

THE İMRALI POST

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

Issue № 76 / 11 November 2023 ★ Contact: imralipost@freeocalan.org

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Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

Culture and Art Campaign for the Freedom of Abdullah Öcalan initiative in Cologne

ANF | COLOGNE | 4 NOVEMBER 2023

TEV-ÇAND and Kevana Zêrîn will hold a big event for Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan in Cologne, tomorrow, 5 November.

Performers, painters, theater actors and folk dance actors will participate in the event titled "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan". The event will be held in front of the Dom Cathedral between 1 and 5 pm.

Speaking to ANF, Hozan Şemdîn said: "Singers and musicians will attend the event with their own instruments. We will all wear national clothes. Our painters will exhibit their paintings. We invite all our people to this event."

Hozan Şemdîn also said that hundreds of TEV-ÇAND members from all branches of art will be present at the event.

During the four-hour program, songs about Abdullah Öcalan and Kurdistan will be sung, and the dance groups will perform folkloric dances. In addition, information will be given about the condition of Abdullah Öcalan.

‘Culture and art campaign for Abdullah Öcalan’s freedom’

TEV-ÇAND and Kevana Zêrîn published a joint written statement to present the event saying: “We support the Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, Political Solution to the Kurdish Question campaign.”

The statement also drew attention to 10 December, the day on which the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted at the United Nations in 1948.

“The 75th anniversary of this declaration will be on 10 December 2023. The Turkish state accepted this declaration in 1949. However, the inalienable human rights of the Kurds have been systematically violated by the Turkish state every day for 75 years.”

The statement also underlined that Abdullah Öcalan was the theorist and philosophical leader of the Kurdish Freedom Movement and that he had been kept under heavy isolation for 24 years. “The isolation imposed on Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] is essentially an isolation imposed on his political ideas and his proposal and work to have a successful peace process. Isolation is illegal and is a form of torture. In order to break the isolation, we are launching the ‘Culture and Art Campaign for the Freedom of Abdullah Öcalan’.”

The statement pointed out that Kurdish literature, history, music and art are denied and banned by the Turkish state and said: “This is cultural genocide. All kinds of oppressive violence are applied to the Kurdish people and unlimited assimilation policies are implemented. All of these are crimes. We reject this cultural genocide. We are fighting for it to end.”

The joint statement ended as follows: “As Kurdistan artists, we do not accept the isolation imposed on Rêber Apo. We declare that we will participate with our art in the events organized to break the isolation and achieve Rêber Apo’s physical freedom.”

Young people will take to the streets for Abdullah Öcalan on 11-12 November

ANF | 7 NOVEMBER 2023

The Revolutionary Youth Movement (TCŞ), the Movement of Militant Young Women (TEKO-JIN) and internationalist youth movements announced in a press statement their support for the international [campaign](#) launched on 10 October in more than 100 cities around the world with the slogan “Freedom for Öcalan, Political Solution to the Kurdish Question”.

As part of the campaign, youth movements will organize marches in 10 cities of Europe to demand the physical freedom of Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan on 11 and 12 November.

TCŞ and TekoJIN called on all young people to join the campaign launched by the Kurdish Freedom Movement and its friends for women’s freedom and a democratic and ecological life.

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Sit-in in front of the UN in Geneva: “We will continue to disturb you”

ANF | GENEVA | 8 NOVEMBER 2023

Since January 2021, a sit-in for the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan has been held every Wednesday in front of the United Nations headquarters in Geneva. The Democratic Kurdish Council in Switzerland (CDK-S) is using the action to demand the attention of the international community and discuss current developments in Kurdistan every week. The protest event was initiated as part of the Kurdish freedom movement's campaign “Time for Freedom” (ku. Dema dema azadiyê ye).

A minute's silence was held at the beginning of today’s vigil. On the occasion of World Kobanê Day on 1 November, the commemoration was dedicated to those who died in the resistance against ISIS in Rojava/Northern Syria in autumn 2014.

Tuba Yilmaz, co-chair of the Democratic Kurdish Community Center in Geneva, said in a speech that Abdullah Öcalan has been completely isolated on the Turkish prison island of İmralı since March 2021 and that not even his lawyers or relatives have contact with him. Yilmaz referred to the worldwide campaign launched in October for the freedom of Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question and called for participation in the demonstrations of the Kurdish youth movement planned for the weekend.

Kasim Erik from the organising committee of the vigil in Geneva, called on the international community to take action and noted that Abdullah Öcalan was abducted to Turkey almost 25 years ago in an interna-

tional intelligence coup seeking to break the will of the Kurdish people and stifle the resistance for good. “This conspiracy continues to this day and is the reason for Öcalan’s isolation since the unilateral cancellation of talks on a solution to the Kurdish question by the Turkish state in 2015. The isolation is therefore a continuation of the 1999 policy aimed at breaking our will,” said the Kurdish activist, emphasising that these efforts are still unsuccessful today.

“The CPT defines itself as an institution for the prevention of torture. Whenever it comes to Abdullah Öcalan and war crimes against the Kurdish people, the institutions that are supposedly committed to human rights remain silent. As long as the Kurds’ concerns about the health, life and safety of Leader Öcalan are not addressed and the relevant institutions such as the CPT and the UN do not fulfil their responsibilities, we as a people and as Kurdish youths and women will use our democratic rights and continue to disturb them.”

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‘Freedom for Öcalan’ vigil in Strasbourg on its 594th week

ANF | STRASBOURG | 10 NOVEMBER 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 the 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 on Imrali Prison Island in the Turkish Sea of Marmara since March 2021.

A group of activists from Charleroi, Belgium took over the vigil on its 594th week today. The group includes Kerem Aşkan, Mutat Karasu, Yusuf Demir, Ferhat Uzman and Sedat Aydın.

Speaking on behalf of the new group, Kerem Aşkan denounced the aggravated isolation imposed on Abdullah Öcalan, who has not been heard from for 32 months now because of an arbitrary ban on visits from his family members and lawyers.

Aşkan called on the European institutions to take action for the Kurdish leader, and urged the Kurdish people to take to the streets in protest at the isolation of Öcalan.

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Prisons

Mehmet Emin Sosin walks free after 30 years in prison

ANF | ADANA | 4 NOVEMBER 2023

Mehmet Emin Sosin was arrested in the Hezex (İdil) district of Şirnak in 1993 and was sentenced to life imprisonment on the charge of “disrupting the unity and integrity of the state”.

Mehmet Emin Sosin was released on 2 November, at the age of 66, after 30 years of captivity.

Sosin was on the list of ill prisoners of the Human Rights Association (IHD). After his release from Giresun Espiye L Type Closed Prison, he came to Adana, where his family lives.

Sosin, who walks on crutches, was welcomed with enthusiasm in the Şakirpaşa neighbourhood in Seyhan.

Emin Sosin spent some time with his relatives and those who came to meet him.

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Nine prisoners executed in Iran

ANF | 9 NOVEMBER 2023

In a statement, the Iranian Human Rights Organization said that 9 prisoners were executed in the Qezal-Hesar prison in the city of Kerec on Thursday. Five of them were sentenced to death for murder, 3 for drug trafficking and 1 for arms smuggling.

The statement added that more executions took place in the same prison, but no information could be obtained regarding the identities of those executed.

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Violation of rights in Patnos prison continues

ANF | 10 NOVEMBER 2023

Çekdar Ödünğit, who is held in L Type Closed Prison in Agır's Panos (Patnos) district, talked about the rights violations he experienced in a phone call with his family. Ödünğit's brother, Hevidar Ödünğit, said that his brother told him that their cells were raided every day. Noting that books and belongings were distributed during the raid, Hevidar Ödünğit said that his brother told her: “They seized many of our belongings and made others unusable.”

'Let's be the voice of the prisoners'

Hevidar Ödüngit's brother said: "They do not take ill prisoners to the hospital in Patnos Prison on time. When they do, they cause difficulties." Hevidar Ödüngit said his brother told her that those outside should "give voice to those who are behind four walls."

Prisoner released late lost the ability to speak

68-year-old Cemal Tanhan, who had been in prison for 30 years, was kept in jail despite his serious illness and was released only after he suffered a stroke.

His daughter, Ayşe Tanhan, explained that her father's health condition was deteriorating, and she said: "My father has lost his ability to speak."



Military aggression and occupation

Turkish-backed mercenaries continue to commit violations against Afrin residents

ANF | 4 NOVEMBER 2023

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported that the "Jaysh Al-Nukhbah" mercenaries severely beat a civilian in his 30's and his 67-year-old father from Shekhoutkah village in Mabeta district of Afrin.

The mercenaries attacked the two men because they refrained from selling foodstuffs from their shop to an armed group of the faction due to debt accumulation.

On the other hand, the "National Army" mercenaries brutally assaulted a 45-year-old civilian from Hasan Dera village in Bilbile district in Afrin. The man was then taken to an unknown destination for unknown reasons and his fate remains unknown, according to SOHR.

In addition, a civilian from Qarah Gul village in Bilbile district, was released after paying a release bail to the court in Afrin city, estimated at 150 USD. The man had been arrested last month in a raid operation on his house in Al-Ashrafiah neighbourhood in Afrin city, on charges of going out on guard shifts during the former Autonomous Administration rule.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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HPG: Six Turkish soldiers killed in Serhed

ANF | BEHDINAN | 4 NOVEMBER 2023

The Press Centre of the People's Defence Forces (HPG) issued a statement providing information about the war in Kurdistan. According to the statement, guerrilla actions have taken place in the north and south of Kurdistan and the Turkish army is continuing its attacks on the guerrilla-held Medya Defence Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

Guerrilla actions

According to HPG, six Turkish soldiers were killed in a guerrilla ambush in the Serhed region of northern Kurdistan on 30 October. The soldiers were on their way to the Onurtepe base in the Tendürek region when they were struck by the guerrillas with light and semi-automatic weapons. Their armoured vehicle was completely destroyed.

Two Turkish army drones were shot down in the Şehîd İbrahim area in the Zap region of Medya Defence Zones on 1 November. In Metîna, the guerrillas hit the Turkish occupation forces at Girê Çarçel on Wednesday and at Girê Ortê on Friday with heavy weapons. On Thursday, a Turkish position at Girê Şe-

hîd Kamuran in Xakurke was shelled with heavy weapons by guerrillas from the YJA Star (Free Women's Troops). On Friday evening, the guerrillas intervened against the helicopters as the Turkish army attempted to deploy troops in the area.

Attacks by the Turkish army

According to the HPG statement, the Turkish army used banned explosives against a guerrilla position in the resistance area of Sîda in Zap on 1 November. At Girê Ortê in Metîna, the army used chemical gas four times and banned explosives four times on 1 and 2 November. During the same period, drones loaded with explosives shelled guerrilla positions at Girê Çarçel in Metîna four times.

Turkish fighter jets have bombed the Medya Defence Zones eight times in the past two days. The targets of the attacks were Şehîd İbrahîm in Zap, Girê Zengil in Gare, Gundê Dergelê and Golka in Metîna, as well as Ava Lolanê in Xakurke. The regions of Zap, Metîna and Xakurke were also attacked by artillery.

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Turkish armed drones heavily bomb Biradost

ANF | 5 NOVEMBER 2023

According to information received from local sources, armed drones belonging to the Turkish army bombed the Riwara, Sinîn, Geruî Singa and Çiyasorkê plateaus several times on Saturday night.

Bêrkem village, Bolê and Bêcwanan mountains in Sîdekan district of Hewlêr were also targeted.

While it was stated that the mobility of warplanes continued until the late hours of the night, no information could be obtained about the results of the bombardment.

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YRK warns those who scout out their activities in guerrilla areas

ANF | 5 NOVEMBER 2023

The General Command of the Eastern Kurdistan Defence Forces (YRK) released a statement warning the public about people who are in guerrilla areas and scouting their locations. YRK stated that collaborators of the Iranian regime posed as hunters, tourists, mountaineers or cattle dealers and spied on sensitive information in order to localise the locations of the guerrillas for attacks. The Zagros Mountains are a particular focus of these activities, said the YRK and issued an explicit warning to agents who report to the

regime on the inner workings of the guerrillas. According to the organisation, “necessary measures” will be taken against them.

“As part of its genocidal policy, the Iranian regime is trying to secure its existence by exploiting the poverty of the people and organising espionage among the population. Under the guise of hunting, tourism or livestock farming, guerrilla areas are identified and then attacked. But nature falls victim to these attacks. We appeal to our people: do not sacrifice the beauty of our nature and the richness of our land for the benefit of some. Be sensitive to those who want to scout out the whereabouts of the guerrillas under false pretences. These people serve the enemies of the Kurdish people and the occupiers. They are responsible for any negative situation that may develop as a result of espionage activities.”

According to the YRK, the regime’s forced reconnaissance is focussed on relevant areas of Çiyayên Zagrosê, including Kebîrko, Manêşt, Perwa, Ajwan, Dalahû, Şaho, Kosalan, Qeleberd, Şaneşîn and Çilçeme as well as the Dalanper and Ewrîn mountain pastures in the Mukriyan mountains. The YRK also issued a warning to people from the hunting and timber industry, saying: “All those who harm the nature of Kurdistan are in the sights of our forces.”



Three injured in Turkish drone attack in Ranya

ANF | 6 NOVEMBER 2023

Three people were injured in a Turkish drone attack in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) on Monday. The target of the attack, carried out by an unmanned combat drone in the morning, was the village of Boskênî in Ranya. The head of the village, Serhed Resul, told the RojNews agency that at least three people were injured. The security authorities have launched an investigation.

According to Resul, the airstrike took place in the centre of the city. One of the victims is said to be a person on foot, while two others were employees of neighbouring shops. The director of the Ranya health department, Farman Ahmad, only spoke of two wounded people who were taken to hospital. Ahmad did not give any details about the severity of their injuries.

The city of Ranya is located around 130 kilometres north-west of the metropolis of Sulaymaniyah. Almost three weeks ago, a drone attack by the Turkish state targeted the vehicle of Mexmûr resident Dilovan Işlek near Ranya. He died in the attack which left three female family members of his injured.

Attacks by Turkey that violate international law have been routine in southern Kurdistan for years. The Turkish air force bombs the territory of the KRI and Iraq on an almost daily basis, especially where guerrillas are suspected. However, civilian settlement areas are also regularly attacked by the Turkish army, including the Yazidi settlement area of Shengal and the Maxmur refugee camp. With its aerial terror, Ankara is pursuing a targeted policy of displacement - in particular by deliberately destroying civilian infrastructure.



Turkish army builds roads to guerrilla positions with the help of the KDP

SERHAT ARARAT | BEHDINAN | 6 NOVEMBER 2023

The battle for the western Zap region in the guerrilla-held Medya Defence Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) continues unabated. The Turkish army has been trying to capture PKK guerrilla positions in the region for two years. Last winter, the Turkish army had to withdraw in the face of resistance from the guerrillas. The invading forces and their collaborators are very active ahead of the coming winter.

The KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party), South Kurdistan's ruling party which is collaborating with the invading forces, is being deployed for the Turkish army's attacks against the guerrillas. As the guerrillas have so far been reluctant to attack KDP units in order not to play into the hands of the Turkish interest in an open war between the KDP and the PKK, KDP troops are mainly being used to build roads and fortifications for the Turkish army. At the moment, KDP troops are using heavy excavators to build roads to the guerrilla positions. The latest guerrilla footage clearly shows the KDP's approach. In addition, huge protective walls can be seen along the military roads, which are intended to protect the Turkish troops from the guerrillas' guided missiles.

Commenting on the role of the KDP, PKK Executive Council member Murat Karayılan said the following last week: "The enemy is largely stuck. It can neither control the area nor retreat. Last year, they withdrew from some areas such as Girê Cûdî, Girê Amêdî and Girê Pirdoğan. This year, they wanted to occupy these areas again and this time relied on the KDP. With the support of the KDP, they want to occupy the places they were unable to occupy or take last year. Last year, the KDP troops were stationed in Metîna, behind Kanîmasî on a mountain range that we call Girê Ortê. Our guerrillas were there; we told them not to interfere and we withdrew from there. We knew that the mountain range was long and that it would therefore not be a problem if they got stationed in one place. But this year the enemy came with helicopters and airdropped troops 100 metres away from these positions. That means they operate under the protection of these defences, and from there they advance on the ground. A few days ago, it was reported in the press that the soldiers seen in front of the KDP headquarters had been airdropped. In the Çarçela area, the Turkish army marched in under the leadership of the KDP and occupied Sêgirê. The Turkish state wants to take advantage of our cautious attitude by relying on the KDP. This is how the region is meant to be occupied. This is the Turkish state's approach. If it were strong, it would not do this. It is a sign of its weakness. It wants to directly trigger an internal Kurdish war. But this war already exists anyway. The public should realise what this means."



HPG: Six soldiers were killed in actions by the guerrillas

ANF | BEHDINAN | 6 NOVEMBER 2023

The Press Office of the People's Defence Forces (HPG) released a statement providing information about the latest actions by the guerrillas and attacks by the Turkish army in Kurdistan.

According to the HPG statement on Monday, two Turkish soldiers were killed in a sabotage action in the province of Van in northern Kurdistan on 4 November. The action carried out by guerrillas from YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) targeted a Reo type military vehicle, which was completely destroyed, leaving two soldiers in it dead. The action was a retaliation for the fallen guerrillas Yusuf Pîrosî, Şoreş and Deyndar.

Other actions by the guerrillas were directed against Turkish troops in the Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

Girê Cûdî Resistance Area

YJA Star guerrillas intervened against helicopters on a mission to airdrop troops in the area on 2 November.

On 4 November, YJA Star guerrillas struck the occupation forces three times, stopping their advance in the area. Strikes by the guerrillas left a soldier injured and a position damaged on the same day.

Girê Amediyê Resistance Area

On 3 November, one soldier was killed by a guerrilla sniper.

On 4 November, one soldier was killed by a guerrilla sniper and two others were killed in strikes with heavy weapons.

Attacks by the Turkish army

Regarding the attacks by the Turkish army in South Kurdistan, HPG stated that the guerrilla defence positions in Girê Ortê near Metîna were attacked by chemical warfare agents at least 28 times on 4-5 November. In four further attacks, unconventional explosives were used against guerrilla positions. HPG also reported ten airstrikes by Turkish warplanes. Four of the air strikes were aimed at resistance areas in Zap, while the other six attacks targeted the Xakurke region. Attacks by combat helicopters were primarily directed against areas in Zap, Xakurke, Metîna and Barzan. All of the bombed locations were also attacked simultaneously by tank and artillery fire.

Gangs affiliated with Damascus government kill a child in Deir ez-Zor

ANF | 7 NOVEMBER 2023

After the attempt of gangs affiliated with the Damascus government to infiltrate the regions on the east bank of the Euphrates River in Deir ez-Zor was prevented by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), the gangs, together with the Iranian forces stationed on the west bank, launched a mortar attack on the houses of civilians in the village of Dîban.

As a result of the attack, a child named Abdulrauf Ubeyd El-Xelef lost his life, and civilian homes were seriously damaged.



Guerrillas continue their actions against the Turkish army

ANF | BEHDINAN | 7 NOVEMBER 2023

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

According to the HPG Press Center statement on Tuesday, two drones loaded with explosives were shot down yesterday during attack flights on defensive positions of the guerrillas in the Girê Cûdî area on the western front of the Zap region. In the resistance area of Girê Cûdî, sniper units of YJA Star destroyed a surveillance system installed in the area by Turkish occupation troops. The guerrillas also struck a military position with heavy weapons. Several helicopters circling over Girê Cûdî were forced to turn back as a result of intensive strikes by the guerrillas.

In the Girê Amêdî resistance area, the guerrillas targeted the Turkish occupying forces' positions, nine of which were damaged by the use of heavy and medium weapons. In addition, one soldier was shot dead by a sniper.

HPG also reported several artillery attacks that were directed against construction vehicles that were to be used to demolish guerrilla positions "Despite all conceivable war technology and prohibited weapons that have been used for two years, the Turkish army has not succeeded in implementing its occupation plans. The will of the guerrillas cannot be broken - on any day and at any moment. Our forces are tirelessly resisting and successfully combining their firm belief in victory with various tactics. As a sign of their impotence, the Turkish army is relying on collaboration with the KDP and bulldozers to tear down our positions."

HPG reported that the Turkish army once again carried out various attacks in South Kurdistan. On Monday, nine airstrikes by warplanes targeted the resistance area of Şehîd İbrahîm in the Zap region. Further attacks by combat helicopters targeted the western front of the Zap and parts of Xakurke, which were also targeted by numerous tank and artillery attacks.

In Girê Amêdî, the HPG reported two attacks with unconventional explosives. Another attack against guerrilla positions in the area was carried out with an explosive-laden drone.

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Turkish state bombs villages in Biradost

ANF | BEHDINAN | 7 NOVEMBER 2023

The Turkish state bombed the villages of Geruy, Sindan, Kuwêstanî Sinîn and Bêrkme in Sîdekan in the Biradost area.

Turkish warplanes also bombed the villages of Qendîl and Pişder on Tuesday evening.

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Council of Martyrs' Families: The Heart of the Revolution

NUJIYAN ADAR | QAMISHLO | 8 NOVEMBER 2023

The Council of Martyrs' Families represents one of the most important institutions of the Autonomous Administration for the people of Northern and Eastern Syria, as almost every family has martyrs who died in the defense of the revolution and the region. Since the revolution began in 2012, 11,804 fighters have fallen and the number continues to grow every day. The number of spouses of martyrs alone is at least 3,893, and the number of children of martyrs is 11,585. Hêvî Seyîd, who is responsible for the Council of Martyrs' Families, said: "When we visit the families, the women draw strength from our presence. We are also relatives of martyrs. They receive support from both us and society and realize that they are not alone."

The Council of Martyrs' Families was organized in the Shehba region before the revolution in 2008 as the Committee of the Martyrs of Shehba. With the beginning of the revolution in Rojava, the first conference of the families of the martyrs took place on 28 July 2011 in the village of Bestasus in Dêrik. After the conference, small groups began to organize in each city. As an institution for the relatives of the martyrs, the association continued to spread and has continued its work in all cities since 2015 as the Council of Martyrs' Families. The Council is organized into eight committees and covers 199 municipalities. These municipalities are closely linked to the municipalities as central units of grassroots democratic self-government. The communes of the Council consist of 25 to 50 people.

The Council held its first congress this year and is in Shehba, Aleppo, Manbij, Kobanê, Tabqa, Raqqa, Deir ez-Zor, Shedadê (ash-Shaddadi), Heseke, Til Temir, Til Berak, Dirbêsiyê , Amûdê, Qamişlo, Tirbespiyê, Til Hemîs, Til Koçer, Dêrik and Girkê Legê as well as in the Serêkaniyê and Wasokanî camps.

There are 11 council graveyards. These are located in Dêrik, Qamishlo, Heseke, Raqqa, Kobanê-Sirîn, Manbij, Aleppo and Shehba. The number of martyrs buried there is broken down by city as follows: Shedadê 426, Til Hemîs 90, Amûdê 74, Manbij 351, Til Koçer 96, Kobanê 1,739 martyrs in four graveyards for martyrs, Qamishlo 891 martyrs in two graveyards for martyrs, Dêrik 980 martyrs, Raqqa 420 martyrs in two graveyards for martyrs, Tirbespiyê 194 martyrs, Aleppo 38 martyrs, Shehba 220 martyrs in two graveyards for martyrs, Heseke 1090 martyrs in three graveyards for martyrs, Dirbêsiyê 544 martyrs, Til Hemîs 269 martyrs, Deir ez-Zor 349 martyrs in three graveyards for martyrs and Tabqa 230 martyrs.

Council Committees and Academies

The Council, similar to municipalities in Rojava in general, has committees established as needed. One important committee is the Council's Education Committee. The committee is responsible for educating all members of the council on the principles of a gender-free, ecological and democratic society. Vocational training and other further training are also offered at the council's academies. This applies in particular to the children of those who died. Their education is supported and organized at every level, both material and intellectual. At the same time, the council creates the basis for family members to also be able to take part in educational programs. In this sense, the council places emphasis on the Academy for the Children of the Martyrs and aims to expand its own school model in all cities, offering two-year computer training, as well as electronics, design, physics, chemistry, mathematics, Kurdish, English and Arabic training. At the moment, there is the 'Şehîd Beşîr Qamişlo School' for technology as a pilot project.

Another important committee is the Understanding and Reconciliation Committee. The committee tries to solve all social problems of relatives on the basis of understanding and the principle of building a moral-political society.

At the same time, there is an evaluation and monitoring committee whose task is to track and analyze the families' situation and determine the families' needs. The committee prepares a needs report for each family.

Health care with limited options

The Health Committee is concerned with improving public health care and expanding care for the families of martyrs despite the limited resources due to the embargo and war. At the same time, it is about health education.

Economy based on society

Like every self-governing institution, the Council also has an economic committee that is committed to building a communal, cooperative-based, grassroots democratic economy. The committee sets up cooperatives in which the relatives of the fallen can work and through which they are cared for. The cooperatives particularly include agriculture and livestock breeding.

A memory of society

The Archives and Press Commission represents the heart of the Council. Here the data and reports, diaries and information about the fallen are recorded and shared with the public.

Organizing children and partners of fallen soldiers

The Women's Council and the mothers of the martyrs take direct care of the partners of the martyrs. The Women's Council participates in all full council activities and held its first conference on 25 May 2021. The second congress followed on 25 August 2023. At the conference, criticism and self-criticism were particularly expressed and it was decided to improve the work.

60 fallen internationalists

Hesen Ubeyd from the Council of Martyrs' Families in Cizîrê Canton said: "We have martyrs every day. As the Council of Martyrs' Families, we are always ready to support the families of the martyrs, especially their partners and children. Our main task is to help these families. The blood of Kurdish, Arab, Armenian, Assyrian, Aramaic, Turkmen, German, French, Canadian, Egyptian and many other international martyrs has mixed on the soil of Northern and Eastern Syria. There are around 60 fallen internationalists. Nine families have visited our region and are committed to their children's fight."

"Our job is to create solutions"

Hêvî Seyîd, head of the Women's Council of Martyrs' Families in Cizîrê Canton, said in an interview with ANF: "Our goal is to introduce the 'Şehîd Bêşîr Qamişlo School' of technology in all cities. Our preparations go in this direction. Kurdish, English and Arabic languages and music are taught in the summer months. We are using the closure of schools to focus on raising healthy and conscious children. The partners of the martyrs go through ideological and professional training in academies. They are also involved in activities such as painting, sewing and embroidery, as well as in farming and livestock breeding in cooperatives to secure their livelihood. In addition to the Women's Council, partners of fallen soldiers work in many areas, from health to trade, from women's institutions to business. Our job is to understand women's feelings, show them to understand and support them. When we visit families, women draw strength from us. We are also relatives of the martyrs. They get strength from us and from society. They feel that they are not alone."

— ★ —

Turkey-backed mercenary group kidnaps 6 Kurds in Girê Spî

ANF | 8 NOVEMBER 2023

Jabhat al-Shamiya mercenary group affiliated with the Turkish state raided the wedding of a Kurdish family in the Ein Eros town in the occupied Girê Spî Canton.

The mercenaries attacked the wedding and kidnapped Şahin Ehmed and his father, Hec Yûsif El Hesên, Reşad Ehmed, Mistefa Ehmed and Seed Ehmed.

It is not known where the six Kurds were taken.

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Turkish army establishes a new base in Bradost after the deployment of KDP forces

ANF | 8 NOVEMBER 2023

The cooperation of the KDP, the ruling party in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), with the Turkish state took on a new dimension with its recent deployment of troops and armored vehicles to the guerrilla areas.

The Turkish state has started to build a new military base in the Bradost region in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq), according to the pro-PUK media.

With the new military base, the Turkish state penetrated some 10 km into the border of the Kurdistan Region.

Local sources report that around 100 soldiers have been airdropped by helicopters at the Turkish base in Bradost.

The new base is located in the area of Duriya and separates it from Xakurke, bringing the areas of Tarstan, Kem Kora and Sinîn Lolan under the control of the Turkish occupation state.

The establishment of the Turkish base began after the deployment of the KDP, which is collaborating with the Turkish army against the guerrilla forces.

On 13 September 2023, the KDP dispatched hundreds of armored vehicles and heavy weapons to Bradost after forcibly evacuating the nomads from the region through threats, repression and use of force. A part of the KDP force attacked the positions of the guerrillas at Gewriya Zînê in the Goşîne area the following day.

Local sources report that nearly 286 families, including nomads and farmers, had to leave their fields and orchards in the region due to KDP pressure.

Warplanes and reconnaissance aircraft of the Turkish state are conducting bombardments in the Bradost region on an almost daily basis. The region is also targeted by systematic artillery and mortar attacks.

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.

The KDP, controlled by the Barzani family, is largely dependent on and closely allied with the AKP/MHP regime. The Turkish state is trying to use the KDP as a tool to trigger an internal Kurdish civil war. The current deployment of troops by the KDP shows the extent of the danger. In recent years, the KDP has repeatedly set up ambushes against the guerrillas, marked targets for Turkish airstrikes, captured guerrillas and even “disappeared” them. The KDP’s intelligence service Parastin supports the Turkish intelligence service MIT in its attacks against Kurdish activists in southern Kurdistan. So far, a major escalation could only be avoided thanks to the patient attitude of the guerrillas, who are trying to build a Kurdish unity. However, as the Turkish army seems to be on the defensive again in its current large-scale attack on the guerrilla-held Medya Defence Zones, a relief attack by the KDP is becoming increasingly likely.

While the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) and the Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK) are calling for Kurdish unity to stop the genocide of the Kurdish people, to make their voices heard at the international level and to prevent an inner-Kurdish war, the Barzani-dominated KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party) in South Kurdistan is working with the Turkish state and its secret service MIT and is doing the exact opposite.

Elî Ewnî, a member of the Central Committee of the KDP, openly called for the murder of leading PKK members during a TV appearance on a Barzani family channel in mid-August. Ewnî explained that the Turkish army and MIT are capable of targeting people with drones and questioned why the PKK leadership is not being eliminated with drones.

Elî Ewnî stated: “I say it to the leaders of the Turkish state. You can use drones, the airway and by means of the Internet to locate the members of the PKK in the tens of thousands of cars going to Ahmedawa and bomb them. Don’t you know the leaders and vanguards of the PKK who come and go to Turkey through Ranya, Derbindaxan, Qeladizê and Bradost?”

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Military operation in Hakkari countryside

ANF | HAKKARI | 8 NOVEMBER 2023

The Turkish army launched a military operation in the countryside of Yüksekova and Şemdinli districts in the province of Hakkâri.

According to information from the region, the operation covers the villages of Şişemzîn, Xurekana Seyîda and Xurekana Temo in the Geliyê Diriyân region as well as Mûşan, Memkava and Elver in Şemdinli. The high pastures are besieged by the military and checkpoints have been set up in several places. There are also reports of masked men scouting the area around the villages.

According to reports, shots were heard from the mountain pastures of Astenga Reş, Meydanok, Kaniya Barkirî and Mêranava, located between the villages of Şişemzîn and Xurekan. Reports are coming through of an explosion in the Kora Oncê area near the village of Memkava, where shots were also fired. Helicopters and drones are also observed in the area of operation.

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Turkish drone attack on a vehicle on the M4 highway in Rojava

ANF | QAMISHLO | 8 NOVEMBER 2023

The Turkish state targeted a vehicle passing on the M4 highway between Qamishlo and Hesekê with an Armed Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV).

No casualties were reported.

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Occupation forces attack Til Temir countryside

ANF | 9 NOVEMBER 2023

The military violence of the Turkish army and its jihadist allies against the autonomous region of North and East Syria continues.

According to reports from the ground, occupation forces shelled the village of Til Tawile in the countryside of Til Temir (Tal Tamr) on Thursday. Information about the aftermath of the aggression was not immediately available.

Til Temir is a good 30 kilometres from the Turkish border and borders in the north on the illegal occupation zone that Turkey is running along its southern border in solidarity with jihadists in Rojava. Since 2019, the Christian-majority district has been in the aggressors' crosshairs as part of a war of attrition, with periods of high intensity alternating with periods of low intensity. Over thirty villages have since been either occupied, depopulated or extensively destroyed. Almost as many villages lie directly on the front line - and thus in the permanent sights of the occupying forces.

The constant incursions by Turkey and its Islamist allies constitute violations of the ceasefire and de-escalation agreements concluded between the guarantor powers Russia and the USA with Turkey after the occupation of Serêkaniyê (Ras al-Ain) and Girê Spî (Tal Abyad) in October 2019. Both Moscow and Washington nevertheless give Turkey a free hand. Other regions of the AANES are also permanently targeted by the Turkish military, which, however, remains largely unnoticed.



HPG reports 18 airstrikes and 48 attacks with unconventional weapons in guerrilla areas

ANF | BEHDINAN | 9 NOVEMBER 2023

The Press Centre of the People's Defence Forces (HPG) released a statement providing information about the ongoing war in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq). According to the statement, Medya Defense Zones were bombed 18 times by Turkish fighter jets on 7-8 November, in which the guerrillas did not suffer any casualties.

HPG pointed out that the exaggerated portrayal of air strikes in the Turkish media is part of the psychological warfare. "The Turkish army is stuck in the war zone and is trying to make progress through bombardments from the air and on the ground and by using unconventional explosives and chemical gases. However, this plan is failing due to the protective measures taken by the guerrillas," said the HPG.

Regarding the latest guerrilla actions against the Turkish invasion forces in South Kurdistan, and the attacks by the Turkish army, HPG reported the following:

Şehîd Delîl, Western Zap region

On 7 November, Turkish troops in the Girê Cûdî resistance area were struck three times with heavy and semi-automatic weapons and one position was damaged. On the same day, a drone loaded with explosives was destroyed by means of sabotage tactics.

In the Girê Amêdiyê resistance area, a surveillance camera installed by the Turkish army was destroyed by a YJA Star sniper. A howitzer position of the invading forces was struck and damaged with semi-automatic weapons.

Metîna

In Metîna, the Turkish occupying forces in the resistance areas of Girê Ortê and Girê Çarçel were struck by the guerrillas with semi-automatic and heavy weapons on 7-8 November.

Attacks by the Turkish army

According to the HPG, the Turkish army has used banned explosives, chemical weapons and drones loaded with explosives against guerrilla positions in Zap and Metîna on a massive scale since the beginning of the week. In the resistance area of Girê Ortê, the Turkish army carried out 48 attacks with unconventional explosives and chemical gases between 6 and 8 November. Prohibited explosives were employed four times against guerrilla positions in the Sîda resistance area on 6-7 November. Five attacks with explo-

sive drones were carried out at Girê Çarçel on 7 November, when, on the other hand, positions at Girê Cûdî were attacked five times by drones loaded with explosives.

Airstrikes by fighter jets were directed against the areas of Şehîd İbrahim in Zap, Gundê Bilindbazê, Gundê Girê, Şehîd Aslan, Girê Zengil, Deriyê Hirçê, Kanîsarkê and Gundê Gûzê in Gare as well as Girê Roj, Gundê Bêpala and Gundê Bolê in Qendîl. On 7 September, the regions of Zap, Şehîd Delîl Western Zap, Xakurkê and Barzan were attacked by helicopters. Artillery attacks were carried out on Zap, Şehîd Delîl West-Zap, Metîna and Xakurkê.

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Turkey bombs civilian houses in Amadiya, South Kurdistan

ANF | 10 NOVEMBER 2023

The invading Turkish state bombed civilian houses in the countryside of Duhok governorate in the Kurdistan region of Iraq (KRI).

The attack on Friday targeted villages in the city of Amadiya. According to reports from the ground, a cannon ball hit a house in the village of Berçî, causing material damage.

Attacks by Turkey that violate international law have been routine in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) for years. The Turkish air force bombs the territory of the KRI and Iraq on an almost daily basis, especially where guerrillas are suspected. However, civilian settlement areas are also regularly attacked by the Turkish army, including the Yazidi settlement area of Shengal and the Maxmur refugee camp. With its aerial terror, Ankara is pursuing a targeted policy of displacement - in particular by deliberately destroying civilian infrastructure.

— ★ —

HPG guerrilla Zinar Sori buried in Idil

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 11 NOVEMBER 2023

The body of Zinar Sorî (Abdulselem Oğuz), one of the 4 Kurdistan Freedom Guerrillas who were martyred in a bombardment carried out in the region of Şirnak as a result of the local counter-guerrillas informing the invading Turkish state, was delivered to his family.

After the DNA test on the body that had been buried in the Cemetery of the nameless in the city, his family applied to the Şirnak Chief Public Prosecutor's Office.

The martyr's body was removed from the graveyard and handed over to his family. The family took the remains to Idil district.

Martyr Zinar Sorî was buried at Şêx Hesên Cemetery in Idil, with the participation of hundreds of people as well as his family.



Femicide

Hüda Kaya held in solitary confinement

ANF | 4 NOVEMBER 2023

Former HDP MP Hüda Kaya was taken into custody at Istanbul airport in line with an investigation launched by Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office. The 63-year-old politician was remanded in custody in connection with the Kobanê trial. She was transferred to the Silivri prison complex near Istanbul on the same day.

Hüda Kaya wrote a short message from prison, which was published on her X account: "Dear brothers and sisters, I am being held in solitary confinement, but I know that I am not alone. I don't have a way to write yet. I would like to greet all free people, my friends, my brothers and sisters who send me their greetings, love and prayers and show their solidarity. How good that you exist!"

Hüda Kaya was a member of the HDP in Turkey's parliament from 2015 until the elections in May. As the politician and internationally renowned activist told the Mezopotamya Agency (MA), she travelled abroad even after her mandate ended and could have escaped persecution. On 27 September, the Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office declared her a "fugitive". She appealed against this decision together with her lawyer and asked why. During this time, she was at her official registration address in Istanbul, could be contacted by telephone and was prepared to make a statement at any time.

Hüda Kaya's arrest was publicised in the Turkish media under the headline "Caught on the run". Kaya speaks of a "political trap" and is set to press charges against the authorities.



Saturday Mothers took to the streets for the 971st time this week

ANF | ISTANBUL | 4 NOVEMBER 2023

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.

The Saturday Mothers and their supporters faced a renewed obstruction and siege by the police on the 971st week of their action, while journalists were pushed back and prevented from doing their work.

The resilience of the human rights defenders enabled them to overcome the police blockade and leave carnations at Galatasaray Square, after which they left the scene. The group then made a statement to the press at the Istanbul Branch of the Human Rights Association (IHD).

Men kill at least 19 women in Turkey in October

ANF | 6 NOVEMBER 2023

According to the platform “We will stop femicide” (KCDP), at least 19 women were murdered in Turkey in October. This brings the number of femicides this year to 253, compared to 275 cases in the same period last year. This is a decrease of eight percentage points compared to the previous year.

According to the report by the KCDP association, five femicides were committed in October because women wanted to make their own decisions about their lives: they wanted a divorce or rejected reconciliation after separation, marriage or a relationship. In one case, a “discussion” played a role; the reason for the remaining 13 murders could not be determined.

Around 58 percent of femicides carried out by husbands

In eleven cases, the killers were the husbands of the victims. Seven killers were ex-husbands, former partners, brothers, sons or other male relatives. Only one woman was murdered by an unknown person.

Most women killed in their own home

Thirteen women were murdered in their own homes, three women on the street, one in a public place and another in a remote area. In the case of one femicide, the crime scene could not be identified.

Methods of murder: shooting, strangling, slaying

Of the women murdered in October, twelve were shot, three were strangled and two were stabbed. Another two women were “beaten to death,” according to the report.

High number of unreported cases feared

The report by the Istanbul-based women's rights organization KCDP contains data on all femicides recorded by the police or published in the media. However, the actual number of femicides committed is likely to be significantly higher, the report emphasized. A further 18 women died under “suspicious circumstances” last month. Experience shows that perpetrators often construct scenes to make femicide look like a suicide, an accident or natural death, the platform said.

Mother of Amedspor player taken into custody for not standing during the Turkish national anthem

ANF | AMED | 6 NOVEMBER 2023

On Sunday, the Kurdish football club Amedspor was playing at home in Amed, in the stadium named after the murdered human rights lawyer Tahir Elçi in Amed. Just before the match, Turkish police arrested Fatma Aydın, the mother of player Oktay Aydın, because she did not stand up due to pain in her legs. She was taken to a police station in Amed and then released.

Nationalist reprisals against Kurds

On 10 September, similar reprisals took place against Kurdish fans who refused to stand during the Turkish national anthem at the football match between Amedspor and Düzcespor. Two weeks earlier, at the match between Amedspor and Sarıyerspor, twelve people were arrested for the same reason.

Amedspor fans were charged with “publicly denigrating the emblems of the state.” The arrested people were brought before the magistrate and released under judicial supervision pending trial.

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Akıncı: Special war targets women

ANF | MARDIN | 7 NOVEMBER 2023

HDP Nusaybin (Nisêbîn) provincial co-chair Şindar Akıncı said that the attack within the scope of the special war concept was two-dimensional and emphasized that the female body, identity and culture were targeted.

The court hearing of Eyüp K., who was found to have molested four children in Nusaybin, was held on 30 October. Although the statements, camera recordings and other findings about the harassment, which emerged when the two victimized girls told their school counselors about their experiences, were evidence of how the incident developed, the court decided that Eyüp K should be tried without detention.

Şindar Akıncı stated that the increase in harassment cases by uniformed officials should be considered as a pillar of specific policies implemented in the region and emphasized that the reason for the increase in harassment, abuse and prostitution cases after the self-governance processes in Mardin (Mêrdîn) was the special war concept. Akıncı said, “The attack is two-dimensional, targeting the female body on one side and identity and culture on the other. These men do this knowing that nothing will happen to them. In their court defenses, they swear allegiance to the homeland, nation and flag. They are released, and most of the time they do not receive any punishment. Instead they get encouragement, protection, reward.”

They know that nothing will happen to them

Most recently, it was revealed that a young woman was forced to act as a spy in Dêrik and that the woman was harassed by a village guard. Akıncı said: “We saw in the incident in Nusaybin that the harassing person was released. The lawyer’s defense style was similar to previous ones. These people know that if they do such a thing, nothing will happen to them, they will not receive any punishment. They will literally be rewarded.”

The increase is not a coincidence

Şindar Akıncı pointed out that the practices of the special war concept in Kurdistan changed style, size and quality according to periods, and emphasized that state policies towards the female body increased after the self-governance process.

Akıncı underlined that the increase in incidents such as violence, harassment and abuse against women in Nusaybin, which was declared as the ‘Women’s City’ during the co-mayorship of Ayşe Gökkan, is not a coincidence and continued as follows: “Concepts are changing hands, changing shape. Assimilation and harassment of women are known. For years, the naked bodies of people who died in the conflict, especially women, were displayed. They wanted to humiliate a people over this. In Mardin, there has been an increase in harassment, abuse and violence cases since the self-government process in 2016. Almost all of the perpetrators are uniformed harassers. It is necessary to read these events in Nusaybin within the current special war concept.

One of the areas opened under the special war concept in Kurdistan is the encouragement of Turkish soldiers to establish relationships with young women in the region. Under the name of ‘love’, state forces and young women are encouraged to get together. These relationships are tried to be legitimized with statements such as ‘Love knows no borders, love has no natio’. However, we know that our young women who find themselves in this network of relationships do not have the right to live with their identities and cultures. Absolute obedience and renounce to their identity are required. Nusaybin does not have a ground where state forces can establish such relations. Eyüp K. not only knows this, but also has more perverted ambitions. He did not introduce himself as a staff sergeant. He said that he was a new engineer in the region and asked the people he harassed to give him directions. This is how he pulled into his car. We will not remain silent about this particular concept of war waged over the female body.”

Former DBP leader Ayna sentenced to two and a half years in prison

ANF | AMED | 8 NOVEMBER 2023

Former DBP co-chair Emine Ayna was sentenced to two and a half years in prison in Turkey. The 55-year-old is said to have publicly called for a political solution to the Kurdish question several times between 2011 and 2016 and also emphasized the role of Abdullah Öcalan in easing the conflict. She is also said to have spoken out in favor of improving Öcalan's prison conditions. A court in Amed said on Tuesday that all those speeches proved Ayna had carried out propaganda for a "terrorist organization". Ayna was acquitted of the accusation of multiple violations of the Turkish assembly law. The verdict is not yet legally binding.

The trial before one of the large criminal chambers in Amed ended without the presence of Emine Ayna. Her defense lawyer, Semra Balyan, pointed out to the chamber that the speeches criticized by the prosecution fall under freedom of expression and were made at a time when her client was a member of the Turkish parliament. She also gave some of the speeches in her role as chair of a pro-Kurdish party. Balyan accused the public prosecutor's office of deliberately criminalizing Ayna's political speeches in order to punish certain points of view.

The lawyer also emphasized the limited scope for restrictions on political speech in the relevant article of the Turkish penal code. State restrictions on expression can only be justified if they serve to incite violence. Ayna's statements did not contain hate speech or calls for violence. On the contrary, they included demands to solve the Kurdish question. Therefore, there is a lack of public interest in the prosecution, which is disproportionate and unnecessary, said Balyan and called for her client's acquittal. The court initially sentenced Emine Ayna to three years in prison, but reduced the sentence by six months.

Who is Emine Ayna?

Emine Ayna was born in 1968 in Dicle, in the province of Amed. After graduating from high school, she was co-founder and later chair of the Istanbul-based women's association "Gökkuşığı" (Rainbow). In 2007, she stood in the parliamentary elections as an independent candidate for the province of Mardin and entered the Turkish parliament with more than 15 percent of the vote. She was co-chair of the Party of Democratic Society (DTP) until it was banned at the end of 2009. After the DTP ban, she joined the successor party, BDP (Party for Peace and Democracy). She stood as an independent candidate for Amed in the 2011 parliamentary elections and was re-elected. When the BDP renamed itself DBP (Party of Democratic Regions) in 2014, Ayna was elected as co-chair. Ayna did not stand for re-election in the 2015 elections. In 2016, she withdrew from active politics in response to the Turkish military siege of Kurdish cities that claimed hundreds of lives.

Defendant in the Kobanê trial

Emine Ayna is one of 108 defendants in the so-called "Kobanê trial" and was in custody for around nine months in connection with the trial.



Kurdish politician Aysel Tuğluk taken into custody one year after her release from prison

ANF | ISTANBUL | 8 NOVEMBER 2023

Former member of parliament Aysel Tuğluk was taken into custody at her home in Istanbul on Wednesday in connection with an investigation from 2012.

Aysel Tuğluk was released from prison a year ago due to severe dementia. The Kurdish politician and lawyer was arrested at the end of 2016 and convicted in several trials. In February 2020, the Turkish Court of Appeal confirmed Aysel Tuğluk's sentence of ten years in prison, the highest to date. She was convicted of "leading a terrorist organisation" due to her role as co-chair of the Democratic Society Congress (DTK). In October 2021, she was sentenced to twenty months in prison for alleged terror propaganda in 2012 and 2013. She faces an aggravated life sentence in the so-called Kobanê trial in Ankara.

In prison, Aysel Tuğluk became so seriously ill with dementia that she was no longer able to look after herself. Women's organisations led a months-long campaign for her release. She was released from prison in October 2022 and her sentence was later suspended due to her incapacity.



Aysel Tuğluk released from custody

ANF | ISTANBUL | 9 NOVEMBER 2023

Aysel Tuğluk was taken into custody on Wednesday afternoon for a speech she delivered in Hakkari in 2012.

The lawyer and former MP, who suffered from dementia, was released in the evening.



Human Rights Violations

RojNews agency once again calls on KDP to release journalist Ehmed

ANF | 4 NOVEMBER 2023

There is still no news of the journalist Silêman Ehmed, who was abducted by KDP security forces in South Kurdistan on 25 October. The employee of the Arabic-language editorial team of the RojNews news agency initially disappeared after visiting family in Aleppo at the Sêmalka-Pêşxabûr border crossing between the Autonomous Region of North and East Syria and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

The last contact with him was a telephone conversation with his mother when he was already in the KDP's area of responsibility. Six days later, the Asayîş security agency in Dihok announced that they accused the journalist of being a member of the PKK and, therefore, they had arrested him.

RojNews said it holds the KDP responsible for the life and safety of its editor.

Ehmed comes from Afrin and has been working for the news agency in South Kurdistan for five years. "We condemn the illegal abduction of Silêman Ehmed and demand immediate clarification about his situation as well as his immediate release," RojNews said on Saturday.

Many Kurdish media organizations support journalists, such as the Kurdish PEN Center (Navenda PEN a Kurd), the journalists' association DFG from Amed and the Mesopotamian Journalists' Association, as well as international associations such as Reporters Without Borders (RSF) and the CPJ are calling on the KDP to release Silêman Ehmed.

RSF said: "We are concerned about the incommunicado detention since 25 October of Roj News agency editor in chief Suleyman Ahmet, arrested by the Kurdistan Democratic Party on the Syrian border. Kurdish security forces must release him immediately."

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Kurdish music as evidence of terror trial

ANF | MERSIN | 5 NOVEMBER 2023

The Mersin Public Prosecutor's Office has brought charges against almost a dozen HDP members. The indictment has already been formally accepted by one of the major criminal chambers in the southern Turkish province. However, the court plans to set a date for the start of the trial at a later date.

Eleven people are accused in the case. They are all people with a Kurdish background active in local politics. Seven of them have been in custody since last May on "strong suspicion of membership in a terrorist

organization.” These are a former co-chair of the HDP district association in Yenişehir and six male activists from the party’s youth council.

The alleged “terrorist organization” to which those affected are said to belong is the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK). According to the public prosecutor’s office, there are numerous pieces of evidence that support the defendant’s alleged PKK connections. These included, among other things, invitations for a HDP youth conference shared on various social networks and statements made to the Kurdish press about the isolation of Abdullah Öcalan.

The defendant’s participation in HDP cultural and political events, as well as in funerals of political prisoners, is also read by the public prosecutor’s office as evidence of PKK membership. One of the youth activists is also accused of “demonstrating his ideological connection to the PKK” by listening to Kurdish-language music in his car.

Elsewhere in the indictment there more Kurdish songs are named as evidence against the activists. The songs have been listened to in homes and in public, such as cafes. Apparently the young activists were illegally wiretapped by the police for months. The public prosecutor's office accuses a severely disabled activist who relies on a wheelchair of putting “illegal lettering” on the facades of houses in 2016.



DBP Conference: Time for freedom and great successes in Kurdistan

ANF | AMED | 5 NOVEMBER 2023

The DBP (Party of Democratic Regions) held a conference in Amed (tr. Diyarbakir) in the run-up to its 6th party congress in Ankara on 12 November. Thousands of people from the Kurdish region of Turkey took part in the event in the district of Bağlar. Kurdish-language banners clarifying the goal of the party read: “Building a free life with an organised society” and “Women organise life”.

The conference began with welcoming speeches by DBP co-chairs Saliha Aydeniz and Keskin Bayindir, who are both members of parliament in Turkey. The DBP is a sister party of the HDP (Peoples’ Democratic Party), which has taken a back seat due to an ongoing ban procedure and has handed over its competences to the HEDEP (Peoples’ Equality and Freedom Party).

In his speech, Keskin Bayindir addressed the current political situation in the Middle East and said that the system of capitalist modernity was on the verge of collapse: “No power can prevent this collapse any longer. The reason for the wars in the Middle East is one of the consequences of this collapse. Hegemonic powers have turned the geography of the Middle East into a battlefield. World War 3 has begun and continues, at great cost to humanity as a whole. The entire Middle East, especially Kurdistan, has turned into a bloodbath. In the year of the centenary of the Treaty of Lausanne, new steps are being taken to reshape the Middle East. This is clearly demonstrated by the situation in Kurdistan, Afghanistan, Armenia, Azer-

baijan, Iraq, Syria and Palestine. Attempts are being made to deprive the peoples of their future through war and occupation. We can say that capitalist modernity is targeting Kurdistan in particular.”

The main cause of wars and crises is the “divide and rule” mentality of nation states, said Bayindir and continued: “As long as the identity and status of peoples are not recognised, the bloodshed in the Middle East will not stop. Nation states are cultural genocide, assimilation, denial, identity genocide, plunder, destruction and monistic mentality. For this reason, nation states cannot be a solution to crises in the Middle East or anywhere else in the world. The model of the nation state cannot be a remedy for the Middle East. We see this reality today in the Palestinian-Israeli war. The only solution is the model of democratic modernity. With it, freedom in Kurdistan and democracy in the Middle East are possible. In the Democratic Modernity model, all identities and beliefs can express themselves freely. It stands for communal life and was established in Rojava with great effort. We can clearly see the results of this. Despite the attacks, all identities, beliefs and cultures live together in Rojava. The peoples of Rojava are sowing the seeds of freedom together. Rojava shows that democratic modernity is not a dream. We can realise this model everywhere.”

Keskin Bayindir went on to say that a political solution to the Kurdish question was a fundamental prerequisite for peace in the Middle East and at this point proposed democratic confederalism as an alternative to the nation state model. “The confederal model proposed by Abdullah Öcalan gives hope to the oppressed peoples in the Middle East and in other parts of the world. The architect of this model is Mr Öcalan,” stated the DBP co-chair and called for a return to the Dolmabahçe Consensus of 2015.

According to Bayindir, one of the reasons for the isolation of Abdullah Öcalan and his proposed solutions and the intensification of the Kurdish question is the fragmentation of Kurdish society: “The main task of the DBP is to organise society and ensure national unity. This is important in order to give Kurdish achievements a permanent status. The future and the achievements of the people of Kurdistan must not be misused for personal interests. Our attitude towards collaborators who jeopardise the future of the Kurdish people must be clear. Our main task is to build a strong struggle and unity that the Kurdish people can be proud of. No power will be able to stop the Kurdish people on their way to freedom and success. The Kurdish people will democratise their country and build a free life in Kurdistan. Now is the time for great achievements in Kurdistan, for the freedom of women and the people. It is time for freedom. It is time to build an ecological and democratic life in Kurdistan.”

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Declaration of the Youth Writing History Conference Principles

ANF | PARIS | 5 NOVEMBER 2023

Over 400 young people from 40 countries and 95 organisations, movements and parties have been exchanging views on the challenges of our time and common perspectives for action at the “Youth Writing History” conference in Paris since Friday.

The conference concluded with a declaration calling on the young people of all countries to “unite and change this world”. The declaration highlighting the main principles of the Youth Writing History Conference includes the following:

“As the youth of the world, as well as humanity as a whole, we are currently confronted with a systemic crisis of unprecedented intensity. The ecological catastrophe is worsening daily, wars are intensifying everywhere, nationalism and fascist movements are spreading across the globe. In order to fulfill its endless thirst for profit, the capitalist world system is destroying the environment and ultimately robbing humanity of its basis of life. We experience the consequences everywhere, be it in our personal lives or in our environment: social isolation, femicide, poverty, misery, violence and environmental disasters. We are growing up in a catastrophic world and we refuse to accept the reality that is presented to us. Young people around the world are organising and fighting for a better future. For us, being young means searching for the truth, for a better world and a better tomorrow. We are convinced that we can achieve this. If it is not us who intervene in this crisis, who will? If we don't start acting now in the face of these disasters, when will we do? Against this background, we have come together in the “Youth Writing History” network to put our common struggle on a new footing.

We want to discuss, network, educate and organise together. So, we, over 400 young people from 40 countries and 95 organisations, movements and parties, declare that:

1. A solution to the current global crisis can only be achieved outside the existing capitalist system and only by building a new, just and truly democratic world order.
 2. To achieve this goal, the unity of all democratic-revolutionary and anti-systemic forces in the world is needed. As “Youth Writing History” we work on the basis of mutual respect for our different forms of organisation, ways of struggle and political traditions. Furthermore, we actively work on the worldwide unity of all struggles and resistances that are in fundamental contradiction to the ruling system and its world order.
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1. Our common networking and organising is based on the principle of “unity in diversity”. We focus on the principles that unite us, our common goals and our resolute opposition to capitalism, while leaving room for differences, contradictions and diversity in theory and practice.
 2. Our common point of reference is internationalism and the realisation that a different world can only be achieved through the common struggle of all oppressed people worldwide. We defend the fraternity of peoples as a fundamental value of our network.
 3. We fight against all forms of domination, exploitation, capitalism and its ideology, liberalism, which divides society under the flag of false freedom and promotes individualism, patriarchy and the destruction of nature and we stand together against sexism, racism and any oppression based on gender, sexual identity, religion, handicap, language or nationality.
 4. We are united in our fight against all forms of occupation and colonialism and recognise the right to legitimate self-defence of every society. We consider it one of the most urgent internationalist duties of the youth in struggle to, first of all, fight resolutely against the imperialist policies spreading from our respective homelands. We defend the right to self-determination of all peoples and declare our solidarity with all oppressed peoples, especially the Palestinian people and the Kurdistan liberation movement.

5. We regard fascism as a common enemy of humanity and the resurgence of fascist and historical revisionist tendencies as a threat to peace and the future of our societies. As a network, we resolutely stand by the peoples and youth in the anti-fascist struggle.
6. We consider the youth as the most dynamic part of any society and the engine of any change. We consider the autonomous organisation of youth, based on their own strength and independent will, as a guarantee of the pioneering role of youth and the key to the constant renewal of our struggles and organisations.
7. We stand firmly on the side of all peoples in struggle and declare our solidarity with the revolutionary struggles in all countries. We regard the liberated and self-governed territories of this world, from the indigenous regions of Abya Yala, to the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, the free mountains of Kurdistan, the strongholds of the liberation movements and anti-imperialist struggles in Asia, as well as the struggles for national self-determination on the European continent and the ongoing struggle against colonialism and neocolonialism in Africa, as outposts of free humanity. The defence of the achievements of the struggles of the past decades is our common task.
8. While the rulers of this world act together and in a coordinated manner against our struggles, their repressive apparatuses exchange information and persecute oppositionists and revolutionaries across all national borders, our movements and struggles often remain isolated from one another. The rulers are coordinated worldwide, so, we rely on global cohesion and international solidarity. Wherever our movements are attacked and persecuted, we will support each other and back each other up. Together we will work for the freedom of all revolutionary prisoners. Amid the global campaign for the freedom of the revolutionary Abdullah Öcalan, which started on 10th October, we declare our support for the demands of the campaign "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan - A political solution for the Kurdish question!"

Our cooperation and collaboration will be based on the aforementioned principles. We may have different ways of thinking and we may have different methods, ways of working and traditions in our movements. We differ in our cultures and languages, some of us come from large movements and some from smaller ones. But we do not see our differences as an obstacle. Instead, we see this diversity as a richness and on this basis, we want to discuss together, learn from each other and join up forces. Our differences are our strength, it will not weaken but strengthen us on our common path. Our fundamental common ground is our opposition to capitalism, our insistence on humanity. In the face of the global crisis, the ever-increasing war, the ecological catastrophe, the enslavement of women and a system that tries to rob us of our right to a dignified future, our differences and contradictions must fade into the background. As the youth of today, we have a responsibility towards history that we have to fulfil. We no longer want to wait for tomorrow, we want to build a free life here and now. And we are willing to fight for it.

This world and humanity need a youth that has will and strength, is organised, believes in itself and is radical. The current problems will not be solved within the capitalist system; seeking solutions within the cage of capitalism brings no advantage. Capitalism has driven humanity to the edge of the abyss. Our survival is only possible through the defeat of capitalism and the construction of a different life and a different world. The conclusions we draw from the current situation show very clearly that we must come together and become an organised force in the shortest possible time. What is needed is a unity of spirit and strength among young people in struggle worldwide. If in 1848 the Communist Manifesto, which still influences millions of people today, called out "Proletarians of all countries, unite!", today we want to take up this legacy and shout: Young people of all countries, unite and change this world!"



The youth calls for a new internationalism

ANF | PARIS | 6 NOVEMBER 2023

Over 400 delegates from 49 countries and 95 organizations, movements and parties from across 5 different continents traveled to Paris from the 3rd to the 5th of November for the first World Youth Conference convened by the Youth Writing History Network. Topics of discussion were the different aspects of the globalized crisis as well as the possible solutions to be offered by radical youth movements. The delegates specifically discussed their place in these struggles as young people and, therefore, as the creators of the future of the world.

The conference was centered around three core principles, those of Youth Autonomy, Women's Liberation and System Change. As many speakers stated, young people of our time are born into a period of chaos, with the climate and global order in decline. The "end of history", proclaimed at the fall of the Soviet Union, has given way to a capitalist world-system of ever increasing contractions. The challenge we face is to address these problems and construct a future in which all are free. This takes place in the context of escalating wars, the rise of tensions between imperialist players, conflicts over resources and environmental destruction, a rise in fascism and nationalist politics - in brief, a Third World War.

This conference was particularly timely in its assertion of the necessity of internationalism, as over the last weeks we have seen popular adoption of international struggle with spontaneous global support for the people of Palestine and Kurdistan.

The struggles of women worldwide are central to this endeavor – as the principles state: 'The entire system we live in is built on the foundation of male dominance... How can we fight patriarchy and initiate in a new era?' To answer the question on how to usher in a new age under the leadership of a radical and politically conscious youth, delegates and activists of social movements from many different parts of the world came together in Paris.

Discussions centered around historical and current resistance practices, in an attempt to address the question of how a global liberation strategy can be coordinated, but also adapted to local conditions. Delegates exchanged stories of their particular struggles worldwide.

A delegate from the Mapuche people, who are engaged in a struggle for rights to their traditional homelands, highlighted the necessity to connect these issues: "Capitalism oppresses us globally. A huge potential of international links is to raise awareness about the struggle of a certain territory which could be totally eliminated if in isolation."

In the panel called "understanding today's world" Rachele, General Secretary of Anakabayan, a youth organization from the Philippines highlighted also that: "We need to advance the popular struggle and reach out to people across all parts of society, to create a new world order."

The conference not only consisted of workshops and panels in which revolutionary strategy was discussed, but also a sharing of community and cultural solidarity. Delegates ate together and danced together in the evenings to traditional music from Brazil to Occitane to Kurdistan. They also shared literature and art from around the world, as parts of the conference space were transformed into galleries and libraries for the contemplation and education of the attendees. In this way, the attendees were united not only in struggle, but also in joy, and a mutual appreciation of each other's cultures and ways of life, striving for a truly holistic internationalism.

Ignacio from the Chilean organization Liberación said: "It gives me hope to see that people from Latin America, Asia, Africa and Europe are coming together here, realizing that, despite their differences, there are many things which connect them."

In the finishing speech, Florian André pointed out that this conference was born out of the ideas of Abdullah Öcalan, who proposed a paradigm of Democratic Confederalism under the leadership of the youth. Therefore, it was declared that his physical freedom from isolated prison confinement should be of importance to all those who fight for a more democratic future. And also, Lewis Maghanga from Kenya, the country where Öcalan got abducted in an international conspiracy in 1999, took the microphone and said "Our continuous struggle necessarily involves the demand for the freedom of Öcalan", followed by "free free Öcalan" chanting by all the participants around him.

To conclude the conference on the last day, all the delegates came together for the final declaration:

"The unity of all democratic-revolutionary and anti-systemic forces in the world is needed. As "Youth Writing History" we work (...) on the basis of common principles and goals and our resolute opposition to capitalism, while leaving room for differences, contradictions and diversity in theory and practice."

They recognize together a common enemy and remind themselves what they are fighting for: "We fight against all forms of domination, exploitation, capitalism and its ideology, liberalism, which divides society under the flag of false freedom and promotes individualism, patriarchy and the destruction of nature. We are united in our fight against all forms of occupation and colonialism and recognize the right to legitimate self-defense in every society. We consider it one of the most urgent internationalist duties of young people in their struggle to first of all fight resolutely against the imperialist policies spreading from our respective homelands."

They insisted on their identity as young people : "We consider the youth as the most dynamic part of any society and the engine of any change. We consider the autonomous organization of youth, based on their own strength and independent will, as a guarantee of the pioneering role of youth and the key to the constant renewal of our struggles and organizations."

And also shared concrete perspectives on internationalism today:

"The rulers are coordinated worldwide, so, we rely on global cohesion and international solidarity. (...) Together we will work for the freedom of all revolutionary prisoners. (...) We declare our support for the demands of the campaign "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan - A political solution for the Kurdish question"

The declaration ended up with a rephrasing of the famous slogan from the Communist Manifesto: “Proletarians of all countries, unite!” to “Young people of all countries, unite and change this world!”

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HEDEP MP denounces Turkish threats against Kurds in South Kurdistan

ANF | HEWLER | 6 NOVEMBER 2023

The Peoples’ Equality and Democracy Party (HEDEP) Mardin MP Beritan Güneş held a press conference in the South Kurdistan representation of the HDP (Peoples’ Democratic Party) in Hewler (Erbil) about the repression and threats against the party members in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI).

Beritan Güneş recalled that members and supporters of the HDP sought refuge in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) due to the threats and attacks of the Turkish state. She continued: “Now, they are subjected to threats from the Turkish intelligence service (MIT) in South Kurdistan. The HDP is fighting for the legitimate rights of the Kurdish people in four parts of Kurdistan on a democratic basis.”

Beritan Güneş stated that the HDP representative office had been under surveillance for days by suspected MIT agents. On 29 October, these people attempted to carry out an attack on the building but were prevented by the local members of the HDP.

The MP continued: “The Government of Kurdistan Region is responsible for ensuring the safety of the lives of our members and supporters. The KRI government should determine and penalise those behind these attacks and threats. We call upon the relevant institutions, the United Nations and human rights organisations not to allow threats against the lives of political refugees. The KRI government should not let South Kurdistan turn into a territory where Kurds are murdered and exposed to terror attacks.”

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Eighteen people detained in Bingöl

ANF | BINGOL | 7 NOVEMBER 2023

At least eighteen people were taken into custody in the province of Bingöl on Tuesday, including several women. In a large-scale operation, the police stormed numerous homes in the city centre, as well as in the districts of Genç, Karlıova and Solhan and carried out meticulous searches.

The operation was conducted under the label of “counterterrorism”. The investigation file is currently being kept secret and those affected will be denied access to lawyers for the first 24 hours.

All those taken into custody are being held at Bingöl police headquarters. Among them is Übeyid Özer, who is co-chair of the district association of the HEDEP in Solhan.

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Former political prisoner has his torture complaint ignored

ANF | ISTANBUL | 9 NOVEMBER 2023

Emir Karakum was arrested in December 2021 during a house search in Samsun in the Turkish Black Sea region and was severely tortured in custody. He was arrested for alleged “membership in a terrorist organization.” The only “evidence” was his participation in rallies for ill prisoners and prison visits. He was released after ten months. Now he is charged with resisting attacks while in custody. He spoke to ANF about the repression against him.

Cell raids and torture

After his arrest, Karakum was initially taken to the T-type prison in Samsun. That's where the attacks began. Prison guards repeatedly stormed his cell and physically and verbally abused him. Karakum said: “For the first 12 days of my 25-day stay there, they did nothing because of the pandemic, but then when I was taken to the cell, it was searched for five days in a row and I was systematically tortured. I was beaten by the guards and my head was repeatedly hit against the wall. In addition, the prison administration censored the letters I wrote to inform my family and lawyers about the torture.”

On 31 December 2021, Karakum was transferred from Samsun to Bafra T-Type Prison. The attacks continued there. Karakum was only able to stop the attacks with a hunger strike and his subsequent dismissal.

Forced to sing the national anthem

Karakum said: “The torture in Bafra prison started from the first moment. When I entered the prison, I was strip-searched in a three-meter box-shaped room. When I waited to register, they tried to force me to sing the Turkish national anthem. When I resisted, I was attacked by the guards. After a while they let me go because I protested with slogans and refused to sing the anthem. When I was taken to the infirmary before I was taken to my cell, I pointed out my injuries from the beating. The medical staff ignored the signs of torture. That same day I was abused in the hallway. When I went to the infirmary again, the prison doctor in charge, Ferdi Arar, did not take the injuries seriously either. There were 30 guards in the examination room with me. I explained that I wanted the torturing guards to go out and that I wanted to be examined by the doctor in a secluded area. The doctor claimed it was the first time he had heard something like that in his life and ignored my demands. I was then mistreated for ten minutes by dozens of prison guards who were with prison doctor Ferdi Arar. They kicked me with their boots, I received countless blows to the face and was taken out of the infirmary semi-conscious. This is evidenced by prison camera footage that was released to the press.”

The torture apparently affected not only prisoners on remand, but also those who had already been sentenced. Karakum stated that on 6 April, he witnessed a disabled and ill prisoner named Batuhan Satık being tortured in his cell by guards and that he himself was pressured for protesting.

Karakum reported another attack on 25 April 2022, in which he was initially insulted by the guards while walking in the courtyard and beaten in front of the cameras. He tried to go to the infirmary again. But the doctor was not interested in his injuries. When Karakum protested against this, he was severely mistreated in front of the doctor.

Turkish justice system ignores torture

Karakum explained that he, his lawyers and his family filed a criminal complaint against the torture and the prosecutor's office did not even record his statement. He said: "Our criminal complaints were ignored. I was never allowed to see the prosecutor. I then went on hunger strike and the prosecutor agreed to talk to me. On the 113th day of my hunger strike, I was released with a restraining order months before I was due to appear in court. This was due to the hunger strike and the fact that the torture I was subjected to had become public."

New procedures initiated

While no action was taken regarding the torture even after his release, proceedings were initiated against Karakum based on counter-complaints from guards and the prison doctor. Karakum said: "I was systematically tortured in Bafra Prison and when I went on hunger strike to stop the torture and bring the torturers to justice, I was released with an injunction. Afterwards, the guards who tortured me, the doctor who ignored the torture, and the prison administration filed a lawsuit against me. The complaints claimed that I had insulted the guards and resisted them. Four separate lawsuits were filed against me for my resistance to torture. In addition, the court hearing that led to my arrest will take place on 11 November and in which two key witnesses will testify against me. While I was waiting for the torturers to be brought to justice, I learned that I too would be charged with resisting them. I will continue to take legal action against those who tortured me and fight for their punishment."

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Journalist Celalettin Yalçın arrested in Istanbul

ANF | ISTANBUL | 9 NOVEMBER 2023

Kurdish journalist Celalettin Yalçın was arrested in Istanbul on Thursday in connection with "terror" proceedings that have been ongoing for more than six years. The 37th Heavy Penal Court in Istanbul argued that there was a risk of flight because Yalçın had violated a previously imposed ban on leaving the country. The court, which is notorious for imposing long prison sentences on members of the opposition, did not comment on how the journalist left the country despite being banned from leaving. Yalçın's lawyers rejected the court's ruling and announced an appeal against the decision.

Celalettin Yalçın was detained on Wednesday in the Esenyurt district of Istanbul after a GBT (criminal record check) procedure. Yalçın and dozens of other people are being investigated on suspicion of “terrorism”. The proceedings, which have been dragging on since February 2017, are directed against activists and those involved in pro-Kurdish politics and civil society. Over 70 people from the ranks of the HDP (Peoples’ Democratic Party), DBP (Democratic Regions Party) and the TJA (Free Women’s movement) were arrested by the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor’s Office and later charged. Yalçın was a member of the HDP party council at the time. According to his own statements, he has been under constant supervision by the Turkish authorities ever since. In August 2021, he made it public that he had been abducted and abused by people who claimed to be police officers in Sancaktepe, Istanbul.

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Five people imprisoned in Bingöl

ANF | BINGOL | 11 NOVEMBER 2023

18 people were taken into custody during house raids in the province of Bingöl and the surrounding districts of Genç, Karlıova and Solhan on 6 and 7 November.

While 11 of those detained were released after police interrogation, seven other people were referred to the courthouse, including the HEDEP (Peoples’ Equality and Democracy Party) Solhan district co-chair, Übeyid Özer.

Two of the detainees were released on condition of judicial supervision, while the other five were remanded in custody for alleged membership of the PKK and of raising funds for it.

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Society for Threatened Peoples against Erdoğan's visit to Berlin

ANF | GÖTTINGEN | 11 NOVEMBER 2023

The planned visit of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to Berlin at the invitation of the German government remains controversial. The Society for Threatened Peoples (STP) appealed to all members of the German Parliament (Bundestag) to force Chancellor Olaf Scholz (SPD) to pass a resolution to disinvite the Turkish head of state. STP stated that the visit planned for 18 November would be a fatal signal to all enemies of freedom and human rights and would damage Germany’s reputation.

“These days Erdoğan is making himself the mouthpiece of hatred towards Israel and the Jews. The president of the state with the second largest army in NATO has declared the radical Islamist Hamas a ‘liberation group’. At the same time, he is bombing Turkey’s neighbouring states on a daily basis in order to expel the minorities living there and to Islamize the region,” emphasised Kamal Sido, the STP’s Middle East expert, in Göttingen. He underlined that the Bundestag should make sure that the Federal Chancellor does not ennoble these activities by inviting him to the Chancellery.

“Together with the Emir of Qatar, Erdoğan is one of the most important supporters of radical Sunni Islamism, which also includes the so-called “Islamic State” (IS). Under the banner of NATO, Erdoğan’s army is attacking the Syrian Democratic Forces (QSD), effectively the “ground troops of the anti-IS coalition”, said Sido. “For years, he has occupied large parts of a neighbouring country in violation of international law. His army and its allied mercenaries are responsible for countless serious human rights violations there. This Turkish president can therefore rightly be labelled a war criminal. The Federal Chancellor should not receive him.”

The German Bundestag and the German government should make any further rapprochement with Turkey dependent on the country’s position on human rights, the rule of law and international law, Sido continued. “The long list of critical issues ranges from freedom of the press and freedom of opinion within Turkey to the discrimination of minorities at home and the expulsion of minorities abroad to close cooperation with Russia and Iran.”



Interview

Kalkan underlines importance of international campaign for Öcalan

ANF | BEHDINAN | 4 NOVEMBER 2023

Duran Kalkan, member of the KCK Executive Council, spoke about the importance of the international campaign for Öcalan, the latest developments in Kurdistan and the Middle East.

A few weeks ago, a new campaign called “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, a Political Solution to the Kurdish Question” was started. What can you tell us about this campaign and the situation of the Kurdish people’s leader Abdullah Öcalan? You also said in some recent statements that the solution for the Kurdish question could also be a solution for the Palestinian people. Can you evaluate this point?

First of all, I respectfully greet Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] who is leading a historic resistance on the prison island of Imrali. I would like to point out that we are constantly discussing the isolation that is practiced on Imrali. It is said that Rêber Apo has once again been subjected to ‘disciplinary punishment’, but it is easy to see that there is no such thing as ‘misbehavior’ that would make this punishment reasonable. What they are trying to achieve with this is twofold. Firstly, they are preventing any meetings with his family and lawyers. Secondly, Rêber Apo is now on Imrali for the 25th year. There should be a new trial, but this is what they are trying to prevent. From a legal point of view, he should regain his physical freedom.

The 'disciplinary punishments' that they give out, are not only concerning Rêber Apo. Now they give these punishments to many prisoners, by using the smallest points as reasoning. They make people serve for 30, maybe even 31, 32 years, in prison because of this. It is called 'execution through burning'. This has no legal validity and is detached from reality. This should not be accepted. What law is there on Imrali?

Rêber Apo has been imprisoned on Imrali for 25 years because he is a Kurd defending the rights of the Kurdish people. What are the laws according to which this punishment is given? The constitution and the laws that were formed after the fascist military coup of September 12, 1980 do not recognize the Kurdish existence and identity. So a sentence cannot really be given on this basis. There can not be a punishment according to the justification there. Therefore, it is necessary not to accept the legal point of this punishment. This reality should also be more of a concern for the international public. More effective legal struggles should be carried out within this framework.

Another important issue is the campaign "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, a Political Solution to the Kurdish Question" that started on October 10. In a day or two, the third week will be over. On the basis of achieving Rêber Apo's physical freedom, there is indeed a global campaign for freedom. This is very important and significant. Our international friends started it and the campaign is taken up by Kurdish women and young people. Every day for the last three weeks, new people and groups from different places around the world have announced that they are joining this campaign. It is spreading and the number of participants is increasing. It is clear that the campaign is growing, diversifying and enriching. It started with press releases and marches. Now there are tent actions, rallies, larger statements, individual participation, discussion of Rêber Apo's ideas, and much more. Even those who are not able to take action still participate by educating themselves and working on their own liberation.

This campaign is a campaign for freedom, to be free and to free oneself. In other words, it is a campaign to achieve freedom in theory and practice, to create a free personality and a free life. It is a struggle for the freedom of everyone. Because the responsibility of defending Rêber Apo concerns everyone. Everyone sees their own freedom in the struggle for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo against the system of torture, isolation and genocide on Imrali. A global freedom movement, a global freedom struggle has emerged. And everyone is being mobilized. It can be said that a global movement of movement has begun. Rêber Apo has called it 'World Democratic Confederalism'. Its foundations are being laid, and indeed it can be said that a global revolution for freedom is taking place. There is a revolution for democratic socialism based on women's freedom and ecology. In other words, people are acquiring new ideas and reaching out for a new way of life. This is spreading all over the world and in all societies. On all continents, people of all colors and sexes are participating. So there is a radical change and transformation. Such a movement of revolutionary struggle, of freedom struggle, of liberation and democratization is developing on a global level and is developing around Rêber Apo. It is so because Rêber Apo has developed today's paradigm of social freedom. This paradigm gives a basis to the struggle for freedom of all the oppressed, especially women. The paradigm shows the way to the liberation of all the oppressed. With the ideas of Rêber Apo, everyone can fight against all kinds of fascist oppression and cruelty against the system of capitalist modernity.

On the other hand, there is the Imrali system. The system of isolation, torture and genocide that Rêber Apo has been opposing for 25 years through his historical struggle. This struggle affects everyone. The Imrali system was created through the international conspiracy which was the most concentrated attack in the framework of the genocide against the Kurds. The system of capitalist modernity, the global hege-

monic system, was founded on the Kurdish genocide. It was founded on genocidal mentality and policy. İmralı is the center of the struggle against this genocidal mentality and policy. Rêber Apo is the leader of this struggle. He is the leader by his resistance on İmralı. Therefore, it is meaningful and important that this global campaign develops around Rêber Apo.

Kurdish society and women are also playing a leading role, which is also very important. The Kurds are a people that are ignored by this global hegemonic system, the system of capitalist modernity or the system of power and state. They want to destroy the Kurds and commit genocide against them. Women have already been destroyed by the mentality and policies of this system. In this sense, the situation of women and the Kurds is close, in fact, quite similar. They are the social groups that the system most oppresses, massacres, genocides and wants to destroy. They suffer the most from the system, but at the same time, they are the first to become aware of the system. They organize and struggle the most, they carry the burden of the struggle and lead it. It is a heavy and difficult duty, but it is meaningful and honorable. It is necessary to be aware of it.

The campaign has been up and running for about twenty days now, and there is movement every day. It was a new global beginning that is spreading rapidly. It will continue to spread and it will certainly bring results. Everyone should see their responsibility in it. Possibilities and opportunities need to be used correctly. All forms and methods of action should be used and therefore creativity is necessary. The Kurdish people, women and youths are already doing this. The Kurds in the four parts of Kurdistan and abroad are in a state of mobilization.

We used to say that the physical freedom of Rêber Apo is the solution to the Kurdish question, the achievement of free life and democracy for the Kurdish people. Now, the freedom campaign at the global level has really shown this. The physical freedom of Rêber Apo means opening the way for the liberation of all oppressed people, opening the way for the liberation of all women and workers. That is why they are so interconnected. This was shown most concretely in the campaign that began on October the 10th. Our international friends have greeted us and on behalf of the leadership of our party, I would like to greet all those who are participating in this campaign. I wish them success and I would like to emphasize that we firmly believe that they will succeed.

Of course, it is important that the campaign spreads more to the Middle East. In this regard, it is especially important that it spreads to Turkey. Recently, 78 intellectuals have issued a statement in support of the campaign. We consider this step as very important and meaningful and we would like to greet the intellectuals who made this statement as a call for peace. Their efforts are of great value. These thoughts need to be spread to the Turkish society, to the women, to the youth and to the laborers. Certainly, a great effort is needed for this.

The situation of Rêber Apo concerns not only the Kurds, but all oppressed people, women and humanity. Both the system of torture and isolation on İmralı and the resistance of Rêber Apo against it. The physical freedom of Rêber Apo should concern the Turkish society more than anyone else. The democratization of Turkey absolutely depends on it. It is a situation that will bring about the democratization of Turkey at least as much as the freedom of the Kurds. In other words, the destruction of the system of torture, isolation and genocide on İmralı and the physical freedom of Rêber Apo are important. It is very significant for Turkey to accept this and for such a mentality and policy to spread in Turkey. The intellectuals have made

a breakthrough and an important and courageous step with their statement. This has to continue and spread. Those in the most difficult situation are responsible of doing the most.

Right now there is a war going on. Gaza has become a bloodbath. It is a war between the Israeli state and Hamas. Meanwhile, both the Palestinian people and the Jewish people are being massacred under the conflict of the war barons. These people should embrace Rêber Apo the most, they should focus on trying to understand Rêber Apo and the solutions that he creates. Because it is Rêber Apo who has created the mentality, the politics and the projects of solution that can stop this bloodbath. The people can find a solution there.

The solution of a democratic modernity comes through the concepts of “democratic nation” and “democratic confederalism”. Rêber Apo is a person who made great contributions to the resistance of the Palestinian people. He has recognized, met and talked with all Palestinian leaders. He has been in solidarity and joint struggle with the Palestinian people for a long time. And Rêber Apo also presented the important role of Jewish democracy in the democratization of the Middle East in the best possible way. It is Rêber Apo who expressed and defined the tragic situation of the Jewish people in the most accurate, comprehensive and understandable way. This can be seen in his prison writings, where he sheds light on many facts. In other words, Jewish, Hebrew socialists, democrats and workers can definitely benefit from Rêber Apo’s ideas. Jews have a certain level of sophistication in terms of ideas, and Rêber Apo valued them and brought them to a new synthesis. The struggle against the system of torture, isolation and genocide and for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo is a struggle of everyone. It is a struggle that affects everyone in one way or another.

I once again greet all those who are leading this struggle and wish them success. I once again call upon all oppressed people, especially women, workers, youth and all peoples of the world to join this campaign for freedom.

On the other hand, the war that is being waged in Kurdistan continues and seems to get more intense every day. What can you tell us about this war? How is the resistance of the guerrilla developing and are there any changes in the attacks of the Turkish state?

The situation of Rêber Apo, the solution of the so-called ‘Kurdish question’, everything is related to the war, it is carried out on the basis of the war. All the information about the war is given by the central headquarters of the guerrilla. No information is hidden from the public from our side, but it can be seen that the Turkish state is trying to cover up this war. Nevertheless, in the current situation, the war continues in every possible way. In this regard, October was an important month of resistance and struggle. October 25 was the 31st anniversary of the martyrdom of comrade Bêrîtan. I remember her with great respect and gratitude, as I would like to remember all our martyrs who fell in the month of October.

Our guerrilla warfare is led by YJA Star [the autonomous women’s guerrilla]. As can be seen, the fighters of YJA Star are in the vanguard in all the action balances. On this occasion, I send my greetings and congratulations to the entire leadership and fighting force of YJA Star. The struggle they are waging is the most important and meaningful struggle in history. The force waging this struggle is the spirit, will, consciousness, courage and sharp sword that come from free life. The fighters of YJA Star are the vanguard of the achievement of freedom. The leadership of YJA Star reveals how important and essential ideological and

women's leadership is in war. It also shows the importance and ideological significance of the Kurdish freedom struggle and guerrilla warfare. There is a great ideological struggle and it is developing.

It can be said that there was a turning point at the beginning of October. Some comrades evaluated the action in Ankara as a turning point and I strongly agree with them. I would like to respectfully remember the comrades Rojhat and Erdal. They really showed the necessary struggle spirit in this period. They expressed the necessity of fighting according to the philosophy of Zilan. They also showed by their actions that there is nothing that the guerrilla cannot achieve and no enemy that it cannot overcome.

There were some developments initiated on the occasion of the anniversary of the martyrdom of Bêrîtan and the anniversary of the founding of the YJA-Star. There is a clear increase in guerrilla actions in October compared to the previous months, which is also shown in the monthly balance. There were some actions that really dealt heavy blows to the AKP-MHP fascist hordes. Therefore, I send my greetings to the resisting guerrillas and congratulate HPG [general guerrilla force] and YJA Star for their great successes. I remember all our martyrs with the greatest respect, love and gratitude, the last one being comrade Cûdî Çekdar who martyred Zap. It is these martyrs who lay the foundation of humanity.

On the other hand, there is another picture. I don't know how much it needs to be said because the press has analyzed it, but the Turkish army is hiding behind the KDP. This is a clear fact that can be seen because there are pictures and videos of it. Actually, it is hard to understand whether it is the KDP hiding behind the Turkish army or the Turkish army hiding behind the KDP. They are so dependent on each other, so afraid of the guerrillas. They act as if they are one army. Can a force taking orders from two command centers stay together like that? It can't. So there's only one command. They've reached that level.

This is the situation in the [southern Kurdish areas of the] Medya Defense Zones [guerrilla-controlled areas]. Recently there have been actions all over Zap. Both in the so-called 'Martyr Delîl' in the west and in the east of Zap. For example, there was the action in Kokerê, which dealt a heavy blow to the occupation army. The Cûdî mountain and the whole area of Metîna became areas of action. The enemy responded with all kinds of counterattacks; with planes, artillery, tanks, with chemical weapons and even with tactical nuclear bombs. In other words, the resistance experienced there is beyond heroism. The actions have even spread to Xakurkê in Heftanîn. It can be said that the Medya Defense Zones have entered a total phase of resistance.

But it is not only this area. It can be seen that especially since the summer, the areas of Northern Kurdistan have been involved in the war. Recently, there have been actions from Serhat to Amed, Lice and Mardin. There has been a massive development in the guerrilla. It has started a new process on its own front. There have also been some actions in the metropolis.

There is no change in the enemy's attacks. On the contrary, the blockade, impasse and stalemate are increasing. Tayyip Erdoğan talked about the morality and law of war regarding Gaza. He should do this a little for himself. Let's not forget that even Hitler said that he got this inspiration from the Turkish Republic. He said that he got it from the 'Committee of Union and Progress' and the establishment of the Turkish Republic. Now, everyone who is 'criticized' by the Turkish government, by the fascist AKP-MHP administration, sees the real face of the Turkish Republic more clearly.

They try to manipulate the society in Turkey with complete demagogy and psychological warfare. Therefore, the information they give about the war consists of lies. The central headquarters of the guerrillas regularly exposes their lies. The Turkish administration is desperate because it has no solution. The outcome of this war is still not clear. My comrades have stated that without the support of the KDP, without the support of the “village guards” [villagers who are used against the guerrillas either by force or for a lot of money in the service of the Turkish army], the Turkish army would not be able to fight for a single day. They are defeated again and again. A handful of guerrillas can defeat an army. Everyone could see what a heavy blow was dealt by just two people in Ankara. Everyone witnessed the power and capacity of the guerrilla.

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Former CPT member Restellini: Abdullah Öcalan should be free

SERKAN DEMIREL | STRASBOURG | 4 NOVEMBER 2023

There has been no news of Abdullah Öcalan for two and a half years. The last contact with the Kurdish leader, who has been imprisoned on the prison island of İmralı in the Turkish Sea of Marmara since 1999, was an interrupted phone call with his brother in March 2021. In October, an international campaign was launched for his freedom and a political solution to the Kurdish question. Jean-Pierre Restellini, a Swiss forensic pathologist, doctor and lawyer who visited İmralı with a delegation from the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) in 1999, 2010 and 2013, was asked by Serkan Demirel for the European Agenda programme on Medya Haber TV about his contacts with Abdullah Öcalan. Restellini worked as an expert for the CPT for more than 30 years and was President of the Swiss National Commission for the Prevention of Torture between 2009 and 2015.

As a member of the CPT, you visited İmralı immediately after the arrest of Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan in 1999 and then in 2010 and 2013. Can you tell us what happened during those visits?

Yes, I visited Abdullah Öcalan three times, and on the last two visits I also saw his fellow prisoners. The first visit was in 1999, almost 25 years ago. So my memories are a little faded. During this first visit, Abdullah Öcalan was very nervous because he had just been arrested. He didn't know who we were and didn't understand what we were trying to do or whether we wanted to help him. It took a few hours for him to relax and tell us what he had experienced. That was our first visit.

During our visits in 2010 and after, he was much more relaxed. Prison conditions had improved somewhat. Since I, as a doctor, was concerned about Öcalan's health, I asked to be allowed to examine him. Everyone was asked to leave the room and we were left alone in a purely medical environment, able to share information that is subject to medical confidentiality and which I cannot give you, clearly. After this second visit, which was a memorable visit for me, we remained good friends. Öcalan is a very nice person.

Our third visit in 2013 was in the same setting and we were happy to see each other again. He called me “my French doctor” because he knew that I spoke French. I liked this discourse.

In summary, it was clear from these meetings that he was not a victim of violence and was not ill-treated by the authorities.

However, the conditions in which he is being held today, particularly isolation, are very difficult. I don't know exactly what his current situation is, but in any case, it is terribly violent for everyone in isolation to be confined to a small square of concrete four meters long with little or no means of communication and have freedom of movement. These conditions are extremely difficult to endure.

Can you tell us a little about Imrali Prison? For example, the structure of the prison...

As you know, Imrali used to be an island housing many people. During our first visit, the Turkish authorities told us that they had to evacuate the entire island within a few weeks to accommodate a special prisoner like Öcalan. It is a prison controlled by submarines and security measures at the highest level. I have visited hundreds of prisons around the world and I cannot remember ever seeing such a high level of security in a prison.

What was Abdullah Öcalan's attitude towards the CPT delegation during your visits?

When we first visited in 1999, Öcalan was quite tense. At our later meetings he was quite cordial. He was even willing to talk about his experiences and share his hopes for his people and himself. After more than 20 years, it is sad for me to know that his situation has not changed much.

Were political issues discussed in those meetings?

I allowed him to talk politics in our one-on-one conversations, but you should know that everything we said was recorded by the ever-present cameras. For example, I couldn't say "Long live Kurdistan" when I was with him because otherwise I would have gotten into trouble when I left. The Turks might not have wanted me to come back to Imrali. In such a situation, I had to remain neutral, so we had to be careful about what we said and how we behaved.

Did Abdullah Öcalan tell you about the conditions in Imrali?

He didn't feel the need to tell us about it because we got an idea of his condition during our visits. As a delegation, we visited and analyzed the entire prison system. During our visits, I was in close contact with Öcalan's doctors, as we were also concerned about his health. Since he was not so young, we wanted to make sure that his health and the health structure of the prison were good, and we wanted to make sure that it would be possible to quickly evacuate him to the coast or to a military ship in case something went wrong or he needed medical help.

But I can tell you that the Turkish authorities built the structure of the prison in such a way that Öcalan is not exposed to accidents. They couldn't afford for any accident to happen to Öcalan. That would have been politically serious for them because the whole world was closely monitoring Öcalan's prison conditions.

Abdullah Öcalan has been imprisoned on Imrali for almost 25 years. It's certainly not easy to spend so many years in the conditions of Imrali, is it?

Of course, it's not easy at all. It is very difficult to withstand psychologically on Imrali. But what keeps Öcalan alive is the fact that he knows that his people are behind him. Maybe that's why he's still alive. When we first visited him, we were worried that his mental state might be breaking down, that he might be suicidal or something like that. However, that wasn't the case. During our further meetings we noticed that he remained psychologically very strong.

Conditions on Imrali have not changed significantly in the past 25 years. There has been no news from Abdullah Öcalan for around 32 months. He has been completely deprived of the right to see his lawyers and family. What do you think of his current isolation?

There are various rumors about Öcalan's current situation. If, as you say, he has no contact with his family and his lawyers, that is a very difficult and terrible situation. There is no doubt about that. But I cannot speak with certainty unless I rely on my own observations.

But aren't the conditions of isolation a violation of human rights?

This is an important issue that you are raising. The question of whether or not years of solitary confinement constitutes a human rights violation has been the subject of rulings by the European Court of Human Rights and other international bodies, if I'm not mistaken. I'd have to look to be sure.

Some courts have ruled that keeping a person in solitary confinement for years is inhumane and degrading. However, I am not sure if there is any precedent from the European Court of Human Rights on this issue. However, it is worth checking as the rulings of the European Court of Human Rights can be applied to Öcalan's imprisonment.

The only organization allowed to enter Imrali is the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT). The last visit took place in September 2022, but a report on that visit has still not been published despite all requests. How do you assess this attitude of the CPT?

Unless the state concerned responds to the CPT's report, i.e. if it does not prepare and publish its response, the CPT cannot publish its own report in accordance with the Convention. This situation is, of course, perceived by the Kurds as shocking and abnormal. However, I would like to point out that empowering the CPT to go where it wants, when it wants, is a very sensitive issue. If the CPT starts violating certain rules, states can react by saying: 'We don't want you anymore, you are violating the convention.' That would be a negative situation for everyone. Therefore, it is important to be cautious. It is not the CPT that is to blame for not publishing the report on the aforementioned visit a year ago, but rather the Turkish authorities for not publishing their response to the CPT's visit.

Turkey is obliged to publish the response to the CPT's latest Imrali visit. We often encounter this problem. In the Council of Europe, which has a total of 45 countries, some states publish their response to the CPT report immediately, while others wait for years and some even wait until a new government is formed in the country.

Abdullah Öcalan's lawyers and many human rights activists say the CPT's stance on İmralı is political. Do you think the CPT is under political pressure regarding Abdullah Öcalan's situation?

When you sit on a committee that criticizes, it is understandable that the states being criticized are often not happy. That is clear. But the claim that political pressure is being used to prevent the CPT from speaking out is an argument that has never been proven. The CPT has always been able to express the data it receives in prisons, taking into account the conventions to which it must adhere.

Turkey is a signatory to the Council of Europe and many other international agreements. Nevertheless, today, not only the Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan, but also thousands of political prisoners are being held in very harsh conditions in Turkish prisons. Doesn't Turkey's actions violate these treaties?

Yes, absolutely. These violations are not limited to political prisoners, but also relate to the general situation of the Kurdish people. When I first visited the Kurdistan Region 40 years ago, the Kurds were viewed by the Turks as people of the mountains and were often treated as second-class citizens. Today, the Turkish state continues to violate the rights of the Kurdish people.

Do you think that the war that the Turkish state is waging against the Kurdish people in the four parts of Kurdistan and Öcalan's isolation are related? Is isolation part of the war against the Kurdish people?

Yes, it certainly is. Because they are afraid of Öcalan. They are afraid of what Öcalan might do if he is released. It's not just the Turks who are afraid of Öcalan, but also other countries with Kurdish populations. They fear that Öcalan, once free, will unite the Kurds in these countries. They see this situation and Öcalan's freedom as a threat to themselves.

As someone who was in close contact with Abdullah Öcalan, what would you like to say about his role and his ideas for resolving the Kurdish question?

I believe that a solution to the Kurdish question will eventually be found. It is undeniable that the Kurdish issue is a concern on a similar level to the current Palestinian-Israeli question. It is a problem that needs a solution. However, I believe that Öcalan is and will remain the "father", the leader of the Kurdish people, and that his ideas are very positive and important for the Kurdish people and for resolving the Kurdish question. The problem is that many countries don't share this point of view. This creates tensions and, unfortunately, these tensions are not limited to the Kurdish people, but there are many situations in the world that are similar to what you, the Kurdish people, are going through.

Abdullah Öcalan was convicted as the leader of the PKK, which Turkey considers a terrorist organization. What would you say about this definition of terror?

First of all, it is important to ask what a terrorist is. When I was a member of the CPT, I voted for a motion to ban the use of the term "terrorist" because the term in itself means nothing. It is usually used to describe the use of force. Therefore, any war can be considered terrorism. In its current definition, terrorism is used as a means of defaming a group of people.

For example, if you fight to liberate your country, you can be called a terrorist. During World War II, the French who fought to defend their country were labeled terrorists. Similarly, Chechens who fought against

the Russians were labeled terrorists. In short, when you resist something and take up arms to defend your country, you can be called a terrorist. This term actually doesn't mean much.

In connection with this question, I would like to ask you about the European Union's decision to classify the PKK as a terrorist organization. How do you evaluate this decision?

I was amazed at this decision. I would like to use the expression that you used for the CPT: it may be that there was political pressure on the European Union to take this decision, or that it made a political decision. In any case, I was surprised that the EU made such a decision.

As a member of the CPT, you have visited hundreds of prisons and written a book about your impressions of these prisons. In your opinion, which prison has the worst conditions and where do you place İmralı Prison?

That depends on the criteria of the individual prisons. I have also visited prisons in Central and North Africa. In Central Africa, there are prisons where prisoners are starving, especially in hot countries where they cannot sleep inside and have to spend the night outside where they are exposed to mosquitoes. It is difficult to categorise the worst prisons because it also depends on the resilience of the prisoners. Someone who is mentally strong and physically healthy will survive prison better than someone who is less fortunate in this respect.

It's been a long time since I was on İmralı. Judging by what I observed during that visit, the conditions on İmralı didn't seem so bad back then. Back then, Abdullah Öcalan was allowed to meet with other prisoners, play sports and follow the media. It is important and essential for a prisoner to be in contact with fellow prisoners, to do sports, to follow developments, to have contact with the outside world, to be able to meet with his family and his lawyers. Abdullah Öcalan had all of this in 2013.

Many of the rights that you experienced in 2013, such as the right to contact lawyers and family members, i.e. the right to communicate with the outside world, were completely taken away from Abdullah Öcalan. According to his lawyers, Abdullah Öcalan was also deprived of many of his rights inside prison. So, I would like to ask once again: are these not violations?

If the situation is as you say, then it is completely unacceptable. For example, when we first visited Öcalan in 1999, the conditions of detention were unsatisfactory. The CPT raised its concerns with the Turkish authorities and demanded that these conditions be changed. The authorities have gradually changed some aspects of the detention conditions. If Öcalan is being held in the same conditions today as he was in 1999, this is unacceptable to both the CPT and myself.

As you probably know, South African leader Nelson Mandela regained his freedom after 27 years in prison. The international community played an important role in the process that led Mandela to freedom. Do you see a similarity between the situation of the Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan and that of Mandela? Can the international community also play a role in Abdullah Öcalan's freedom?

Yes, definitely. When I met with Öcalan, that was one of the topics we talked about several times. I mentioned the example of Nelson Mandela, how Mandela, who was considered a terrorist in his own country, was released and then became the leader of his country, and how he always kept hope. We can talk about

similarities between Öcalan's situation and Mandela's situation. The same process can take place for Öcalan.

Can the international community take action for the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan as well?

Of course, the international community can do something for Öcalan. But at the moment, in the tense international situation we find ourselves in, I don't think this will be a priority, at least not from the point of view of international public opinion. But, of course, they can make a difference for Öcalan.

Can't the United Nations help to change the conditions under which Abdullah Öcalan is imprisoned?

Yes, the United Nations (UN) can intervene in Öcalan's situation. The UN Special Rapporteur against Torture could also look into Öcalan's situation. At this point, a voice would be raised.

On 10 October, politicians, writers, intellectuals, human rights defenders, trade unions, including world-renowned personalities, issued a joint statement in 74 locations around the world and launched a campaign calling for "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question". What would you like to say about this campaign?

It is an important situation. It is necessary to continue such campaigns. The vigil for Öcalan's freedom near the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, for example, is an important action. It is necessary to continue actions to recognise Öcalan.

Abdullah Öcalan is today recognised as the leader of the Kurdish people and thus represents more than 40 million people. Nevertheless, he has been imprisoned for 25 years in a country ruled by Erdoğan, who is seen by many as a dictatorial regime. What do you think can be done to change the conditions in which Öcalan finds himself?

Of course, we must put pressure on Erdoğan and do everything we can to bring about change. But I don't know what else we can do. I think it is very important that people continue to mobilise and, above all, never forget Öcalan and continue to embrace him.

Do you have a message for the freedom of the Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan?

I repeat: Öcalan is indisputably the father and leader of the Kurdish people. When you have a father, a leader in captivity, you want to protect him. Since I have a very sincere and even sympathetic relationship with Öcalan, I personally want him to be released from prison as soon as possible and be free. This wish is very clear to me. I repeat, I wish with all my heart that Öcalan is free and I hope to be able to visit him soon in his own Kurdish state.

Who is Jean-Pierre Restellini?

Jean-Pierre Restellini is a Swiss doctor and lawyer who has worked as an expert for the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture for over 30 years. In parallel to his work for the CPT, Restellini also chaired the National Commission for the Prevention of Torture in Switzerland between 2009 and 2015.

Restellini has visited hundreds of prisons around the world and has written a book entitled “Travel diaries of a doctor carrying out medical inspections in European prisons”.

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Kalkan: We defend the just cause of the Palestinian people until the end

ANF | BEHDINAN | 5 NOVEMBER 2023

Duran Kalkan, member of the KCK Executive Council, spoke about the ongoing war against Gaza.

Part two of this interview can be read [here](#) and part one [here](#)

What can you tell us about the ongoing conflict in Gaza?

Some time ago, Armenians in Karabakh were facing genocide. People were suffering. Now the same situation is happening in Gaza. But some people talk very cheaply. They always look after their own interests. Like Tayyip Erdoğan when he spoke in Istanbul a few days ago. It was like an election rally for the mayor of Istanbul. He talked about Gaza, he recited prayers, but the calculation behind it was to win the elections in Istanbul, to turn it into election propaganda. The Palestinian people have been brought to such a situation where they are being sacrificed and slaughtered. God damn anyone who sheds blood for material interests. That is definitely not our approach. We do not have an interest-driven approach. We have established friendship with the Palestinian people on the war fronts. Our movement and the Kurdish people have given the greatest support to the Palestinian resistance. We defend the just cause of the Palestinian people until the end. Genocide is being practiced in Gaza and we strongly condemn it. But how much those who say they are acting in the name of the Palestinian people represent these people, how much they think about the interests of the people or how much they have become an extension of other interests; this must be seen and understood well.

Israel is doing everything against the civilian population. This is part of the Third World War, centered in the Middle East, which has been going on for more than 30 years. The only solution to this is Rêber Apo's philosophy of 'democratic nation' and 'democratic confederalism'. Rêber Apo has already stated that it will be best implemented as a mentality and a policy, as a project that will even solve the Palestinian-Israeli problem. He called it the most serious conflict. This is our stance as a movement. We are against these mentalities and ideological structures that clash in the form of religionism and nationalism. We are ideologically against them. Politically, the Palestinian people are victims of a conflict of interests. We are opposed to this conflict of interests. In this respect, Jewish democrats and socialists criticize the Netanyahu government. We support their struggle and the just cause of the Palestinian people. If the Palestinian people, the Jewish people and the workers of Israel had imagined and based themselves on living together on the basis of their own characteristics in the line of a democratic nation, according to democratic confederalism, and not with two separate nation states and the poison of nationalism and religionism, if such a mentality and policy had developed, these conflicts would have been prevented.

On October 1, there was an action in Ankara which shook the whole Turkish Republic. On October 4, attacks on the basis of Hakan Fidan's declaration of genocide were launched against Rojava. There was a strong reaction against these. In an attempt to prevent this, the AKP-MHP clung to Palestine and tried to deflect the agenda and hide the truth from Turkish public opinion. That state press, the press directed by the Turkish intelligence service, the center of special warfare, is distorting the facts. It is waging a psychological war. No one should trust them, no one should be a tool for them. Tayyip Erdoğan's rally in Istanbul was just like that. He turned it into an election rally. It turned out that he was actually negotiating, in the sense of: "You call YPG terrorists and I will call Hamas terrorists". That is what he openly declared. The October 7 rally revealed who started the war. Tayyip Erdoğan personally took the responsibility. He spoke as the commander-in-chief of the war. No one shall be fooled by this psychological warfare.

No one questions the cause of these conflicts. Instead of asking why there is no ceasefire, why there are no results, they are screaming their opinions at the top of their lungs. The result is always emphasized. Humanitarian aid deliveries, for example. Yes, they are also important, we don't say anything about that, but we also need to see the causes. If the causes of problems are not found and eliminated, the problems cannot be fixed. In this respect, there have been approaches and evaluations based on very topical, shallow and excessive results. These were not very correct. There is also a historical dimension to the problem. Genocide has been practiced on the Palestinian people for 75 years. We are against this genocide and in favor of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. But, historically, the Jewish people have also experienced many genocides. A democratic government and free life in their homeland is their right too. We are also against the massacres practiced on the Jews. In this respect, the problem has historical dimensions. It has connections with the development process of the Third World War, which has been going on for more than 30 years. I have mentioned this before and do not want to repeat myself there. There are also important things in terms of ideology and current politics. For example, there is an ideological conflict, deputies of the same ideology clashing with each other. If this ideological approach, that mentality, that is, the nationalist religious mentality, is not overcome, if democratization in mentality and thought does not develop, this strife will always be experienced. There will never be a solution.

In terms of current politics, some debaters stand out. Trade routes; these discussions have developed after the announcement of the energy route from India, Syria, Israel, Cyprus to Greece. This is important. China and Russia wanted to establish relations with Europe through Ukraine, but the war in Ukraine put an end to this. Turkey joined in and liked it. No matter how much the Tayyip Erdoğan administration tried to make the old Silk Road work again, the southern route was finally announced. The states reached an agreement. Turkey was excluded because of Tayyip Erdoğan's mentality and politics. It was left off this path. The old Silk Road was rendered inoperable. Because there is no confidence, there is no stability, there is war. Even states and the capital did not see it in their own interest. The sycophants say, "Tayyip Erdoğan has brought Turkey to something," but in reality Erdoğan has brought Turkey to disaster, he has made Turkey lonely. As a result, he got up and started to sabotage.

For example, the Karabakh war was developed by the AKP, by the Tayyip Erdoğan administration. It is trying to open a new road from Central Asia through Turkey. For this, Azerbaijan captured Karabakh. Now it wants to take the Zengezor Strait and connect Armenia directly to Turkey by narrowing Armenia even more, taking territory and pushing Armenia and Iran aside. They also fought back. They did not give the opportunity. It was he who waged the war there. This is also how Hamas started the war. I mean, why did Hamas launch 5,000 missiles all of a sudden? And it did it on October 7th. We need to look at the timing, why it happened, who directed it. Tayyip Erdoğan is trying to open a road in Karabakh by occu-

pying it, and he wants to sabotage the agreed road on the Israeli line and the Palestinian line. There was an attempt of provocation. There is such a struggle here. Those who agreed on the road wanted to clear it. Those outside the planning, Turkey and the AKP administration, wanted to sabotage this road project. That's why it directed Hamas. Hamas is supported by many circles, Iran also supports Hamas. This is not a secret. But Tayyip Erdoğan definitely has a hand in this latest attack. Tayyip Erdoğan directed Hamas just as he directed IS, which went to Damascus, to attack Kobanê on September 15, 2014, he now directed Hamas to attack Israel and caused such a war to start. It is doing this in order to sabotage that place, to make it unreliable and to make the road supposedly pass through it..

Now, I don't know if it will yield results or not, but what is this war? We need to know who is fighting this war. Tayyip Erdoğan is in a panic, because his guilt is being exposed. He is the one most involved in this. Secondly, he may have been deceived. In other words, he may have been manipulated. Some forces may have given the impression that you can do this job easily. Tayyip Erdoğan is trying to protect Hamas now that there has been a complete turn against Hamas. First he wanted to sabotage it with Hamas. He realized that the calculations turned out to be different; this time Hamas will be weakened and destroyed, so he is trying to protect it.

We should think like this. When Saddam Hussein's government attacked Kuwait on August 2, 1990, were the CIA and Mossad unaware of this? What were they doing? Why didn't they prevent it? Because they didn't want to prevent it. America started the Third World War based on Saddam's attack on Kuwait. It brought 150 thousand soldiers to the Middle East. This is how it works. For example, until the attack happened on September 11, 2001, America had supported the establishment of Al Qaeda – didn't the CIA and MOSSAD know about it? Why didn't they prevent it? They entered Afghanistan and Baghdad as a result of this. In other words, they did a military occupation. So they wanted to take advantage of it. When they saw those tendencies, they supported them. For example, were the CIA and MIT asleep during the coup attempt on July 15, 2016? Was Hakan Fidan, who is now challenging the Kurds, as the Undersecretary of MIT asleep? He wasn't. Why didn't he prevent it in the first place? Because they controlled and strengthened Tayyip Erdoğan with him; 40 days later, on August 26, 2016, they launched an invasion attack against Syria through Jarablus and Iraqi territory through Çukurca. Biden and Masoud Barzani were in Ankara when this attack began. They gave their approval. If this had not happened, if there had not been that coup attempt, if Tayyip Erdoğan had not achieved such power that it bypassed the parliament, he would not have been able to do that.

Even Tayyip Erdoğan knows how many tunnels there are under Gaza. The Israeli army also explains this. But was Mossad, for example, asleep when they were preparing 5,000 missiles to launch an attack? Why didn't it prevent it? Let's not say he did it himself, but at least he hoped that he would benefit from something like that. After the July 15 coup attempt, what did Tayyip Erdoğan say? "This is a blessing from God". And this was "God's favor" to Netanyahu. Actually, it was not God's grace but Tayyip Erdoğan's grace. Tayyip Erdogan gave that grace and brought about this bloodbath. Now, when the calculation at home doesn't fit the market, this time he is trying to throw Turkey into the fire. He has almost brought Turkey into conflict with the whole world.

Hamas is a Muslim Brotherhood movement and the Greater Middle East Project was actually a project for the Muslim Brotherhood to dominate the Middle East. What did Tayyip Erdoğan say back then? He proclaimed, "I am the co-chairman of this project." AKP, Hüda Par, Qatar, Morsi, FSA are all part of the Muslim Brotherhood movement called Ahwal-i Müslimin. And Tayyip Erdoğan is also at the helm of

it. How is it possible to see Hamas' relations with Iran and not see its relations with Tayyip Erdoğan? He is definitely the one with the most fingers in this attack, the one who started this conflict process. Israel, America and others were waiting for an opportunity to spoil this path. Perhaps they directed Tayyip Erdoğan from a distance, just as they did with Saddam, so that we would not say anything. And when Tayyip Erdoğan mobilized Hamas to sabotage it, they received God's blessing.

Now they say they will destroy Hamas. And to destroy Hamas, they want to destroy Gaza. They are practicing genocide on Gaza. What mentality and politics brought the people of Gaza to this kind of sacrifice? What is the role of Hamas in this? What is the role of the Muslim Brotherhood, what is the role of Tayyip Erdoğan? This needs to be seen. Now he is afraid that this will be exposed. Before, he was hiding it, and then, when it was exposed, he openly embraced Hamas. Now he is trying with all his might to save Hamas by saying "there must be a ceasefire". In other words, he is trying to achieve a ceasefire and save Hamas by loading on humanitarian issues.

Güneri Civaoglu, while interviewing Rêber Apo at the beginning of 1990, asked him about the situation of Hafez Assad and Saddam Hussein. Rêber Apo replied: "Hafez is approved. Saddam has a case". Now it seems that there is approval for Iran and trouble in Turkey. If Turkey is not saved from the fascist, colonialist, genocidal mentality and politics of Tayyip Erdoğan and the Republican Alliance, the system he is a part of will put Turkey on the operating table. If they continue with this mentality, Turkey will be damaged, it will lose Cyprus, and even disintegration may be on the agenda. I want to express this here. After a while, the turn will come directly to Turkey. It already has. But when I say Turkey, I mean the AKP and MHP mentality.

A democratized Turkey, a Turkey that creates a solution to the Kurdish question, will never come to such a situation. In this respect, the peoples, laborers, women and young people have a big role to play. Democratic and socialist forces have a role to play. Based only on the results of the conflict, neither the Palestinian people nor the Jewish people can get out of this situation, nor can humanity wage such a righteous struggle. This fight for interests must be opposed, imperialist plunder must be opposed. The Palestinian people, the Jewish democrats and the peoples of the world must oppose this. I am making a call in this regard. We could say that states should be a little bit more democratic and sensitive, but the logic of the power and state system is clear. We need to fight against them. We need to be able to fight more effectively. The development of democratic modernity against capitalist modernity is the development of the line of the 'democratic nation' and 'democratic confederalism'. This is the only solution. If this mentality and politics do not change, if we do not fight on this basis, we will face more genocides and bloodbaths. I have always defended and will always defend the just cause of the Palestinian people. But the laborers of the Jewish people also have their just cause. Provided that they are on the right line and have a democratic approach, we will act together with them as well. Therefore, first the Palestinian and Jewish peoples, socialists, revolutionaries and democrats must solve the problem among themselves. Humanity and democratic circles should also support this. So this is such an effective strategic situation. In other words, a new world, a new alternative world. An alternative world against this power and state system must be developed on this basis. Otherwise, by serving this or that circle of interests in other ways, these problems cannot be solved, nor can a correct humanitarian approach be adopted.

There was the Aydin Youth Movement in Turkey. After the death of a young man in an elevator, there was a movement against the AKP-MHP fascism's approaches and policies that did not serve the youth. The

World Youth Conference is said to be the first of its kind, it therefore is really important. I send my greetings to them and wish success to the youth who are organizing this.

I would also like to make a call to our Kurdish youth. They should participate actively, they should not see themselves alone. They should listen to their comrades and try to understand them. They should bring Rêber Apo, the Kurdish freedom movement, our women's freedom policy, and the theory of 'democratic modernity' to the conference, discuss them well, and represent them. Because youth is the future. The future is in the democratic modernity. The youth who will create the future will create a free and democratic future for themselves to the extent that they comprehend and assimilate the paradigm of democratic modernity developed by Rêber Apo and organize and struggle on that basis.

Rêber Apo once said, 'We started young, we succeed young.' On the basis of this slogan, the Kurdish youth owes it to the Kurdish youth to work to bring the youth of the world to a consciousness, responsibility, and organization that will take stronger ownership of their future. Because they were the ones who saw and learned the reality of Rêber Apo before all the youth. We hope and believe that they will represent it well. This will be an important start. The answer to wars like the one in Gaza and similar places will be provided by the youth who take control of the future by becoming conscious and organized on this basis, and who succeed in creating the future along the lines of freedom and democracy. On this basis, I greet you once again and wish you success.



Kalkan: Palestinian people's struggle for freedom and democracy is sacred

ANF | 10 NOVEMBER 2023

PKK Executive Council member Durkan Kalkan spoke about the new geopolitical context, analyzing the role of China and the current Israeli war on Palestine.

During the Kobane process, a tactical alliance was made with the USA. In the first years, there were different explanations from the movement about why this alliance was made and what the issue of tactics and strategy was. Now it has been almost 10 years and it would be good to make a current assessment. What is the status of this alliance? Why is it still being maintained? How should the third way strategy be evaluated in this context? What are your strategies towards the USA and Russia for the solution to the Syrian problem and, at the same time, your anti-imperialist perspective? What is your understanding of anti-imperialism on this basis? How should the relevant anti-imperialist policies of the movement in the four parts of Kurdistan be understood?

As we have briefly stated above, we do not consider any state as a strategic ally. Our strategic allies and ideological friends are non-state and non-power forces. Therefore, all states are tactical relations and alliance forces for us. In a tactical relationship, there is no such thing as being on the side of one of the two states or power forces and being associated only with it. In other words, it is not possible to side with one of the anti-interest power and state blocs. Such situations occur between strategic allies. Since no state is our

strategic ally, we do not stand for one and against the other. We are based on tactical relations with all of them. This means that we always exist as the third politics against the two power blocs. Therefore, there is no such thing as a third strategic line. This concept does not belong to us. We mainly call it the 'third political power'. Some people also refer to it as the 'third political line'. But all this does not mean a 'third strategic line'. Because if strategy is involved, then ideology also comes to the fore. As such, the concept of a 'third line' emerges. However, we, as a movement, have never defined such three lines or a third line and we do not do so now. As the human species, we define today's world life in terms of two opposing forces: 'capitalist modernity and democratic modernity'. We express history in the form of two historical lines: 'the history of democratic civilisation and the history of statist or centralised civilisation'. There is no such thing as a 'third force', 'third strategic line' or 'third line'. The theoretical definitions put forward by Leader Abdullah Öcalan in the Defence are very clear in this respect.

There is no other force that has defined and analysed the system of capitalist modernity as accurately and holistically as Leader Abdullah Öcalan and the PKK. Again, no one has defined the system of democratic modernity that can be realised as an alternative to the capitalist modernity system. The PKK is not only against capitalist exploitation, but also against industrialism and nation-statism, that is, against its modernity. Therefore, today there is no anti-capitalist force as holistic and consistent as Leader Apo and the PKK. As a movement, we are an anti-capitalist force and this determines our stance against imperialism in one aspect. On the other hand, we are an existence and freedom movement that has led the last fifty years of a people who have been fighting against colonialism and genocide for a hundred years. Therefore, since we have experienced imperialism and colonialism at the level of genocide, we think that we know and recognise them very well. Our anti-imperialist stance is also determined by this great struggle of fifty years beyond words. Therefore, it is not meaningful to question whether the PKK and the KCK have an anti-imperialist character.

At the end of 2014, the relationship and alliance that emerged in Kobani against the ISIS gangs was very important and fruitful. Therefore, it requires correct understanding and definition. If we refer to recent history, it can be likened to the alliance between the Soviet Union, the USA and Britain against Hitler's fascism. A similar broad alliance has emerged against the fascist-genocidal ISIS. Undoubtedly, the ideological dimension of this alliance is almost non-existent; it only expresses opposition to ISIS gangsterism and is based on mutual interests. In other words, it is a political relationship and an alliance. Conditions necessitated this, and a relationship of interest was formed against a greater danger. The relationship and alliance of the US and Coalition forces with the Rojava Freedom Forces is at this level. The factors that led to this have continued to exist and, for this reason, the relationship in question has been prolonged until today. Undoubtedly, there have been mistakes and deficiencies in practice while maintaining this relationship. Attitudes that could not understand this relationship adequately, and could not carry it out correctly in practice, have emerged. We are constantly evaluating and discussing this situation; we find the existing mistakes and deficiencies and criticise them in order to correct them.

We also seriously criticise and struggle against the current US and Russian policies towards Syria. This mainly manifests itself in the attitude towards the invasion attacks of the Turkish state against North-East Syria. It should be noted that the US and Russia have supported all the Turkish attacks so far to a great extent. So, who fought against these invasion attacks? It is very clear that all the peoples of North-East Syria, especially the Kurds, fought. They gave thousands of martyrs in this war. The battles of Afrin, Gire Spi and Serekaniye are remembered. All these resistances against the Turkish occupation were mainly a struggle

against the policies of the USA and Russia. This needs to be understood very well by the socialist popular forces.

As for the improvement of the current Syrian situation and the overcoming of the fragmentation, we certainly want that too. But how will this happen? We must be able to give the right answers to this question. As a movement, we are in favour of Syria's internal forces solving Syria's problems and we are absolutely against foreign intervention. At the same time, we do not see bringing the governments east and west of the Euphrates side by side and uniting them as they are as a correct and realisable solution. We see the solution in the democratisation of Syria and the people's development of a democratic revolution. We believe that a democratic change in which all differences such as nationality, religion, sect, gender, class and similar differences organise themselves freely and govern themselves on the basis of democratic autonomy and unite within the system of democratic confederalism must develop and take place. North-East Syria is a beginning, a model and a spark for this. To paraphrase Mao Zedong's famous quote, a spark can lift up the whole society.

How do you position your struggle as the PKK within the global struggle for the construction of democratic socialism?

Since 1973, as a movement that was born and developed in Kurdistan, we first defined ourselves in two dimensions: one was to be a socialist movement, and the other was to be a national liberation movement. We wanted to lead the Kurdistan national liberation struggle under the leadership of socialist ideology and realise the solution of the Kurdish nation-state. On this basis, we tried to study and understand Marxism-Leninism in many ways. We studied the national liberation movements of the period from Vietnam to Cuba and Angola and took them as examples for ourselves. On this basis, we waged a very intense ideological, political and military struggle. After the assassination of Comrade Haki Karer on May 18th 1977, we started to use armed violence as a duty of revolutionary revenge while developing and becoming a party. After the September 12th atrocities in the Diyarbakir dungeon and the 1982 historical resistance, we retreated to the mountains and started the guerrilla war against the Turkish State on August 15th 1984. Until the February 15th 1999 international conspiracy, we waged an uninterrupted guerrilla war and national liberation war for 15 years under the leadership of Leader Apo. At the end of such a war, in order to develop a nation-state solution to the Kurdish problem, Leader Apo travelled to Europe and reached Rome. So what did the European Union and the global capitalist system led by the USA impose on this demand? Obviously, the İmralı system of isolation, torture and genocide! They showed the Leader Apo, who wanted to find a political solution to the Kurdish problem, the İmralı torture and genocide path. This result required us to evaluate the entire struggle we have been waging since 1973 in many ways. This is what Leader Apo did under the İmralı system of isolation, torture and genocide, and on this basis he realised a paradigm shift.

In early 1990, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Leader Apo and our party, like everyone else, tried to analyse the multifaceted causes of this collapse and to draw conclusions. The theoretical analyses developed by Leader Apo on this basis throughout the 1990s were indeed pioneering and hopeful. It played a very important role in overcoming the pessimism that developed after the collapse of the Soviet Union and in improving the morale of the revolutionary front. But it was not only the state of the Soviet Union that collapsed. Gradually, the national liberation movements, which had developed on the basis of the existence of the Soviet Union, one by one, began to establish multifaceted relations with the capitalist system. Vietnam, which was a source of inspiration at the time of the birth of our movement, turned towards

multifaceted relations with the USA, with which it was in the most conflict in this new process. In other words, the national liberation struggles and nation-state systems in question, even if victorious, were not solutions; they did not create an alternative exploitation-free order; on the contrary, they merged with the imperialist system that they opposed. Therefore, the lack of a solution was not only experienced in Kurdistan and in the practice of the PKK, all the examples of the world were ultimately left without a solution. In other words, the ideology of the nation-state did not produce a real solution. Leader Apo also evaluated all this and developed the ideology of the democratic nation by breaking away from the ideology of the nation-state that produced an insoluble solution. By making a paradigm shift foreseeing this, he tried to overcome the lack of a solution and reveal the power of a solution. He assessed that socialism could not be realised through state rule, but only through democratic rule. In this framework, it overcame the state and the instrument of power and developed the instrument of democratic society and democratic confederalism. It resolved the contradiction between the goal and the means in socialist revolution and construction and harmonised the means with the goal. On this basis, it defined our new ideology as democratic socialism based on ecology and women's freedom.

As a movement, we consider ourselves more socialist than anyone else, that is, libertarian, egalitarian and sharing-communal. We do not consider equality here as the adaptation of women to men, but as the free existence and organisation of women as women and their equality with men on this basis. We do not consider the socialist revolution and construction as an event that took place after the seizure of political power; on the contrary, we consider the socialist revolution as a change and development on the basis of the ideology of the free individual and the democratic commune, and we define it mainly as an ideological change. Again, we do not see socialism, that is, the life of the free individual and the democratic commune, as realised after political power and statehood; we see it as lived and realised within a struggle that is not based on political power, starting from an individual, within the party and gradually in society, and we have been living socialism on this basis within the PKK for decades. For example, PKK cadres have no private property, their lives are completely communal. Everyone participates in the ordinary work according to their ability and everyone uses what they need. So, state property is not social property. Social or communal property is property owned by communal communities. To summarise all this, we consider Apoist theory to be the highest synthesis of revolutionary-libertarian thought up to now, and PKK practice to be the most communal life of socialism. We consider this as a new level of development in socialist theory and practice, and we believe that with this, socialist construction at the global level will develop and realise on more correct foundations and successfully. In short, we are not one of those who preach communal living while keeping private property for ourselves, or one of those who preach socialism but act according to the basis of capitalist individualism. We are trying to say the right words as much as possible and to create and live the integrity of word-action, theory-practice. On this basis, we endeavour to develop friendship and alliance with all our strategic allies at the global level, especially with the peoples of Turkey and the revolutionary-socialist forces, and to make the world livable together.

As a movement, how do you assess China's role in the geopolitical context and its importance for anti-systemic movements?

President Mao Zedong said, "China will never be a superpower". We attach importance to this statement and we believe that Chinese society will take this as a basis. But we also see that China has become a great economic and military power. In this respect, we, of course, attach great importance to China politically and take it as data in our evaluations. However, we do not see a new US-China bloc like the pre-1990 US-Soviet bloc as beneficial both for themselves and for the peoples of the world and the forces outside the

system. Such a bloc binds all contradictions to itself and almost freezes them. No ideological, political and military struggle can be waged without taking one of these two powers as a basis. A multi-headed statist system, not a bipolar one, offers more possibilities and opportunities for the oppressed and exploited to wage their struggle for freedom and democracy. Although it is said that the USA has established an empire in the world, we do not see it like this. In fact, there are many heads in the statist system. Besides the USA, there is the EU, the UK, Russia and China. Some powers such as India are also growing. There is also the transnational monopolisation of capital. Such multi-headedness offers more possibilities and opportunities for struggle than the pre-1990 bipolarity. Because one does not have to rely on one state and make a strategic alliance with it.

Making a strategic alliance with a state means considering everything according to the interests of that state, which creates the domination of politics over ideology and prevents intellectual independence and freedom. One is forced to do whatever the interests of the state dictate. In this respect, it is better for the statist system to be multipolar rather than bipolar. In this respect, it is necessary not to want a China-US polarisation and not to lead China towards it.

We have nothing against China's development and strengthening, it is becoming a great economic, political and military power in the face of the USA and other states. Of course, it has also recently played an important role in reining in the US and NATO. It has largely frustrated US provocations in the Pacific. It also plays an important role in many problems within the UN. We, too, carefully analyse this and consider it important. After all, we are also an Asian country and society. However, we should clearly state that we do not have a very significant relationship with China. Our efforts in this may also be small. But on the basis of the coup d'état of 12 September 1980, the Turkish state attached great importance to its relations with China and prevented China from participating in the Kurdish problem by marketing the Uyghur Turks problem there. In other words, in return for not supporting the Uighur Turks, the Turkish state wanted China not to support the Kurdish people. This situation also played an important role in China's lack of interest in the Kurdish issue. We are aware of these and we want to overcome them. But we cannot act quickly because of the intense struggle. We hope that all these will be overcome in the future.

Palestine is seen as a central reference on all continents. Even though left-wing movements on the ground have weakened, the issue is still a centrepiece of all international conferences. Hundreds of civilians have been killed in Palestine since the beginning of the year. What is your view of the situation in Palestine? Not only historically, but how do you see the prospects for a solution? How do you evaluate the struggle for the right to self-determination in Palestine?

As a people coming from the depths of history, living in the centre of the Middle East and under genocidal attack for a century, we believe that we have a more accurate and deeper understanding of both the Jewish tragedy from history and the struggle of the Palestinian people against imperialism, Zionism and reaction. We always keep in mind the revolutionary role of the Palestine Liberation Movement, which is a source of inspiration in our region. In our region, the Palestinian people have been the most important people who have been in brotherhood with the Kurdish people. All organisations within the Palestine Liberation Organisation provided the most important support to our party after the military-fascist coup of September 12th 1980. We always thank them for this. The Kurdish guerrilla resistance received its first basic training in Palestinian camps. I, too, received my first basic training in Palestine and I am also a Palestinian guerrilla. I have expressed many times that I am always proud of this.

Undoubtedly, the Palestinian people's struggle for freedom and democracy is sacred and their right to a free and democratic life can never be discussed or negotiated. Kurds know best what the psychological impact of such a situation is. We are always in favour of the Palestinian people's struggle on this basis. However, religious currents have recently developed there too, and in our opinion they have caused some damage to this just struggle. Again, as in all problems, we see the imposition of a statist solution here and the division of that tiny piece of land into two states, for example, to the detriment of those peoples at most. In our opinion, the non-state solution of democratic confederalism is most necessary there and would be the most important salvation for the Palestinian people. While resisting the oppression and exploitation of Israel, it is not a good thing to fall under the oppression and exploitation of the Arab rulers. The policy of divide-conflict-rule is a policy of imperialist exploitation. Undoubtedly, it is difficult and a historical enmity has been formed. Nevertheless, the best solution for all peoples and the oppressed is democratic confederalism on the basis of democratic autonomy. Palestinian-Israeli democratic confederalism can gradually give birth to the democratic confederal unity of the peoples of the Middle East, which is the best solution for us. As a movement, we take the Democratic Middle East Confederation as a basis and defend it.

Kurds and Arabs will undoubtedly play a very important role in such a regional development. We see Kurdish-Arab relations as very important and of strategic value in this respect. For this, we believe that the alliance and brotherhood between the Kurdish and Palestinian peoples, which was formed in the early 1980s, will play a core role. Of course, the Jewish community will also have a place in this democratic union. Jews are also a historical part of the social reality of the Middle East. They are creative and advanced in intellectual and economic production. They have also made a significant contribution to the development of socialist ideology. They also have a certain democratic experience. The most extensive and comprehensible analysis of the Jews was made by the Leader Abdullah Öcalan in his Defences. If Zionist influences are removed and democratic measures are taken as a basis, the Jewish community can also have an important place and contribution in the unity of the democratic Middle East. In our opinion, this is the correct and solution-producing approach. Otherwise, the narrow nation-state approach and monopolistic stance will only result in developing new conflict processes.

How do you assess Israel's role in the Kurdish question in general and the Israeli regime's relations with various Kurdish actors in the region?

The creation of the state of Israel should not be treated as a singular event. It is a project of the capitalist system and was put into practice throughout the twentieth century. Before the State of Israel, in 1923, the Republic of Turkey was set up by Britain as a proto-Israel. The alliance of Britain and France with the Kemalist Movement and the Treaty of Lausanne are based on this. Three years after the First World War, the Turkish Republic was established and, on this basis, the capitalist-imperialist system tried to dominate the Middle East. Three years after the Second World War, the establishment of the State of Israel, again under the leadership of Britain, was completed and Israel was included in the hegemony war being waged in the region by the Turkish Republic. The aim of these two powers is to bring the Middle East under global capitalist hegemony. Undoubtedly, this is intended to be done on the basis of a racist-chauvinist-genocidal understanding and policy. This is based on the Armenian, Assyrian-Syriac, Greek and Kurdish genocides. Therefore, one of the founding aims of the State of Israel is to prevent the Kurdish people from being independent and free. This was tried to be carried out on the basis of the Turkish-Israeli alliance. When the PKK developed and strengthened and imposed the freedom of the Kurds on world politics, the so-called Kurdish administration in Hewlêr emerged as a third force against this situation in early 1990. Although

the war against our party was planned by NATO, in practice it was carried out by the Turkish Republic, Israel and the KDP. This reality is the basis of Israel-TR and Israel-KDP relations.

Launched on October 9th 1998, the international conspiracy attack aiming at the destruction of Leader Abdullah Öcalan was decided, planned and implemented together by the USA, the UK and Israel. When Leader Apo went to Russia, the Israeli state worked first and foremost to get him out of there. For 25 years, the State of Israel has been one of the main actors in the continuation of the İmralı system of torture, isolation and genocide and the imposition of extermination on Leader Apo on this basis. Today, Israel is working to buy the land of Kurdistan and is pouring a lot of money into it. The fact that it is sometimes shown as if there is a contradiction and conflict between the Israeli and Turkish states is a game played in order to mask reality and deceive the peoples.

As a result, the Jewish capital played one of the leading roles in the creation and continuation of the colonialist-genocidal attack called the Kurdish question. Today, they still play a role in blocking the solution. They give the most support to AKP-MHP fascism. They also have close relations with the KDP on this basis. There are already many allegations that the Barzanis are Freemasons. The State of Israel is opposed to the Kurdish freedom struggle on the one hand because of the opposition of global capital to Kurdish existence and freedom, and on the other hand, because Jewish nationalism considers Kurdistan as its own territory, and on this basis it conducts an active policy and plays an active role. However, despite all efforts, the success envisaged so far has not been achieved. What will happen from now on and whether there will be a change in this mentality and politics will be shown by the upcoming struggle. The Kurds do not have even the slightest trace of a racist approach and anti-Semitism. If the Jews also recognise the Kurdish reality and the right to a free life, then the situation so far may change.

For a democratic Middle East and a democratic world where peoples live together in fraternity! For World Democratic Confederalism!

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Kalkan: Latin American social forces are our natural allies

ANF | 9 NOVEMBER 2023

First part of an interview with PKK Executive Council member Durkan Kalkan on the relations of South American governments with Turkey, the lessons of past peace processes, the role of self-defence, alliance policy in general and in Rojava in particular, the understanding of socialist revolution, the geopolitical role of China, the resistance in Palestine, the potential of democratic confederalism in the Middle East and the role of Israel in the Kurdish question. The interview was conducted on 24 September 2023.

Venezuelan President Maduro was in Turkey for Erdoğan's swearing-in ceremony. Lula congratulated Erdoğan on his re-election on social media. Cuba has strong economic ties with Turkey. None of these self-proclaimed socialist states criticise Erdoğan for his anti-Kurdish policies. In addition to economic reasons and relations, there are also voices that see Turkey as an anti-American power. How do you evaluate this? What does the PKK expect from the governments and social forces in South America?

Unfortunately, 'statist socialism' is based on state interests and sacrifices ideology to these interests rather than the basic principles of socialism: freedom, equality based on diversity and sharing. The Soviet Union did the same; under the name of 'defending the socialist homeland', it tied everything to the defence of the Soviet Union state; however, this understanding not only failed to protect the Soviet Union state, but also became one of the main reasons for its collapse. The relations of states such as Venezuela and Cuba with the Republic of Turkey should also be considered on this basis. As a movement, we believe that ideological principles should not be tied to political interests; on the contrary, ideology should guide politics. We also believe that it is not possible to build and develop the basic principles of socialism using the power of the state, which is a political and military institution and thus acts directly as an instrument of oppression and exploitation of capital monopolies. For this reason, we take the stance that the principles of socialism should be built and developed not through state rule but through democratic rule, through democratic confederalism, which replaces the "state without a state" expressed by K. Marx.

As for the claim that the state of the Republic of Turkey and the AKP-MHP fascist regime are anti-American, it is impossible to provide any serious evidence to verify this. Tayyip Erdoğan founded the AKP and came to power with the permission and support of the US Administration; his rise to today's one-man dictatorship is the result of the joint planning made in the Bush-Erdoğan meeting of November 5th 2007. The MHP was founded by Alparslan Türkeş, who received counter-guerrilla training in the USA. The Republic of Turkey has been a member of NATO since 1952 and has participated at the forefront of all NATO attacks, notably the war against North Korea. The Turkish army is the second largest in NATO after that of the United States. All military coups in Turkey were carried out with the support of NATO. The military coup of September 12th 1980, which brought about the current Tayyip Erdoğan administration, was also a NATO coup. Since June 1985, the Turkish State has taken the war against the Kurdish guerrillas to NATO on the basis of the operation of NATO's Article 5 and has received active military, economic and political support from NATO until today. In a way, it is NATO itself that is waging the current genocidal war against the Kurdish guerrilla resistance and the people as a whole. The recent negotiations within the scope of Sweden's NATO membership and the "Coordination Against Terrorism" organisation, established within NATO to coordinate the war against the Kurdish guerrillas, are also for this purpose. Is it possible for such a state to be anti-NATO and anti-US?

We do not even need to mention the genocidal massacres carried out by the Turkish state in Kurdistan during the last century, its efforts to change the country's demographics, its activities to assimilate the Kurdish people, one of the oldest peoples in history, into the broader Turkish culture by banning their unique language and culture. Anyone can uncover these by analysing the history of the last century and following today's developments. What we want to point out here is that the state of the Republic of Turkey is not only anti-Kurdish and practising genocide against Kurds; this state has also been anti-Armenian, Assyrian-Syriac and Greek, and has been practising genocide against these peoples for a hundred years. For example, everyone, including the USA, discusses and takes decisions on the Armenian genocide of April 24th 1915. Of course, it is not acceptable for socialists to choose not to investigate these facts and to refrain from forming opinions and attitudes on this basis.

We do not see any state as a strategic ally. Our approach to states is at the level of tactical relations. We see as strategic allies the forces outside of power and the state, i.e. outside capitalist modernity, and we approach all oppressed and exploited social sectors, especially women, youth and labourers, on this basis. This general approach also applies to the governments and societies of South America. It would be good if the South American governments did not support the fascist-genocidal Turkish state and respect the national democratic struggles of the Armenian, Assyrian-Syriac and Greek peoples, especially the Kurds. Then the Turkish state will not be strong and, therefore, NATO will not be strong. This is a good and useful thing for the whole of South America.

As for all South American social forces, especially women, youth and labourers, they are our ideological and strategic friends and natural allies. Any emancipatory and democratic development they can achieve is our development and success. The success of the Kurdish people and women is their success and strength. For example, the Jin Jiyan Azadi revolution raised by the women of Kurdistan is both the revolution of the women of South America and the revolution for the freedom of all humanity. We consider the brotherhood of peoples and freedom struggles on this basis. The Cuban Revolution and the thoughts of Fidel Castro and Ernesto Che Guevera had a great influence on the emergence of Leader Apo and our birth and development as a movement. Che Guevera's thought and practice have always been a source of inspiration for us, especially in understanding and developing guerrilla resistance. We took the 1968 Youth Revolution as our starting point. Today, the non-state libertarian and democratic struggles of the peoples of South America and the developments they have achieved give us strength and excitement in the same way. We believe that they, too, are so impressed by the struggle of the Kurdish people against ISIS and the Turkish fascist-genocide, and that they embrace this understanding and struggle. On this basis, we wish success to all our friends in South America.

There is an interest in what your movement has learnt from the peace processes in South America. Many movements were liquidated with the peace processes. How do you evaluate your experience as the PKK? What are your conclusions that should be taken into account in relations with states?

Undoubtedly, this question is very important in terms of our practical stance and our ability to survive and make progress. Our experience, our relationship with the state and the search for a political solution was a very new endeavour for us. At the same time, in such an endeavour, we encountered the attack of the international conspiracy and experienced a paradigm shift. In other words, we had to carry out this process with two different paradigms. In particular, we had a certain difficulty in understanding and implementing the practical style and tone of the new paradigm, which was reflected in our negotiations with the state. As some basic lessons of the process we have been going through since the first ceasefire declared by Leader Apo on March 17th 1993, we can state the following:

First of all, we must know very well that the states are liars and deceivers, that they approach such processes tactically, always thinking of taking advantage of them and liquidating the other side, and that they use such processes secretly as a military and organisational preparation process based on their own power. In this regard, we are naive and always well-intentioned, and we can evaluate the other side as we do ourselves. Of course, this is a very serious and damaging mistake. As a matter of fact, since 1993, we have mainly faced four comprehensive attacks by the Turkish State and the NATO-USA behind it. They responded to the ceasefire process we started on March 17th 1993 with a total annihilation attack between June 1993 and August 1998. On October 9th 1998, they responded to the ceasefire process we started on September 1st 1998 with an international conspiracy attack organised and carried out by the USA and the

İmralı system of torture, isolation and genocide. From August 2nd 1999, they further responded with political genocide operations, and total attacks between April 14th 2009 to 2012. From the spring of 2013, their response to the ceasefire process we developed, called the “Solution Process”, with the “Collapse Action Plan” attack which they started on July 24th 2015. In other words, while we were trying to create suitable grounds for political negotiations and search for solutions, we consistently came up against the Turkish State developing secret plans and preparing for the annihilation attack. It is important that this state of affairs is recognised and taken into account.

Secondly, of course, we ourselves have to make very serious efforts to create a basis for relations and negotiations. We can declare a unilateral ceasefire, we make very intensive propaganda in a positive sense; in short, we try to reassure. This process can sometimes be protracted and intensive. In the end, we may end up believing our own propaganda ourselves, and our mass base may become overly influenced. This can lead to a shift in understanding, to insensitivity, to imprudence – in short, to carelessness. Of course, in the end, the other side makes full use of this situation in its favour. It is necessary to be aware of this situation and to carry out these activities carefully, adjusting the content and tone very well. We must never forget the reality of the state and its aim to dissolve us.

Thirdly, states can sometimes keep these processes very short, choosing to immediately show their true intentions by going on the offensive, while sometimes they can keep them relatively long. Or at least, this is how it may seem to us. For example, the state may initiate the process and then not take any real steps, keeping us waiting in anticipation of their next move, anxiously awaiting a response that will decide our fate. The longer the process goes on, the deeper the state of delusion and heedlessness we mentioned in the second point can become. So much so that a misguided approach can emerge, as if to say ‘this is now done’. From our own point of view, we can develop a one-sided view that always looks positively, and consequently downplays the real concerns we face. In other words, states can use this as a basis to draw revolutionary and democratic forces into a process that we may call softening and loosening, and can work consciously and planned in this direction. As a result, serious difficulties can be experienced when faced with a planned and prepared attack. This situation should also be taken into consideration.

Finally, the ideological, strategic and tactical aspects of such relations and negotiations must be adjusted correctly. On the basis of our new paradigm, we approach these relations and negotiations on the basis of the political formula ‘state plus democracy’. We base the level of agreement on mutual acceptance of each other. In other words, to the extent that the state accepts our democracy (democratic society or democratic confederalism), we envisage that we will accept the state. On this basis, we want to ensure that the state and democracy exist intertwined, side by side and in a relationship and struggle. All this requires a great deal of clarity and a great deal of effort. In other words, it requires a convincing enlightenment. Because in general, the existing state system is not open to this, it is too closed. They do not want to share the management of society with anyone. They are very much monist and absolute dominators. Today, the whole nation-state system is like this. The genocidal Turkish nation-state is very much like this. Therefore, it is not easy to negotiate and reach a political solution. One of the two important issues here is to take as a basis the creation of one's own society and the emergence of its own government through education and organisation, and to use such negotiations as a means and opportunity for this purpose. In other words, you will always take the development of your own self-power as a basis and never forget it. Secondly, it is only possible to bring states toward this balanced state through a multifaceted and serious struggle. For this, it is necessary to carry out a long-term plan and continuously struggle within and against the system. Expecting that relations and negotiations with states will yield results in a short time, easily and without

struggle, is a very serious mistake and a dream. Our practice has taught us this and we are struggling to overcome our own misconceptions on this issue.

For South America, the role of guerrillas and self-defence in the liberation struggle is important. For this reason, the experiences gained in Kurdistan are of interest. What is the importance of the HPG's (People's Defence Forces) resistance against the Turkish army? What innovations does it offer for the understanding of guerrillas? What does it mean to be defined as a self-defence force?

The importance of the HPG resistance emerges in two ways. Firstly, the PKK guerrillas brought modern military science to Kurdish society. All previous resistances, including the KDP and YNK peshmerga, represent traditional popular or peasant rebellion. The most recent attempts at militarisation do not in essence go beyond this situation. The guerrilla, on the other hand, bases its training, organisation, strategy and tactics on the requirements of modern military science.

The second concerns the strength and structure of the Turkish army. It is the second largest army in NATO. It is in continuity with the Ottoman Empire, which was a military system. It is the main founder and sustainer of the Turkish state. Its basic structure is based on suppressing social uprisings and resistance. With its entry into NATO, a very powerful counter-guerrilla system was created within it. It is not democratic, but completely dominant. It does not want to share sovereignty with anyone. It is based on suppressing all kinds of objections with the heaviest use of force, brute force. Therefore, it is not easy to oppose and stand against the Turkish army. All revolts and oppositions before the PKK guerrillas were defeated and crushed in the shortest time. The only force that changed this history is the PKK guerrillas. This is where the meaning and importance of the guerrilla resistance, which was previously organised under the names HRK (Liberation Forces of Kurdistan) and ARGK (People's Liberation Army of Kurdistan) and restructured itself under the name HPG after the paradigm shift, comes from. For the first time, an undefeated military force is emerging against the Turkish army. In this way, the invincible power and will of the Kurdish people has been formed.

The guerrilla organisations developed under the names HRK and ARGK were guerrilla movements based on the statist paradigm and the goal of establishing a regular army. They were based on classical guerrilla theory and practice and envisaged developing them as rural guerrillas in Kurdistan. However, it was not possible to develop guerrilla resistance in Kurdistan as seen in the practices of other countries. This situation was not due to geography or people; the geography of Kurdistan, especially its mountains, were more than suitable for developing the classical guerrilla system. Again, the Kurdish people and youth had more than enough courage and sacrifice to develop guerrilla warfare. What made it impossible to apply the classical guerrilla theory and practice as it was in Kurdistan was the characteristics of the Turkish genocide imposed on Kurdistan. It was simply not possible to stand against this genocidal understanding and attack, which had no other analogue in the world, with normal patriotism, democracy and even revolutionism. Kurdish freedom fighters had to be completely partisan. At the same time, this partisanship had to be formed entirely along the lines of sacrifice. Attempts similar to the practices of other countries did not yield results, and the persistent guerrilla effort led Leader Apo and the PKK to such sacrificial partisanship and guerrilla. HRK and ARGK guerrillism were shaped in the form of such sacrificial guerrilla resistance. HPG guerrillism, which was formed with the paradigm change, was based on deepening this sacrificial line. In short, the Kurdistan guerrillas have raised the measures of freedom fighters to the level of sacrificial militancy. This is how guerrillism emerged in Kurdistan, which was not defeated by the Turkish army and

developed the Kurdish people's will for freedom. For this reason, it was defined as the Kurdish people's will for freedom and self-defence.

Undoubtedly, with its current structure, the HPG guerrillas are a self-defence force of the Kurdish people. It represents the Kurdish people's will for freedom, is formed with its own power and resists external and internal reactionary attacks against the people and protects the existence and free life of the Kurdish people. However, the current structure of the HPG is still incomplete as a self-defence force of the Kurdish people. With its current structure, the HPG is essentially a professional guerrilla force and in this respect it is a pioneer. In order for the Kurdish people to have adequate self-defence, only a professional guerrilla force is not enough. This force is pioneering and very necessary. The existence of this professional sacrificial force is necessary and decisive for people to have self-defence.

However, it is also necessary to create a local guerrilla force based on the masses of the people. In self-defence, the professional guerrillas are the vanguard and the local guerrillas are the basic force. The local guerrilla, as the name implies, is a freedom fighter in its own local area, and consists mainly of people who organise their daily lives. That is to say, it refers to the general state of being "armed at night and wearing a cap during the day". It includes both the organisation and maintenance of civilian life and military self-defence fighting. The self-defence force of the paradigm of democratic modernity consists of two such forces, the arming of the people. The regular army of the states is replaced by the self-defence of democratic confederalism consisting of professional and local guerrillas. In other words, K. Marx's definition of "replacing the regular army with an armed people" comes to life in this way.



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