview

Paula Martin Ponz: Isolation is a cruel obliteration of the most basic human rights

MUHAMMED KAYA | BERLIN | 22 OCTOBER 2023

Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan has been held in a solitary cell in İmralı Prison since 15 February 1999.

Öcalan has met with his family members five times since 2014. The last face-to-face meeting was with his brother in March 2020. A phone call was allowed on 25 March 2021 and that was the last date that anyone had contact with him. On the other hand, his right to see his lawyers was limited to one hour a week for the first 12 years. However, he was constantly prevented from exercising this right. He met with his lawyers only five times between 2011 and 2019. Since 2019, his lawyers have never been able to visit him. Numerous visitation applications were rejected or left unanswered.

Activist and lawyer Paula Martin Ponz spoke to ANF about the isolation imposed on Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan, the Turkish isolation policy and practice in international law and the dangers of this isolation.

It has been 32 months now that there has been no meeting with the leader of the Kurdish people, Abdullah Öcalan, and not any news or message has been received from him. How can the isolation policy and practice against Abdullah Öcalan be interpreted in terms of fundamental human rights law?

Isolation, as a repressive tool used by governments to punish inmates, is considered torture by itself. It's true that to date, there are no pronouncements in absolute terms on the limits beyond which solitary confinement should be considered degrading treatment. 'The assessment of this minimum is essentially relative; it depends on all the facts of the case, especially the duration of the treatment and its physical and mental effects, as well as, sometimes, the sex, age and state of health of the victim (Kudla v. Poland; Gelfmann v. France; Renolde v. France)'

But it is not less true that the European Court of Human Rights has already had occasion to rule on a number of occasions on situations of violations of rights in prison, and on the possible violation of Article 3 ECHR (prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment) arising from the conditions of imprisonment. However, it is possible to affirm that today there is already sufficient jurisprudential background to be able to affirm that many of the situations that occur in solitary confinement in state prisons fall into the category defined as degrading treatment by the Strasbourg Court, to the point of being able to question the very regime of compliance in first degree on the basis of such criteria.

Thus, since the ECtHR's statement regarding 'the right of every prisoner to conditions of detention compatible with human dignity, to ensure that the modalities of application of the measures adopted do not subject the person to distress or an ordeal of such intensity as to exceed the unavoidable level of suffering inherent in confinement (para. 109)', 'in view of the potentially highly harmful effects of solitary confinement, the principle of proportionality requires that it be used as a disciplinary measure only in exceptional cases, as a last resort and for the shortest possible time (para. 111)' (ECHR *Ketreb v. France*).

Everything we have gathered leads us to conclude that solitary confinement is a form of torture. It is undeniable that the system has serious shortcomings that unacceptably aggravate the situation for inmates: medical neglect, lack of reintegration programs and contact with the outside world, poor sanitary conditions, lack of adequate control mechanisms, etc.

But even if all these shortcomings were corrected, sending a person to perpetual solitary confinement would still mean causing suffering in retaliation for past behavior, and not a rehabilitation or re-socialization program for a person who has committed a crime. The terrible consequences on mental health (often irreversible) are undeniable. To make a short list of said consequences, we can point out:

That the psychological consequences of said symptoms have been verified can manifest themselves gradually up to acute or chronic. The known categories are as follows: anguish, depression: from low mood to clinical depression, anger (from anger to deep rage, hostility, inability to restrain impulses, physical and verbal violence against oneself, others or objects, uncontained rage), cognitive problems: from lack of concentration to states of high confusion, perceptual distortions, paranoia and psychosis and finally and most terrible, self-mutilation and suicide.

The UN Committee Against Torture considers in its Report of 3/04/1996 that 'the conditions of compliance in 1st degree regime - cell hours, restrictions, exclusion from common activities, sensory deprivation... could be considered as prohibited treatment under article 16 of the Convention Against Torture (cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment)'.

If we gather all this together and think briefly about the situation to which the Kurdish political leader Abdullah Öcalan has been subjected during the last 24 years, we can not see his current situation as any other thing than a blatant and cruel obliteration of the most basic and simple human rights. Mr Öcalan has been held in a solitary cell in İmralı Prison since 15 February 1999.

Since 2014, he has only been allowed to meet his family 5 times. The last face-to-face meeting was with his brother in March 2020. A phone call was allowed on 25 March 2021 and that was the last date that anyone had contact with him. If we just have this resume in consideration, we can clearly see that the most basic human rights of Mr. Öcalan have been violated, but on top of that, we can not forget that every prohibition, limitation of movement, space, human contact... has an effect on the inmate and that all the effects that the measures taken against Mr. Öcalan have effects considered as cruel, inhuman and degrading.

And we can't forget that every degrading act against any prisoner is also a punishment against their family and supporters, and in the case of Mr. Öcalan, also a punishment against the Kurdish population.

In addition, what are the dangers of this isolation in terms of access to the right to health/ right to see his lawyers/ right to a fair trial?

On one hand, his right to see his lawyers was limited to one hour a week for the first 12 years. However, he was constantly prevented from exercising this right. There is no way of preparing a fair defense if your right to see your legal team is restricted, but even more, we have to point out that between 2011 and 2019 he has met with his lawyers only five times and none since 2019. Numerous visitation applications were rejected or left unanswered.

So, this means that it is impossible to prepare not just the legal defense but to have an idea of the current situation of Mr. Öcalan in prison, neither to be able to make any claim against the prison or to let him know his situation or that of the rest of the persons in prison.

The right to have a lawyer when you are in prison, to have easy access to him and to the documents of his trial, to be able to have an exchange with the prison administration and to have a proper, fair and stable regime of visits should be acknowledged as a human right and it is totally needed to be able to built a fair defense and trial.

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Bayık: Our main work is to carry the international initiative for Öcalan to the conclusion!

ANF | 24 OCTOBER 2023

KCK Executive Council Co-chair Cemil Bayık participated in the Special Program on Stêrk TV. This is the first part of the interview.

The isolation against Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan continues. He has not been heard from in any way for almost 3 years. How do you evaluate the campaign that has been started recently, in relation to the isolation against Abdullah Öcalan?

There have been many conspiracies throughout history, but I don't think there is a conspiracy like the one [meaning October 9, 1998, the day Abdullah Öcalan was forced to leave the Middle East, which led to his odyssey through half of the world and ended with his abduction to the prison island of İmralı] that has been carried out against Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan]. It is a very complex conspiracy, so a strong stance against it is necessary. Rêber Apo analyzed the conspiracy and reacted accordingly, also by looking at those who planned the conspiracy and the reasons for it. By his own person, he managed to frustrate the conspiracy. He created a fundamental alternative to the existing system from which the conspiracy emerged. He created an alternative for our movement, the Kurdish people and the whole of humanity. He gave a powerful paradigm to humanity. This is how Rêber Apo responded to the conspiracy. It can be seen that our people and our movement have always strongly rejected and stood against the conspiracy. Our comrades, in particular, in prison understood the conspiracy very well and so comrade Halit Oral organized his action with the slogan "You cannot darken our sun". With this slogan, he made a call to the people of

Kurdistan. He stated that the Kurdish people and the movement represented by Rêber Apo are in great danger. On this basis, he called for a strong stance against the conspiracy inside and outside the prisons. The guerrillas also took a strong stand against the conspiracy.

If Rêber Apo thwarted the conspiracy, it was because of the support of the people and the guerrillas. Rêber Apo also reflected on this later. In this regard he said: "Had it not been for the people and the guerrillas, it would have been difficult for me to resist the conspiracy. I thank both the guerrillas and the people." Why was there a conspiracy against Rêber Apo? Because he created a free Kurdish identity and the struggle for democracy and freedom in Kurdistan developed in connection with it. This struggle was growing day by day and affected not only the Kurdish people but also the peoples of the Middle East. The forces of capitalist modernity recognized this as a great danger for themselves because they wanted to intervene in the Middle East and when they intended to intervene, the struggle developed by Rêber Apo was an obstacle and a danger to their plans. In order to intervene in the Middle East and shape it according to their interests, they wanted to eliminate the danger posed by Rêber Apo. They estimated that they would not be able to achieve their goals with the intervention they would make without limiting the effect of Rêber Apo, and that they might even get the opposite of what they were aiming for. Therefore, they developed an international conspiracy to weaken the movement and the Kurdish people.

The main aim of the conspiracy was to wipe out Rêber Apo, the PKK and the free Kurdish people. Just as Rêber Apo stood against the conspiracy, our people stood very strongly against the conspiracy. A high price was paid for this. Kurdish women, in particular, have stood up strongly against the conspiracy. By doing so, they have set an example for the movement and the Kurdish people, but also for all women around the world. Today, the Kurdish question has reached the whole world because of their strong stand against the conspiracy. Until today, the Turkish occupation state is trying to prevent all uprisings in Kurdistan from reaching the world. It doesn't want the world to know about the situation. But Rêber Apo, the PKK, the Kurdish people and especially the Kurdish women stood against this policy. A high price was paid and great pain was suffered, but it was possible to take the struggle out of the framework of Turkey and Kurdistan and spread it to the whole world. The world became aware of the Kurdish question. The struggle of Rêber Apo, the PKK and the Kurdish people started to be seen. And it was through this struggle that we made friends all over the world.

These international friends also started to take part in the struggle of the Kurdish people. In England, for example, the trade unions carry out a great struggle. Concerts were organized in Italy, France and many other European countries. In the last world congresses of the trade unions, they made a mark by demanding the physical freedom of Rêber Apo. The embrace of Rêber Apo, our movement and the Kurdish people is growing every day. Based on this, the international friends of the Kurdish people have launched a campaign; "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, a Political Solution to the Kurdish Question". This has been developed entirely by our international friends, apart from our movement and our people. This is very significant and important because it shows that the Kurdish question has now spread all over the world. Peoples, socialists, women, young people, ecologists, artists, intellectuals, writers, academics and so on from many parts of the world have declared that they are participating in this campaign. This is an indication that the international conspiracy can no longer keep Rêber Apo in prison.

The conspiratorial forces, the fascist Turkish state and some treacherous collaborating Kurds are trying to develop an absolute isolation with the aim of limiting all the impact of Rêber Apo, but they will not get any results because Rêber Apo is now all over the world. Rêber Apo once said: "Wherever my prison writ-

ings are, wherever my books are, there I am". Rêber Apo's prison writings and paradigm have reached every part of the world. Today, Rêber Apo lives not in Imralı, but all over the world, and no one can stop this. The most obvious proof of this is the attitude of the international friends of the Kurdish people. They have now started this big campaign and stated that Rêber Apo's physical freedom must be guaranteed and that the Kurds must have a status. They emphasized that they will raise the struggle for this. On this occasion, I would like to greet and congratulate all those who have developed the campaign, who are participating in it, who are making efforts and calls in this regard. And I would also like to express my gratitude on behalf of our movement and the Kurdish people.

At this stage, the responsibilities and duties of the Kurdish people have increased even more. If our non-Kurdish international friends embrace Rêber Apo and his paradigm in this way, if they declare that they will struggle for Rêber Apo's physical freedom and for the Kurdish people to achieve a status, the Kurdish people must draw a conclusion from this. The Kurdish people have to support this campaign started by their friends, they have to support the campaign in every way and help it to succeed. Some Kurds are now saying that since our international friends have started such a campaign, we should take over the banner of this campaign. This is an appropriate thought because this is what the Kurdish people should do. While the Kurdish people are fulfilling their duties regarding Rêber Apo and the peoples, they may face hindrances. There will be those who want to sabotage, weaken and obstruct the campaign. Our people must not accept this and must stand firm and courageous against them. If our people fulfill their duties and responsibilities in this way, no one can stop the campaign. That is how the campaign will succeed.

What should the Kurdish people, the democratic and freedom-orientated forces in your opinion, do, to make the 'Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, a Political Solution to the Kurdish Question' succeed?

When I talk about the Kurdish people, it includes the youth, the women, the elderly as well as the children. Everyone who calls him/herself Kurdish, patriotic, democratic, revolutionary, and says that he/she is looking for a free and democratic life in Kurdistan, for a free life in general, and says that he/she stands against occupation, genocide and fascism, has certain duties and responsibilities. Many people see the solution to their problems in Rêber Apo's paradigm and therefore support him. They want to solve their problems in the way he suggests. Kurds, more than anyone else, need to support Rêber Apo and practice his paradigm and philosophy. Rêber Apo has worked and is still working for the entire Kurdish society, for the Middle East, for humanity, even under the conditions of Imralı. He worked especially for the interests of women. The slogan 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadî', which is used by women all over the world today, and all that remains of this slogan, was developed by Rêber Apo.

Rêber Apo always worked for the freedom of women. He declared that society cannot be liberated unless women are liberated. Therefore, he made women's freedom the basis of his work. Women know this and that is why they protect Rêber Apo and struggle for him. I strongly believe that women will continue to act for Rêber Apo more than anyone else. They will lead the campaign developed by our international friends. In this way, they will fulfill their duties and responsibilities to Rêber Apo. He has also done great work for the young people also known to them. The movement developed by Rêber Apo is a youth movement. If this movement has come so far despite conspiracies, betrayals and attacks, if it has given hope to the people, it is because of the leading role of youth and women that has developed. That is why the PKK is always alive, resisting, realizing changes and transformations and being a hope. I believe that in the future, the young people will participate in this campaign even more. They will also lead it and fulfill their role.

Abdullah Öcalan has also worked with and for the democratic forces and those in search for freedom in Turkey. How do you evaluate their duties and responsibilities?

From the early years of the movement, Rêber Apo took the peoples of Turkey as his basis, just like the Kurdish people. Just as he took responsibility for the Kurdish people, he also took responsibility for the peoples of Turkey. He never made any difference between them. There was a struggle for democracy and freedom in Turkey and a high price was paid at that time. Martyrs lost their lives and many people were executed. Rêber Apo took the revolutionary movement that was developing in Turkey at that time as his basis. He thought about how to continue this movement, how to keep these revolutionaries and martyrs alive. Therefore, he founded the PKK. In other words, he founded the PKK not only for the Kurdish people, but also for the peoples of Turkey and for humanity. He also paid a great price for it. Therefore, the democrats and socialists of Turkey, those who stand against fascism, those who are committed to the values of freedom and democracy, those who say that they are based on the peoples, need to fulfill their duties towards the Kurdish people. If they do not fulfill this duty and responsibility, they cannot say that they are democrats or socialists. A policy of genocide is being carried out against the Kurdish people in front of their eyes. Wherever in the world, a socialist, a democrat, does not accept the genocide of a people and stands against it.

There are many such examples in the world and in history. Just one example: when France intervened in Algeria, when they tortured, massacred, looted and arrested people there, the revolutionaries and socialists of France stood against France. Therefore, France had to withdraw from Algeria. The leftists, democrats and socialists of Turkey should take this as an example. If they turn a blind eye to what is happening, do not speak out and still say that they are socialists and against fascism and genocide, then they are liars.

The criterion of being a democrat and socialist is the attitude towards the Kurdish people. It is the attitude towards the Turkish state. If they do not stand against the policies and genocide of the Turkish state, if they do not stand with the Kurdish people, if they do not stand against the Turkish government, no matter how much they say that they are socialists, democrats and patriots, then they are simply liars. Because the struggle that has developed in Kurdistan today has revealed the true face of the Turkish state in every way. A normal thinking person can see the reality of the Turkish state and its attitude towards the Kurdish people, the Turkish people and humanity. However, one has to doubt the humanity of those who do not see it. The democratic and socialist forces in Turkey are asked to stand up against the isolation of Rêber Apo and struggle for his physical freedom.

On October 1, two militants of the PKK, Rojhat Zilan and Erdal Şahin, staged an attack in Ankara and shook the country. The Turkish state used this as an excuse to attack Rojava [North Syria]. What does the action in Ankara has to do with the attacks on Rojava?

First of all, I would like to pay tribute to the comrades Rojhat and Erdal. These friends fulfilled a historical duty for the Kurdish people and humanity. They made a great sacrifice by bravely facing the enemy. They carried out their action against the Ministry of Interior from where the Kurdish genocide is controlled. The enemy is trying to eliminate the Kurdish people and our comrades sent a message with their action. It basically said: "You want to eliminate the Kurdish people, but we don't accept this. Those who want to eliminate us should know that we will eliminate them first." The peoples of Turkey cannot live with the genocide of the Kurdish people. Those who commit genocide against the Kurdish people are committing genocide themselves. With this action, the friends revealed the true face of the Turkish state. Therefore,

this action is historical. With this action, the dirty propaganda of the Turkish state that says, “We have destroyed the PKK. The PKK does not exist anymore, it can’t do anything, we have ensured peace in Turkey, we kill so many guerrillas every day.” has been nullified.

It should be seen as a fact that a government that lives on murdering and its propaganda is a fascist and genocidal government. The action in Ankara made this propaganda null and void. This action showed once again that the Turkish state is deceiving everyone. Although there is such a big war, the AKP-MHP government denies it and even still tries to deny the existence of the Kurdish question. They try to hide the ongoing war and they also try to hide the dead soldiers from the society. They are always propagating that they are killing guerrillas and ending the PKK, but this action has shown that all this is a lie. The enemy was shocked because the action revealed the whole reality of the Turkish state, because it nullified their propaganda, because it brought the reality of this intensive war in the middle of their country. Therefore, they didn’t know what to do. They wanted to break the effect of this action with counter-attacks.

Every day they are arresting Kurds in Northern Kurdistan [South-East Turkey] and call these arrests and detentions ‘Operation Heroes’. What heroism do they have? I mean, what have they done to become heroes? They even put this name to deceive the people. The peoples of Turkey have to hold the ones responsible for the arrestings to account. They have to ask: “Is your heroism to raid houses with all your might, arrest people, torture them, insult them, throw them in prison? Is this heroism?” They launch attacks in the Medya Defense Zones [areas controlled by the guerrillas] every day, making propaganda about how many guerrillas they kill. But this remains just propaganda. Because even when they have not martyred even one guerrilla, they deceive the public and foreign countries in this way. In fact, their aim was to launch a new attack on Rojava. They had already taken the decision to attack Rojava. Regarding this, Erdoğan openly said, “We have made a decision and we are waiting for the right time.” They attacked Rojava using the attack in Ankara as an excuse. They said: “The attackers came from Rojava. Rojava is dangerous for us, so we will take revenge.” This is how they put into practice the decision they had already taken before. They themselves and the whole world know that those friends did not come from Rojava. But the Turkish state attacked Rojava because they are enemies of everything Kurdish. Before they attacked, they said that the power stations, factories, in other words, whatever is on the ground and underground is their target, their army and intelligence will attack everything. They threatened that every 3rd party must withdraw, that no one should stand in their way. They claimed: “Whoever stands against us, we will target them too.”

As a matter of a fact, Turkey alone does not have the power to carry out these brutal attacks against Rojava. It was by the decision of NATO and America that they attacked all these locations, because it is a NATO member state. If NATO does not give permission, Turkey cannot carry out these attacks against Rojava and kill people. If they had not approved the Turkish state’s decisions to attack, the Turkish state would not have been able to carry out these attacks, and if they had, they would have stood against them. The Turkish state obeys neither the laws nor the morality of war. It does whatever it pleases. Because it wants to eliminate the Kurds, that is why it bombs everywhere. It destroys living spaces, power plants, water reservoirs, wheat warehouses, oil facilities, hospitals, factories of the people. How will those people live there when everything gets destroyed? This is a great immorality and a war crime. Those who give way to this are collaborating with the Turkish state. Our people have already stated this. They said they will not accept this. They will not leave their lands no matter what they do. They said: “Maybe we will die, but we will die in our land.” They showed such a determined stance. I would like to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate the people of Rojava and commemorate the martyrs of Rojava with gratitude and pay my respect and esteem to them.

While Erdoğan is carrying out these attacks on Rojava, on the other hand, he is supposedly protecting Gaza. How do you evaluate this situation?

Erdoğan, Turkey, the government and the opposition are acting hypocritically. They think they are cunning and think they can hide what they are doing in front of everyone's eyes and no one will understand. They are supposedly protecting Gaza and Palestine, but those who take the genocide of the Kurds as a basis can never be a friend to the Palestinian people. There are two fundamental problems in the Middle East. One is the Palestinian question and the other is the Kurdish question. As long as these two problems are not solved, there will be war and massacres, and no space for freedom and democracy in the Middle East. When these two problems are solved, the Middle East will be at peace, change will take place, democracy and freedom will develop. The hegemonic powers never want these problems to be solved, because they have built their system on them. The system of capitalist modernity never wants problems to be solved. That is why they instead always create new problems.

Our people, the Palestinian people and the people of the region need to understand this situation well. We want to develop a Kurdish-Arab alliance. Because it is these peoples in the Middle East who are being torn apart, facing severe problems, being subjected to injustice, constantly facing war and genocide. Just as all those who create these problems are together, the Kurdish and Palestinian people need to stand against them together. That is why we are talking about a Kurdish-Arab alliance. The Arabs were divided into 22 states and divided the Kurds into 4 parts. It is these forces that suck the blood of the Kurdish and Arab people. That is why the Kurdish and Arab people need to develop their alliance. If such an alliance is created, it can be a big step towards liberation. The problem of the Palestinian people is not a problem that arose just today. It is a social and historical question. That is why our movement took the Palestinian people and their struggle as a basis in its early years. It found them right, took part in their struggle and paid the price. One of the reasons why the international conspiracy against our movement was developed, is the relationship we formed with the Palestinians and Arabs. Since the day it was founded, our movement has been based on establishing relations with Palestinians and Arabs. We agreed with their struggle.

But I would like to make a few points here. The methods of Hamas are not right, and they should be criticized. But this does not justify using Hamas' wrong methods as a pretext to attack the Palestinian people. As wrong as Hamas' methods are, attacks against the Palestinian people under this pretext are just as wrong. Like this, the situation will never be solved, it will deepen it. It will even cause new problems in the region. This is very dangerous. Therefore, the Palestinian and Jewish people should consider how they can live as brothers and sisters. They should not insist on a nation state, as the nation state will never solve their problems. In fact, it makes the problems worse day by day. Some people say that the solution for Palestine is a nation state. This is not true. Even those who have nation states in the region still have problems and are displaced from their lands. So this is not the solution. The solution lies in Rêber Apo's paradigm. The development of the 'democratic nation' is the solution. They should take this as a basis. Then they can solve their problems. The last example of the nation state not being a solution is the Armenian-Azeri war. They both have states. But there are big wars and even genocide in their regions. So, this is not a solution. The solution is Rêber Apo's philosophy, the paradigm he developed for humanity. Everyone should take this as a basis. This is the only way to solve the problems.

The war between the occupation army of the Turkish state and the guerrillas continues. What can you tell us about the war going on in the Medya Defense Zones?

By remembering comrades Rojhat and Erdal, as well as the martyrs of the Asayish in Dêrik and the martyrs of Amed, I would like to once again commemorate all the martyrs of the struggle with gratitude and respect. There is a big war going on between us and the Turkish state right now. The Turkish state is developing many tactics to hide this reality. For example, they never reveal the identity of their dead soldiers. They only announce one or two of them. In addition to this, they constantly make propagandistic statements that we have killed so many guerrillas. They create the perception in society that they have eliminated the guerrillas. Sometimes we announce comrades that martyred, and 10, 20 days later, maybe even a month later, the Turkish state states, that they have recently martyred this comrade within an operation of the intelligence. They try to deceive everyone in this way. They create the perception that they have succeeded, that they have achieved results.

Therefore, they are bombarding all the time and also use weapons that are banned around the world. They load drones with chemical explosives and aim to drop them on the tunnel doors. In this way, they want to seize the tunnels and martyr their friends. Despite all this, they are not getting results. The guerrillas are showing great heroism under the most difficult conditions. I would like to congratulate my comrades from the HPG and YJA Star on this occasion. They are heroes not only of the Kurdish people but also of humanity. Because they defend humanity. They defend human values. If it were not for the KDP, the Turkish state would have lost this war. If the Turkish state still insists on the war, it is entirely with the support of the KDP. The Kurdish people need to understand this very well. The Turkish state, especially the AKP media, is waging a psychological, special warfare. Just as Goebbels deceived people with his propaganda during the Hitler era in Germany, the AKP media is doing the same. Their channels show day and night how they produce weapons and how powerful their technology is. In other words, they are sending the message that the Turkish state is militarily very strong, that it is a world power, that no one can stand in front of Turkey anymore.

They are making dirty propaganda. "The PKK is not a freedom movement, there are foreign states behind it that do not want Turkey to develop and become stronger. They want to prevent the growth of Turkey by helping the PKK. If these foreign powers do not help the PKK, it cannot survive. These states are using the PKK for their interests. The PKK does not want us to uncover Turkey's mineral resources and put them at the service of the people. If we uncover these mineral resources, the people of Turkey will become very strong, they will stand against everyone in the world. If the people of Turkey are poor, it is because of the PKK. By fighting the PKK, imperialist states prevent us from extracting oil, prevent us from extracting minerals so that Turkey remains poor." This is how they make propaganda, what they tell the people.

In this way, they want to legitimize the liquidation of the PKK and the genocide against the Kurdish people. This is how they aim to get support from the people of Turkey and the peoples of the world. However, it is America itself that brought the AKP to power. It is America, NATO and some European states that support the execution of the genocide policy in Turkey. With their help, they stay in power and carry out a policy of genocide. All the weapons they use belong to NATO. There is one thing the AKP-MHP are experts in. That is to turn the facts upside down. This is how they deceive everyone. The AKP is now applying the same tactics that Goebbels applied to the people of Germany. That's why no one knows what the truth is, what lies are. It is waging such a special warfare. This is how it carries out and strengthens its power. Our people and the people of Turkey need to understand this well.

There were negotiations between the KDP and the Turkish state, and also between Iran and the Turkish state. There were attacks by the Turkish state against the Mexmûr [Makhmour] refugee camp and there are daily attacks against South Kurdistan. How do you evaluate the negotiations between the KDP-Turkish state and the Iranian-Turkish state?

The KDP, especially the family of Masoud Barzani, has tied its fate to Turkey. They are completely in the service of the Turkish state. They help it not only in South Kurdistan but everywhere. Also, the KDP is waging a special psychological warfare against the PKK. Militarily, intelligence-wise, in every sense, they are fighting against the PKK by siding with the Turkish state. But even outside South Kurdistan, the KDP wants to cut the ties of the PKK with everyone, isolate it in the world, encircle it, take it over, or liquidate it. For example, some of our friends tell us, "The KDP is more hostile to you than the Turks". This is true. Barzani is not only helping the Turkish state against us in [the South Kurdish areas of] Metîna, Girê Cudi and Avaşin, and serving the politics of genocide. Our society must demand accountability for this. The policy of the KDP legitimizes everything the Turkish state does against the Kurdish people.

Also, the representative of KNK was assassinated in Hewlêr [Erbil], but until today they have not made a single statement, not condemned, not arrested a single person. But when an action was taken against the Turkish police in Ankara, the KDP immediately condemned the action. This even shows the state of the KDP, who it is on whose side and in whose service. Why did it condemn the Ankara action? That action was not against them, it was an action against the Turkish security forces who are committing genocide against the Kurds. Instead of being pleased, they condemn it. But why don't they condemn those who martyred Deniz? Why don't they arrest that murderer? They say: "I am the government, I am in power, I have laws, no one can do anything here." Indeed, they have established such a power in Hewlêr that no one can move. There are cameras everywhere. The KNK building is under constant surveillance. How can Deniz be murdered there and the KDP doesn't arrest anyone? Because they also had a hand in this murder. The KDP wants to drag Iraq into the politics they are conducting together with the Turkish state. It is also working for this. The Iraqi representative held talks in Ankara for days. They want to include Iraq in their plans. They are searching for ways to destroy the PKK, and to complete the genocide against the Kurdish people.

Regarding this, I want to warn Iraq. Iraq must not fall for the games of the Barzanis and the Turkish state. They have no interest in these policies. They should demand that Turkey solves the Kurdish problem through democratic means. Iraq's interests are in this direction. Siding with the Turkish state and the Barzanis and being hostile to the Kurds will cause great harm to Iraq. The Barzanis want to settle in some places and the settlement of the Barzanis means the settlement of the Turkish state. Because the Turkish state and the Barzanis are now acting together in many places, fighting against us. In some places, their forces are 100-150 meters away from each other. Some places were built by the Turks, but when they left in winter, they handed them over to the Barzanis. Now the Turks attacked them again, and they gave them the outposts that the Turks had handed over. So they are acting together. The Turkish state has dominated South Kurdistan in every sense. They have made Behdinan like a province of the Turkish state. The Turkish state has settled in every area. They act according to what the Turkish state wants. In this way, the KDP completely serves the genocide policy of the Turkish state. Everyone should understand it like that.

Is there anything you would like to say at the end?

Our international friends have started a campaign for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo and for the Kurdish people to have a status. The campaign is growing day by day. Now we have to fulfill our part, take part in the campaign and bring it to a conclusion. This is what is asked of our movement and our people. Therefore, everyone in our movement, no matter where they are, no matter what their role is, everyone has to take part in this campaign. It has to carry out all its work and activities in a way that is tied to this campaign. We must act on this basis until we bring this campaign to a conclusion. This is our main work. The main role here belongs to women and young people. I believe that women and young people will spearhead this initiative. They will strengthen the campaign.

Since we are a youth movement, I especially call on young people; you have to take part in this campaign developed by our international friends with everything you have and ensure strong participation in the guerrillas. Because we are a youth movement. Young people should take the revolutionary war against genocide and the special war as a basis. They have to fulfill their duties and responsibilities on this basis. The enemy imposes heroin, prostitution and espionage, and wants to rot society in this way. On the other hand, he is imposing Hizbul-Kontra on society. "If you don't want prostitution, heroin and spying, you should turn to Hibul-Kontra," they say. They are conducting this politics. It is up to the youth to frustrate this politics. Young people must raise the struggle against prostitution, spying and heroin. They must know that the politics of the Turkish state in our society, especially among young people, are very dangerous. Young people must both oppose this politics, organize themselves and take part in the revolutionary people's war.



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