

THE IMRALI POST

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

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Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

Öcalan Books Day kicks off in Latin America

Mazhauga community members gathered at Casa del Pueblo in Mexico City and held a day-long discussion by reading a section of Abdullah Öcalan's evaluations of a democratic nation with the motto "Ideas cannot be imprisoned".

At the end of the discussion, the community members organized a ritual for all resisting peoples and political prisoners. Then they demand freedom for all political prisoners, especially the Kurdish people's leader, both in their own language and in Spanish.

<https://anfenglishmobile.com/news/Ocalan-books-day-kicks-off-in-latin-america-70699>

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German police prevent a demonstration for “Freedom for Öcalan” in Berlin

ANF | BERLIN | 10 DECEMBER 2023

The German police stopped a demonstration in Berlin on Saturday evening prematurely and broke up the gathering of several hundred participants on the grounds that images of Abdullah Öcalan were shown and slogans were chanted in favour of the Kurdish leader. The organisers criticised the police's actions as unacceptable. In protest against the prevented demonstration, the participants organised a spontaneous sit-in.

The demonstration was organised by the Dest-Dan Women's Council and the Free Kurdish Community in Berlin (Nav-Berlin) in support of the global campaign “Freedom for Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question”. The campaign calls for Abdullah Öcalan to be released and for him to be given the opportunity to take part in talks to find a solution to the Kurdish question. There has been no sign of life from the PKK founder, who has been imprisoned on the Turkish prison island of Imrali since 1999, and his three fellow prisoners Hamili Yıldırım, Ömer Hayri Konar and Veysi Aktaş since March 2021. Their lawyers and relatives also have no access to them.

Nav-Berlin co-chair Hüseyin Yılmaz made a speech and said, “As long as the physical freedom of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan is not ensured, there will never be good days for the Kurdish people and the peoples of the Middle East. We will not stop our activities until the physical freedom of Mr Öcalan is ensured. We will never forget the mentality that took part in the international conspiracy. This mentality is also banning the march we are organising here today for Mr Öcalan. We will never step back in the face of these bans.”

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Mexican academics and students read Abdullah Öcalan

ANF | CREEL | 10 DECEMBER 2023

On 10 October, a new international [campaign](#) called “Freedom for Öcalan – A Political Solution to the Kurdish Question” was launched with press conferences in 74 places around the world, from France, to Belgium, from Italy to the Spanish state, from Germany to the UK, from Ireland to the Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Slovenia, Cyprus, Greece and across the ocean in Australia, Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador. From South Africa to Kenya, Japan, India, Bangladesh, East Timor, the Philippines. The campaign unites social movements, political parties, municipalities, trade unions, activists, intellectuals and millions of Kurds and people in solidarity with the Kurdish liberation struggle worldwide around a common goal: the participation of Abdullah Öcalan in a dialogue for a just and democratic political solution to the Kurdistan question in Turkey, which has remained unresolved for more than a century.

As part of the international campaign, 10 December was designated ‘Global Öcalan Books Day’ to “start reading a book from Öcalan to find methods to solve our common problems and create a future of freedom.”

A group of activists in the city of Creel in the Mexican state of Chihuahua organised Global Öcalan Book Reading Days.

The 10 December Book Reading Day event was held with the participation of approximately 50 students and academics at the Northern Mexico School of Anthropology and History.

In the event, a section from Abdullah Öcalan’s analyses on the women’s revolution was read and the Democratic Confederalism paradigm was discussed for about two hours.

Activists participating in the event emphasised that they would continue the campaign by strengthening it and said that a person who inspires the world should be free.

The event concluded with the slogan “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan”.



Event on Global Öcalan Books Day in The Hague

ANF | THE HAGUE | 10 DECEMBER 2023

On 10 October, a new international [campaign](#) called “Freedom for Öcalan – A Political Solution to the Kurdish Question” was launched with press conferences in 74 places around the world, from France, to Belgium, from Italy to the Spanish state, from Germany to the UK, from Ireland to the Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Slovenia, Cyprus, Greece and across the ocean in Australia, Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador. From South Africa to Kenya, Japan, India, Bangladesh, East Timor, the Philippines. The campaign unites social movements, political parties, municipalities, trade unions, activists, intellectuals and millions of Kurds and people in solidarity with the Kurdish liberation struggle worldwide around a common goal: the participation of Abdullah Öcalan in a dialogue for a just and democratic political solution to the Kurdistan question in Turkey, which has remained unresolved for more than a century.

As part of the international campaign, 10 December was designated ‘Global Öcalan Books Day’ to “start reading a book from Öcalan to find methods to solve our common problems and create a future of freedom.”

A series of seminars were held at the Democratic Kurdish Community Centre in the Hague to mark the global Öcalan Books Day. Sections from the books of the Kurdish leader were read during the event.

The first seminar treated the “Freedom for Öcalan” campaign and its effects on peace in Kurdistan and the Middle East.

The seminars at the event were titled “Restoring the value of the individual in society: The concept behind Democratic Confederalism”, “Conflict resolution by addressing the root cause of conflicts: Peace in the Middle East/Europe is easily possible”, “Ecological sustainability: Building self-sustainable economies” and “Gender Equality as individual empowerment: Jineology to stop systemic vicious cycles”.

The seminars were also broadcast live on KCDK-E’s official Youtube channel.



Public meetings in Germany to demand “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan”

ANF | 11 DECEMBER 2023

Public meetings were held in the German cities of Grevenbroich, Mönchengladbach and Mannheim within the scope of the “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, solution to the Kurdish question” initiative, which was launched globally on 10 October.

Grevenbroich

Former HDP Urfa MP Dilek Öcalan attended the public meeting held in the city of Grevenbroich. Abdullah Öcalan’s sister Fatma Öcalan also attended the meeting. The participants were informed about the freedom initiative.

Mönchengladbach

KCDK co-chair Zübeyde Zümrüt and Abdullah Öcalan’s lawyer Ömer Güneş attended the public meeting held at the Mönchengladbach Democratic Kurdish Community Center within the scope of the initiative. Ömer Güneş gave information about the isolation and freedom campaign carried out against Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan and said that the Turkish state’s behaviour towards Abdullah Öcalan is a summary of its behaviour towards the Kurdish people in Kurdistan for a century. Explaining the historical resistance of the Kurdish people, Güneş spoke about the historical unlawfulness of the Turkish state and its policies of destruction towards the Kurds.

Zümrüt talked about the isolation of Leader Apo and the work carried out by the freedom campaign, and said that Öcalan's physical freedom would both solve the Kurdish problem and break the political blockage in the Middle East. Zümrüt underlined that the Kurdish people are determined about achieving the physical freedom of Abdullah Öcalan.

As part of the "Global Öcalan Books Day", internationalists organized a reading event in the Wuppertal Democratic Kurdish Community Center.

Mannheim

The public meeting in Mannheim was jointly organized by the Mannheim People's Assembly and the Women's Assembly. At the meeting, where excerpts from Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan's books were read, attention was drawn to the isolation that has been implemented in İmralı for 25 years.



Öcalan Books Day events in England, Scotland and Ireland

HIKMET ERDEN | LONDON | 11 DECEMBER 2023

As part of the global 'Öcalan Books Day', Abdullah Öcalan's books were read in the cities of London, Hull, Sheffield in England as well as Cork in Ireland, with the slogan "Öcalan holds the key to equality, freedom and peace."

Within the framework of the global campaign launched on 10 October demanding freedom for Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question, the 'Global Abdullah Öcalan Books Day' was organized with different events in many cities of Britain and Ireland. Academics, trade unionists, writers and politicians from Kurdistan movement attended the events.

Öcalan's books were read at the London KCC building with the participation of the Kurdish People's Assembly, KJAR, Tevgera Azadiye, PJAK, and Civaka Azad. Excerpts from his books 'Resistance of cultures', 'Sociology of freedom', 'Capitalist civilization' and 'Women's freedom' were read.

KCC director Ishak Milani, who opened the event, said that the thoughts and ideas of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan have a great impact all over the world and added: "Not only the Kurdish people but all the people of the world are talking and researching his ideas on freedom, equality and radical democracy. We share them and turn them into manifestos."

Milani said: "We will never get used to this isolation. Isolation will be broken and leader Öcalan will be freed."

Beyan Ali on behalf of KJAR, Kawa Zone on behalf of PJAK, Şiwan Avare from Tevgera Azadi, Aso Kemalî from Civaka Azad, Kurdish People's Assembly co-chair Seyit Pirsusi and Berfin Dersim from Jiyen Women's Assembly, read Abdullah Öcalan's excerpts in Kurmanci, English, Sorani, While passages from

his books published in Persian and Turkish were read, slogans such as “Biji serok Apo” and “Jin jiyan azadi” were chanted.

In London, Kurdish patriots also held book readings in their homes. Kurdistan children Roj and Zana Ari said: “We listen, read and learn from Öcalan’s books. We love him.”

Cork

Abdullah Öcalan’s books were also read at Cork University in Ireland. Philosophy department lecturer Dr. Jason Dockstader read passages from the book ‘Sociology of freedom’. Dockstader said: “This book shows the breadth and depth of Öcalan’s thought and work and how his political theory fits into a broader set of cosmological and metaphysical thoughts.”

A reading event was also held in the city of Sheffield, at the university, organized by the Solidarity Network with Kurds.

Öcalan’s books were read also at the Liverpool Kurdish Community Center, and in Hull, where some unionists read excerpts.

An event was organized by the Kurdish Solidarity Network at Light House Bookstore in Edinburgh.



30th group of residents takes over vigil for Öcalan in Maxmur

ANF | MAXMUR | 11 DECEMBER 2023

The vigil launched in the Martyr Rustem Cudi Camp on 20 July to demand the end of the heavy isolation against Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan, continues on its 143rd day. The vigil was taken over by the 30th group.

The people of the camp gathered in front of the Martyrs’ Families Assembly and observed a minute of silence in memory of the martyrs of the Kurdistan Freedom Movement. Then, Kıymet Nerexi spoke on behalf of the 29th group and condemned the heavy isolation against Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan. “As Kurdish women, we stand by our Leader. Leader Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] is our red line. As Maxmur Women’s Foundation, we dedicate our action to Leader Apo and all the prisoners of freedom. We will not give up our struggle until we ensure the physical freedom of our leader. We will fight for our leader. Only Leader Apo can solve the problems faced by women. As women, we must form a circle of fire around Leader Apo.”

After the speech, a new group took over the vigil accompanied by slogans.



‘Öcalan Books Day’ event in Sydney

ANF | SYDNEY | 11 DECEMBER 2023

On 10 October, a new international [campaign](#) called “Freedom for Öcalan – A Political Solution to the Kurdish Question” was launched with press conferences in 74 places around the world, from France, to Belgium, from Italy to the Spanish state, from Germany to the UK, from Ireland to the Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Slovenia, Cyprus, Greece and across the ocean in Australia, Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador. From South Africa to Kenya, Japan, India, Bangladesh, East Timor, the Philippines. The campaign unites social movements, political parties, municipalities, trade unions, activists, intellectuals and millions of Kurds and people in solidarity with the Kurdish liberation struggle worldwide around a common goal: the participation of Abdullah Öcalan in a dialogue for a just and democratic political solution to the Kurdistan question in Turkey, which has remained unresolved for more than a century.

As part of the international campaign, 10 December was designated ‘Global Öcalan Books Day’ to “start reading a book from Öcalan to find methods to solve our common problems and create a future of freedom.”

An event was organized in front of Parliament House in Sydney, where sections from Abdullah Öcalan’s books were read and the global demand for his freedom was voiced.

The books of the Kurdish leader were exhibited at a booth, where not only Kurdish activists, but also Greens Senator David Shoebridge, Green Left paper editor Peter Boyle and Documentary Filmmaker Jake Loyds made speeches and read passages from Öcalan’s books.

Dr Vicki Sentas, a senior lecturer at the University of New South Wales Faculty of Law, and Lee Rhianon, former Greens Senator for New South Wales, couldn’t attend the event and sent video messages, in which they called for the delisting of the PKK for a peaceful and democratic solution to the Kurdish question and freedom for Abdullah Öcalan.

The event concluded with the chants of “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan”.

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TEV-DEM calls on international institutions to put pressure on Turkey to allow visits to Imralı

ANF | 12 DECEMBER 2023

TEV-DEM issued a written statement to call on international institutions, especially the United Nations, to put pressure on the Turkish state.

TEV-DEM said: “The policy followed by the fascist Turkish state is a racist and historical policy inherited from the Ottoman Empire. The fascist government fears the development of society and the formation of real democratic standards both in Turkey and in the neighbouring countries, and always tries to take revenge on the will of these peoples.”

The statement continued: “In this period, Turkey sees that the real center of influence in regional and world politics is Leader Abdullah Öcalan. Öcalan revived the spirit of resistance of the popular will and the cultures of humanity, but the fascist government is afraid of this development. For this reason, it is consciously carrying out a policy of genocide to destroy Leader Abdullah Öcalan’s cause from both inside and outside.

Thus, the fascist state thinks that it can cover up the heinous crimes it commits. For this reason, they continue to keep the Leader in prison, depriving him of his rights in order to destroy his struggle and resistance.”

The statement added: “TEV-DEM calls on the international legal and civil organizations, especially the organizations under the auspices of the UN, the organizations working on prisoners, and the CPT, to put pressure on the Turkish fascist government. We demand the situation of the leadership be clarified. Representatives [of these institutions] should be allowed to visit Leader Abdullah Öcalan, learn about his health condition and take practical steps to bring about his freedom.

At the same time, we call on the people and organizations in Kurdistan and outside the region, on all political, national forces and civil society organizations to take to the streets and support the leadership’s resistance. We call on our people to participate in the freedom movement activities to support the people of Kurdistan and their friends who are resisting in prisons in Bakurê Kurdistan. Let’s develop the struggle and resistance until the isolation imposed on Leader Abdullah Öcalan is lifted.”

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‘Freedom for Öcalan’ vigil in Strasbourg on its 598th week

ANF | STRASBOURG | 12 DECEMBER 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 Britain took over the vigil on its 598th week today. The group includes Zerdeşt Hewrami, Baran Serhat, İsmet Aris and Hereş Rouf.

The group said in a statement that they joined the vigil to demand freedom for Abdullah Öcalan who has been subjected to isolation for 25 years and has not been heard from for nearly 3 years.

Zerdeşt Hewrami saluted the international campaign “Freedom for Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question” which was launched with press conferences in over a hundred places all around the world on 10 October. The campaign demands immediate access for the legal team and family members to PKK founder Abdullah Öcalan, who has been held hostage on the Turkish prison island of Imrali since 1999, and finally his release under conditions that allow him to play a role in finding a political solution to the Kurdish question. The campaign brings together academics, journalists, NGOs, political parties, parliamentarians, activists, philosophers, Nobel laureates, women’s organisations and representatives of indigenous peoples from all continents.

Hewrami also saluted the political prisoners in Turkey and North Kurdistan who went on hunger strike in solidarity with the international campaign. “We see Leader Öcalan’s freedom as the freedom of humanity. We do not accept the isolation imposed on him,” the activist said.



‘Reading Days’ continue in Latin America

ANF | 12 DECEMBER 2023

On 10 October, a new international [campaign](#) called “Freedom for Öcalan – A Political Solution to the Kurdish Question” was launched with press conferences in 74 places around the world, from France, to Belgium, from Italy to the Spanish state, from Germany to the UK, from Ireland to the Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Slovenia, Cyprus, Greece and across the ocean in Australia, Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador. From South Africa to Kenya, Japan, India, Bangladesh, East Timor, the Philippines. The campaign unites social movements, political parties, municipalities, trade unions, activists, intellectuals and millions of Kurds and people in solidarity with the Kurdish liberation struggle worldwide around a common goal: the participation of Abdullah Öcalan in a dialogue for a just and democratic political solution to the Kurdistan question in Turkey, which has remained unresolved for more than a century.

As part of the international campaign, 10 December was designated ‘Global Öcalan Books Day’ to “start reading a book from Öcalan to find methods to solve our common problems and create a future of freedom.”

A group of members of Abya Yala feminists shared a text of Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan and organised a campaign to read Öcalan’s texts in order to break the isolation regime imposed on him by the Turkish state.

Women read the chapter “The third great sexual rupture against the dominant male” from Abdullah Öcalan’s book “Killing the Man”. Well-known artists and activists such as Claudia Korol, Georgio Andini, Adriana Guzman, Georgio Andini and Adriana Guzman participated in the campaign, as well as women from Bolivia, Paraguay and Ecuador.

Democratic Modernity Paradigm presented in Bogota

In the book centre “La Valija de fuego” in Bogota, the capital of Colombia, an event was organised as part of the Öcalan Books Days. In the event, Öcalan’s biography as well as the paradigm of democratic modernity were introduced. In particular, his works and writings translated into Spanish were presented.

Raramuri children support the campaign

The Raramuri (Tarahumara) people, a group of the indigenous people living in the north of Mexico, organised a series of events within the framework of the ‘Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, Political Solution to the Kurdish Question’ campaign.

One of the events was held with the participation of children in the autonomous primary school that the Raramuri people created with their own means.

During the event, Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan’s childhood memories and his relationship with nature were told.

The event was translated from Spanish into Raramuri. At the end of the event, the children showed their solidarity with the Kurdish people by chanting the slogan “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan”.



Rally in Geneva marks the third year of the vigil for ‘Freedom for Öcalan’

ANF | GENEVA | 13 DECEMBER 2023

A vigil by the Democratic Kurdish Community in Switzerland has been taking place in front of the UN headquarters in Geneva since 25 January 2021. Every Wednesday, activists stage a protest in front of the United Nations building to demand the release of Kurdish people’s leader Abdullah Öcalan. The action is carried out as part of the ‘Dem dema azadiye’ [Time for Freedom] campaign and directed against the isolation of the Kurdish leader on the Turkish prison island of Imrali, the Turkish occupation attacks on Kurdistan, the massacres committed in Kurdish territories and the silence of the UN.

Hundreds of Kurds and activists in solidarity participated in a march organised on the occasion of the 3rd anniversary of the ongoing vigil within the scope of the “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, democratic solution to the Kurdish question” campaign launched globally on 10 October 2023.

The mass gathered under heavy rain at Palais Wilson Square where the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) building is located and made a statement before the march.

Selma Sürer, Co-Chair of the Democratic Kurdish Council of Switzerland (CDK-S), made a speech on behalf of the Swiss committee of the “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, solution to the Kurdish question” campaign and stated that Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan should be free, saying: “We are entering the 4th year of the ‘Dem dema azadiyê ye’ campaign, which has been going on for 3 years in Geneva. We will make this year the year of freedom of Leader Apo (Abdullah Öcalan). We are hopeful of our people, patriots and friends. Whatever happens, this year we must ensure the physical freedom of our Leader. And for this, as the Kurdish people, we will fulfil our responsibility and stand up for the freedom of our leader. We will take this campaign to the end. We will liberate our leader, no matter what.”

After the march, politician Mehmet Aslan made a speech on behalf of the Co-Presidency Council of the KCDK-E on behalf of the masses who reached Nations Square, where the sit-in continued.

Aslan started his speech by saluting the guerrilla resistance and the hunger strike actions in prisons in Turkey and Kurdistan as part of the “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, democratic solution to the Kurdish question” and emphasised the need for the freedom of Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan. Aslan said: “Kurds have defended and will defend their Leader despite all pressures. No pressure will be able to subjugate us. Leader Apo has been in a glorious resistance against the İmralı torture system. He is still continuing the resistance he started on İmralı. Parallel to this, our patriotic people are resisting in 4 parts of Kurdistan, in their mountains. We congratulate our friends who have been protesting here for 3 years. All the Kurds, especially those in Geneva, should embrace this action and take it further. Our people will never submit to the policies of AKP fascism. Because if they have resisted against oppression for centuries, they will resist today. They will not find a single Kurd who will surrender to this fascism. We would like to make a call to the UN and the states of the world. If Kurds are resisting in the Middle East, it is not only for themselves, but also to prevent the spread of ISIS darkness to the world. The Rojava resistance took place in front of the eyes of the whole world. Today, if Europeans are free from the scourge of ISIS, it is thanks to the Kurdish resistance. This is also a resistance for the freedom of all ignored identities in the world. If the Kurds are resisting for the rights of the whole world, the UN and European countries should also take a role for the freedom of the Kurdish people. They should make efforts for the recognition of the rights of the Kurds.”

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‘Global Öcalan Books Day’ event in Qamishlo

ANF | QAMISHLO | 13 DECEMBER 2023

Various actions, events and campaigns are being organised all over the world to demand the physical freedom of Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan. On 10 October, an international campaign was launched under the slogan “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, a political solution to the Kurdish question”.

As part of the globak campaign, a reading day campaign was launched in 160 centres on 10 December 2023 under the name “Global Öcalan Books Day”. The event, which aims to explain and spread the paradigm of leader Abdullah Öcalan, was joined by masses in many centres around the World.

As part of the “Global Öcalan Books Day” campaign, an event was organised by the School Administration of Çilaxa district of Qamishlo. Many people attended the event organised in Parka Jinê (Women’s Park).

Çilaxa School Administration Manager Nezha Seyfedîn said: “We want to show the whole world that no one can stop the ideas of Leader Abdullah Öcalan and that his ideas will be passed on from generation to generation. The people of the region will support the resistance of Leader Abdullah Öcalan under isolation until the end.”



Families of Imrali prisoners apply for visit

ANF | ISTANBUL | 15 DECEMBER 2023

Mehmet Öcalan, the brother of Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan and his guardian, Mazlum Dinç, applied to the Bursa Chief Public Prosecutor’s Office and İmralı Prison Directorate to request a visit. Abdullah Öcalan is kept under severe isolation conditions in İmralı F Type High Security Prison and has not been heard from for over 3 years.

Ali Konar, brother of Ömer Hayri Konar, Polat Yıldırım, brother of Hamili Yıldırım, and Melihe Çetin, sister of Veysi Aktaş, the other prisoners held in İmralı, also applied to the Bursa Chief Public Prosecutor’s Office and İmralı Prison Directorate.

The right to meet with the families of Abdullah Öcalan and the other three people held in İmralı is being denied by the authorities, citing “disciplinary penalties”. The reasons and file numbers of these disciplinary penalties are not shared with their lawyers despite all applications and objections.

The families of the four prisoners applied for an urgent visit on 4 December, after a seaquake of magnitude of 5.1, centred around four kilometres from the coast of the port town of Mudanya at a depth of just under nine kilometres. Mudanya is located on the southern shore of the Sea of Marmara in the Gulf of Gemlik. All boats travelling to İmralı depart from there. “The fact that the island prison is located in the earthquake zone raises concerns about the health situation of the families of the prisoners detained on İmralı and requires a review of their situation,” the application states. In addition to the family members, lawyer Mazlum Dinç, who is also Öcalan’s authorised representative, is also demanding immediate access to the island. The authorities have not responded.

Abdullah Öcalan has been in solitary confinement on the prison island of İmralı since his abduction to Turkey in 1999. The last contact with him was a telephone conversation with his brother in spring 2021, which was interrupted after a few minutes. Öcalan last had contact with his lawyers from the Istanbul-based Asrın Law Office in August 2019. After an eight-year interruption, a hunger strike led by politician Leyla Güven, who has since been imprisoned again, resulted in a total of five visits by lawyers. The last family visit to the island was approved in March 2020. Since then, isolation in the high-security prison has been driven to the level of total incommunicado detention.

Öcalan's three fellow prisoners Ömer Hayri Konar, Hamili Yıldırım and Veysi Aktaş, who were transferred to the island prison in 2015 as part of the dialog between the Kurdish leader and the government in Ankara, are also affected by the isolation on Imrali. The Turkish judiciary generally uses arbitrarily imposed "disciplinary measures" against the Imrali prisoners as a legal cover for the injustice on the island. The last of these "punitive measures" was imposed in October. The "Roadmap for Negotiations" written by Abdullah Öcalan in 2009, which was submitted to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) as a defense brief, is also repeatedly used as an excuse to prevent visits.



'Öcalan's democratic self-government model is a great hope for all societies'

ANF | 15 DECEMBER 2023

Fıras Qesas, President of the Modernity and Democracy Party of Syria, former Egyptian Minister Sebrî El-Jundî and Syrian politician Aysar El Welî spoke out against the isolation of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan and demanded his physical freedom.

Emphasising that Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan is one of the strongest people seeking freedom, Fıras Qesas said: "Öcalan linked the liberation of Kurds to the liberation of all societies. Öcalan, who founded Democratic Confederalism, lives in a dungeon of the Turkish state today. Abdullah Öcalan has dedicated his life for our cause, and we as a people must struggle, resist and ensure his physical freedom. Öcalan's existence is important not only for the Kurdish people, but also for all Arab, Persian and Turkish societies. Öcalan's democratic self-government model is a great hope for all societies."

Former Egyptian Minister Sebrî El-Cundî, who has also supported the "Freedom for Leader Öcalan, a political solution to the Kurdish question" campaign launched by the friends of the Kurds in more than 100 centres around the world on 10 October to ensure the physical freedom of Kurdish People's Leader Öcalan, said: "Mr Öcalan founded the freedom movement in 1987 and led the uprising of a people. Because of this, he has been imprisoned in Turkey for 24 years. I am happy to join the campaign for Mr Öcalan's physical freedom. The Kurdish question can only be resolved with Mr Öcalan's opinion. Öcalan has been in prison for 24 years asking for the freedom of the people and we want him to be free."

"Kurdish People's Leader Öcalan said: "Even if we have the power to defeat the world, we will not attack anyone. Even if the world unites and comes against us, we will never give up our legitimate, libertarian and democratic rights. We will resist for this", said Syrian politician Aysar El Welî and added: "Of course, we will fight against the attacks of the invaders until the end. Leader Öcalan has been under isolation for a long time. Our aim is to ensure his physical freedom rather than ending the isolation."



Abdullah Öcalan's books read in Bellinzona

ANF | BELLINZONA | 15 DECEMBER 2023

Various actions, events and campaigns are being organised all over the world to demand the physical freedom of Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan. On 10 October, an international campaign was launched under the slogan "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, a political solution to the Kurdish question".

As part of the global campaign, a reading day campaign was launched in 160 centres on 10 December 2023 under the name "Global Öcalan Books Day". The event, which aims to explain and spread the paradigm of leader Abdullah Öcalan, was joined by masses in many centres around the World.

As part of the "Global Öcalan Books Day" campaign, an event was organised in Bellinzona after Geneva, Basel, Zurich and Bern in Switzerland.

Hundreds of people, including members of political parties, revolutionary institutions, non-governmental organisations and Kurdish activists, attended the reading days event held in Forum Cinema Hall.

After the screening of the film Kobanê, a presentation was made during the event.

'Work must continue without interruption'

Oncologist and Advisor Member of the National Parliament Dr Franco Cavalli, President of the Association for the Reconstruction of Kobanê, stated that on the basis of ensuring the physical freedom of Abdullah Öcalan, work must continue uninterruptedly to ensure that his ideas reach the peoples.

"Ensuring the freedom of Comrade Öcalan will be the most fundamental and most important work for us," Cavalli said.

The speakers emphasised that the peoples can achieve democracy only by keeping alive the Rojava Revolution, which was created with the philosophy of Abdullah Öcalan, who presented a women's libertarian and ecological life model.

The event continued with the reading of excerpts from Abdullah Öcalan's books.

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Prisons in Turkey

Hundreds of people in Dêrik hold solidarity action in solidarity with prisoners on hunger strike

ANF | 11 DECEMBER 2023

Hundreds of citizens from Dêrik went on hunger strike in order to support the action started by political prisoners in prisons in Turkey and North Kurdistan, to protest the absolute isolation imposed on Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan and the lack of disclosure of his situation after the earthquake in Istanbul on 4 December.

The Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan initiative set up the tent where the hunger strike started in front of the Martyrs' Families Assembly building with the slogan "We salute the resistance in prisons. We will liberate our Leader with the spirit and values of the martyrs."

Dozens of citizens from the city center and villages, civil society organizations and council members, patriotic figures, citizens in the Koçerat region and members of the Dêrik Intellectuals Union joined in the hunger strike.

The participants expressed their support for the political prisoners in North Kurdistan and Turkey.

Political prisoners went on hunger strike on 27 November within the scope of the freedom movement launched worldwide under the name "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, political solution to the Kurdish question".

Condemning the isolation imposed on Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan, Dêrik People's Initiative member Mihemed Seîd promised that they will continue their actions until they achieve freedom for Öcalan.

Suad Mistefa, a member of the Council of Martyrs' Families and the mother of Martyr Hevrîn Xelef, expressed her support for the hunger strike and emphasized that they will follow the path of the martyrs until the end.

Kongra Star Dêrik Coordination executive member Şadiye Yûsif said: "The policies carried out against the oppressed people in the person of Leader Abdullah Öcalan cannot distract us from our struggle and resistance. "We promise that we will increase our level of struggle against these policies."

Dêrik Social Defense Forces (HPC) member Zeyneb Amed said: "We will not stop in any way and we will continue the hunger strike until the physical freedom of the Leader is ensured."

Dêrik Intellectuals Union member Kawa Îsmâîl read a poem about Leader Abdullah Öcalan's resistance in İmralı.

The solidarity hunger strike is expected to end today, Monday.

The Preparatory Committee said that all cities and districts in the province of Jazira will organize solidarity hunger strikes.



Prisoner on hunger strike: Everyone needs to do their part

ANF | VAN | 12 DECEMBER 2023

The alternating hunger strike carried out by prisoners in Turkey and Kurdistan with the slogan "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, solution to the Kurdish question" is on its 16th day.

Metin Uyar, who is held in Giresun Espiye L Type Closed Prison, sent a message to the public in a phone call he had with his family.

Uyar said: "We are fine and we are right. Our country, our leader, our party and our life are ours! We believe that we will succeed. The hunger strike we launched is a sign of loyalty and a debt. Everyone who calls himself human and defines himself as a patriot must pay this debt. Our people are honorable and have been fighting a great struggle for years. We are trying to do our part selflessly. If we have to die for this cause, we will. The friends here in prison are good and we are resisting. All our friends believe that this action will be successful. These period is very important and everyone needs to do their part."



Peace Mothers in Van call on government to accept demands of prisoners on hunger strike

ANF | VAN | 12 DECEMBER 2023

The Justice Vigil, launched last week in Van by TUHAY-DER to support the hunger strikes going on in prisons to end the isolation imposed on Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan, continues.

Talking to ANF about the vigil, now on its 7th day, peace mothers called on the government to end the isolation and accept the demands of the prisoners on hunger strike.

‘All mothers should get together to end isolation’

Peace mother Eyni Atabay said: “We are holding this vigil because our children are on hunger strike and there is a heavy isolation imposed on Mr. Öcalan who has not been allowed to meet with his family and lawyers for years. This isolation is applied to the entire Middle East. That’s why we demand that the isolation be lifted and a solution be found.

We lose dozens of people in every hunger strike. Let a solution be found, let isolation be lifted. Let there be no deaths. Our call is that Turkish and Kurdish mothers should get together for peace. Everyone was harmed by this conflict and war. No mother’s child should die; no mother should cry. Bad things happened in 40 years, children and young people died. We say; Edi bese! Enough! We want peace, we want justice. We were born on this land, we worked in this territory. We are not foreigners; we own these lands.”

Our people should stand by prisoners

Peace mother Yıldız Tuncer said: “We salute the resistance in the prisons. We, the mothers, say that isolation should be lifted. All Kurdish people demand this and we are their voice here. All mothers are here for peace and justice. Kurdish people should not remain silent and should stand by prisoners. This is what we want as mothers.”



Prisoner Temel exposes violation of rights in Şırnak T Type Closed jail

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 13 DECEMBER 2023

Uğur Temel, a prisoner in Şırnak T Type Closed Prison, said in his weekly phone call with his family that their ward was raided. He said that the guards confiscated books and blankets, and added: “On Monday, the guards raided our ward. We are the only two political prisoners in the ward. One of our friends is ill and needs surgery. They do not give us television and they want to cut off our contact with the world. We are under isolation. Our books, blankets and all our belongings were confiscated.”

Temel added: “They put a camera in our ward. We call on all human rights institutions, bar associations and political parties to send a commission here.”

Call for sensitivity

Temel’s older brother Devrim Temel said that what happened was “inhuman”. Temel said: “We are among those who not only hear about torture in prisons, but also experience that torture first-hand. Prisons are places where guards use disproportionate force. For this reason, we are concerned about the situa-

tion of my brother Uğur. We want the authorities to intervene in this situation. It is a crime to place cameras in the wards. The guards stated that the cameras were placed at the request of the Ministry of Justice.”

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Hunger striker's mother: We won't end our Vigil for Justice until isolation is lifted

ANF | AMED | 14 DECEMBER 2023

Afife Kartal, mother of Muhammed Kartal, one of the prisoners on hunger strike, said: “Our children will not give up on the hunger strike until the isolation is lifted.”

Muhammed Kartal, who went on hunger strike in the solitary cell he is being kept in Antalya High Security Prison, was arrested in Amed on the allegation of “membership in a terrorist organization” in 2017. Speaking to ANF, his mother, Afife Kartal, said: “My son was arrested and sent to prison. During the house raid, they put a gun to our heads and threatened me and my husband. My son has been held in prison for 6 years because of someone's statement.”

We want the isolation to be lifted

Kartal said that she talked to her son on the phone when the hunger strikes started, and added: “I told him that we started a Vigil for Justice for them. He was very happy and wished us success. I also wished him and all the prisoners success and said that we support them. Their morale was good. Our children will not give up the hunger strike until the isolation is lifted. They will continue to fight within four walls, and we will continue to fight outside. We support their just cause. I call to all patriotic families to support the hunger strikers so that this isolation can be lifted and our children can end their action.”

The watch will not end until the hunger strike is over

Stating that they will continue to fight until the isolation imposed on Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan is lifted, Kartal said: “Unless the isolation imposed on Leader Apo is lifted, the isolation imposed on our children will not end either. As long as our children are on hunger strike, we will continue our vigil. I am sick, I had an angiography three times, but despite this, I am here for my children and I will not give up. While our children are on hunger strike in prison, my conscience is not at ease. How can I sleep peacefully at home while they are fighting there? We want our children to be released from prison safely. The state always responds with violence. We will not accept this injustice.”

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MA Editor Sedat Yılmaz released from prison

ANF | AMED | 14 DECEMBER 2023

The first hearing of the lawsuit filed against Mezopotamya Agency (MA) editor Sedat Yılmaz, who was detained in Amed (Diyarbakır) on 29 April through an Ankara based investigation and jailed on 3 May World Press Freedom Day, was held at Diyarbakır 4th Heavy Penal Court on Thursday. The journalist is accused of “being member of an illegal organisation” and “establishing and leading an illegal organisation”.

The secret witness “Ulaş”, who connected to the hearing via Audio and Video Informatics System (SEG-BİS), tried to criminalise the news agencies Yılmaz worked for by associating them with the KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union).

“Ulaş” had testified in the preliminary proceedings that the so-called “KCK Press Committee” is led by Mustafa Karasu and that Sedat Yılmaz had illegally crossed the Turkish-Iraqi state border to meet Karasu in the guerrilla region of Xakurke. At his court hearing today, the key witness said that Yılmaz had travelled by plane from Turkey to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Lawyer Şule Recepoğlu stated that her client had conducted an interview with Mustafa Karasu during the “peace negotiations” between 2013 and 2015. The lawyer submitted the interview as evidence and said that many journalists were in the guerrilla area for reports during that time.

MLSA Co-Director and Yılmaz’s lawyer Veysel Ok pointed out that Yılmaz works for the Kurdish press and stated that there is no evidence for the accusations against him. “There is no evidence on which the accusation is based,” Ok said, adding, “There is no legal explanation for the arrest, let alone detention. There is no legal ground for this. All legal legislation is being turned upside down. Only 3 pages of the 43-page indictment are related to Sedat. The prosecutor has done his best to hide the data in his favour.”

The defendant rejected the accusation and said: “I am here because I am Kurdish, because I am a Kurdish journalist and because I work for Kurdish media. For this reason alone, I have been in prison for eight months without any evidence of a criminal offence.”

Yılmaz stated that there are allegations in the indictment that he “carries out activities at ANF at a responsible level and that this coincides with the SSI records” and said that there is no such information in the SSI records. Yılmaz stated that even the prosecutor said that ANF does not broadcast in Turkey and that his comment in an ANF news article titled “Reaction to the arrest of Hüseyin Aykol” about the arrest of journalist Hüseyin Aykol was presented as if he was working for ANF.

Announcing its interim decision after the defence hearings, the court ruled to release Yılmaz with a ban on leaving the country and adjourned the hearing to 29 February 2024.

After almost 8 months in prison, the Kurdish journalist was released from Diyarbakır Closed Prison, welcomed by his family and colleagues from Dicle Fırat Journalists’ Association (DFG) and Mesopotamia Women Journalists’ Association (MKG).

Speaking after his release, the MA Editor said, “Kurds somehow end up in prison. Unfortunately, you are taken in, you are kept in prison for 7 months without any questioning. You are somehow put in prison with empty police roles and games. There is no point in all this. Today we are released, tomorrow we will be arrested again, because we continue to carry out a risky and dangerous profession and we will continue to do so. Therefore, individual freedoms have no meaning in this country. Thousands of people behind the

walls are struggling for life under very harsh conditions and circumstances. Therefore, my soul, mind and brain remained with the people behind these walls. I hope I can do something for them. I can put forward something for them with my profession and journalism. I thank you all very much, it is an honour for me to see you all again and come together.”

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Kurdish refugees in Xanthi Pre-Removal Detention Centre in Greece go on hunger strike

ANF | XANTHI | 15 DECEMBER 2023

Kurdish refugees Mehmet Bilgeç, Mahmut Güler, Gökhan Doğubey, Welat Kaya, Ramazan Tekmen, Şükrü Öztürk and Murat Şahin started a hunger strike in the Pre-Removal Detention Centre in Xanthi, Greece.

Kurdish refugees made a statement on their action, which they launched in solidarity with the political prisoners who went on hunger strike in Turkey and North Kurdistan on 27 November to support the international campaign “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, a political solution to the Kurdish question”. The refugees noted that Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan has been kept under severe isolation conditions in İmralı Island for 25 years and that the destruction and denial of the Kurdish people is targeted in the person of Abdullah Öcalan.

Drawing attention to the denial of family and lawyer visits to Öcalan who has not been heard from for 33 months, the statement said: “We, as political refugees who had to seek asylum in Greece as a result of the increasing fascism in Kurdistan and who are detained in Xanthi, condemn the isolation of Mr Abdullah Öcalan and respectfully salute the resistance of all PKK and PAJK prisoners in prisons against isolation.”

The Kurdish refugees added that their action, which started on 15 December, will continue until 15 February 2024 in alternating periods.

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Condition of seriously ill political prisoner continues to deteriorate

ANF | 15 DECEMBER 2023

The state of health of political prisoner Seyfettin Demhat is deteriorating rapidly. According to his lawyer, Demhat suffers from Familial Mediterranean Fever, FME. Abdominal pain, pain in the chest, stinging sensation and joint pain-swelling occur due to inflammation in the peritoneum, which can last for 3-4 days, accompanied by fever. Recurrent attacks cause protein accumulation in the body, chronic kidney failure,

and other disorders over time. Demhat uses colchicine medicine for this disease, but this medicine does not cure the disease. It only reduces the attacks of the disease and prevents it from harming other organs.

Due to the massive stress caused by the pain and imprisonment, he repeatedly suffers heart spasms. Demhat even had a heart attack last year. As he can hardly move, he also suffers from cysts on his back and neck.

“He cannot remain in prison”

Seyfettin Demhat was sentenced to 26 years in prison and has already served nine years, currently in a high-security prison in Van. His sister, Şengül Martı, announced that her brother’s illness has progressed and his whole body is completely inflamed: “Although doctors told Seyfettin that the medication he was taking to prevent kidney failure was no longer good for him and was not enough, his treatment is only being continued with this medication. The injections had the opposite effect on his body; he had an allergic reaction and Seyfettin’s blood values deteriorated. My brother is definitely not a prisoner who should be kept in prison conditions because of his health condition. His life in prison means extreme stress, inadequate nutrition, lack of sleep and lack of fresh air. Rest, fresh air, good nutrition and regular sleep would be important for him to recover and get well. But the prison administration demands that the doctor confirm his fitness for detention. This exposes him to further torture and severe isolation.”

“We must not leave the hunger-striking prisoners alone”

With regard to the hunger strikes in the prisons for Abdullah Öcalan, Martı said: “We want everyone to support the resistance behind bars and the vigils of families. Because this struggle is a just struggle. All our imprisoned friends are hostages. Of course, we should not leave this just struggle to the prisoners alone, we must not leave them alone. We must be united as a people. We must not withhold our support. We must set an example for the whole world with these actions. I demand that all our prisoners, especially Leader Öcalan, be released as soon as possible. My brother is seriously ill and there are many others like him. This is a crime against humanity. We cry out to a state that is closed to all humanitarian aspects: enough is enough.”



Military aggression and occupation

Car bomb in Girê Spî kills 3 mercenaries affiliated with the Turkish state

ANF | 10 DECEMBER 2023

According to information provided by ANHA based on local sources in Gire Spî, a bomb exploded in a vehicle belonging to Ahrar Al Şarqiyê mercenaries.

In the explosion, 3 mercenaries died and 2 people were injured.

Sources reported that the dead and injured were taken to Girê Spî Hospital.

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Social Contract draft covers all people living in Northern and Eastern Syria

ANF | OMER HORO | RAQQA | 10 DECEMBER 2023

The Northern and Eastern Syria Social Contract Draft Committee submitted its last meeting to the approval of the Autonomous Administration General Assembly after receiving the opinions of all components in Northern and Eastern Syria.

The Northern and Eastern Syria Social Contract Draft Committee, consisting of 158 people, including politicians, lawyers, intellectuals and representatives of civil society organizations, held comprehensive discussions on the preparation of the social contract during the 4-day session.

Hikmet Hebîb, co-chair of the Legislative Assembly of Cizre Region Democratic Autonomous Administration and member of the Social Contract Preparation Committee, talked about the meeting and underlined that the contract was prepared according to the changes experienced by the region and the Autonomous Administration.

Hebîb said: “Annual meetings were held with the participation of committees consisting of 158 members in order to improve the work. Civil society organizations, political parties, women and young people attended this meeting. We held discussions at various levels in order to reach a suitable agreement for the next stages and provide the best service to our people.”

Hebîb said that the social contract covers all the people living Northern and Eastern Syria, and added: “Among the articles of the social contract are the independence of the judiciary and the protection of the rights of voters. The opinions of all the people of the region have been taken into consideration in legal, social and administrative terms.”



The lives of thousands of people are under threat in Til Rifet

RUKEN EFRIN | TIL RIFET | 10 DECEMBER 2023

The forces affiliated with the Damascus government are besieging the Shehba region and the Turkish state's attacks on the region continue. After the occupation of Afrin in 2018, hundreds of thousands of Afrin residents had to migrate to different parts of Syria. More than 300 thousand people from Afrin live in Shehba, where most of them settled.

Shehba region, which was liberated from ISIS and Jabhat Al-Nusra mercenaries by YPG and YPJ fighters in 2017, is located between Afrin and Aleppo. The region consists of many villages and towns, the largest of which is Til Rifet.

Til Rifet has been subjected to many attacks by the invading Turkish state. As a result of the attacks, 28 people, including 8 children, were killed. The Damascus government, which does not allow fuel, medicine and food to pass through, continues the blockade of Shehba. While the fuel shortage caused power outages throughout the district, hospitals were unable to provide service.

Attacks will not break our will

Speaking on the issue, Meryem Ebdulrehman Omer from Afrin talked about the difficulties they experienced and said: "The Damascus government has been imposing an embargo on the people for 6 years. In recent days, this embargo has been further deepened. Shehba has been facing a heavy siege for 16 days. We cannot provide food, medicine and fuel. On the other hand, the Turkish state is constantly bombing the region. It carries out these attacks in front of the whole world and no one raises his voice. Neither the Turkish state nor the Damascus government will be able to break our will with these attacks. We resisted in Afrin until our last moment, and we will continue to resist from now on. One day, Afrin will definitely be freed from occupation and we will return to our lands."

International organizations should come to the region

Cegerxwîn Şêxo underlined the 58-day resistance of the people of Afrin in 2018, when Turkey and its mercenaries attacked and eventually occupied the city, and said: "After Afrin was occupied, the people were forced to move to the Shehba region. After the settlement of people in Shehba, the Damascus government began to impose an embargo on these regions. On the other hand, the occupying Turkish state and its mercenaries attacked many places, especially Til Rifet. This blockade and attacks still continue. The aim of the Damascus government and the Turkish state is to force the people out of Shehba and completely remove them from Afrin. Human rights and international organizations should come to the Shehba region. They must expose the crimes of the Turkish state and ensure that the blockade imposed by the Damascus government ends. Because these regions are currently under intense siege. Hospitals have become inoperable."



Damascus government embargo on Shehba causes the death of a child

ANF | SHEHBA | 10 DECEMBER 2023

The Damascus government has tightened the embargo on the Shehba Canton and is preventing the passage of vital supplies (child milk, fuel, medicine and food, etc.) to the region. Hospitals, education as well as almost all service institutions in Shehba are out of service, while the bakeries in the region are about to reach a level where they cannot be operated. At the same time, education had to be suspended due to fuel shortages and stalled vehicles. 14,500 students were deprived of their education.

Those who took refuge in the northern Syrian canton of Shehba after the Turkish occupation of Afrin are subjected to the continuous bombardments of the Turkish state on the one hand and the embargo of the Damascus government on the other.

On 2 December, a child named Sozdar Hesên died of cold in Serdem Camp where Afrin IDPs are staying.

Heating problems have increased due to the diesel shortage for days. Electricity is also cut off.

The autonomous administration institutions, especially the People's Municipality, are trying to provide services with the means they have.

The embargo has also severely affected hospitals. In the Avrin Hospital, health units and services other than the emergency unit went out of service due to fuel shortages and power cuts. At the same time, the public cannot find medicines for the treatment of patients.

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AANES hands over 96 ISIS women and children to Kyrgyzstan

ANF | 10 DECEMBER 2023

On Thursday, 7 December, a delegation headed by the representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, Bakıt Kadirov, visited the regions of Northern and Eastern Syria and held talks with the Autonomous Administration.

Citing an official document of the talks between the two sides, ANHA reported that the delegation received 69 children and 27 women from the families of ISIS gangs staying in camps in the regions.

Xalid İbrahim, member of the Executive Committee of the Autonomous Administration, said that AANES will cooperate with Kyrgyzstan and all states that have citizens and children in the Autonomous Administration regions.

İbrahim pointed out that the Turkish state's constant threats against the region, intensive targeting of civilians and employees of the Autonomous Administration by drones, and the continuous bombing of vital facilities such as gas, oil, electricity and water stations in the region continue uninterrupted, and these attacks are carried out in front of the eyes of the international community.

İbrahim stressed that the invading Turkish state has given the ISIS gangs the opportunity to reorganise themselves and to attack the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and the International Coalition.

Bakît Kadîrov said that the Kyrgyz Republic is aware of the price paid by AANES and the SDF in the fight against ISIS.

Kadîrov thanked the Autonomous Administration and the SDF for helping the citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic to return to their homeland despite all the challenging conditions in the region.

ISIS members in North Eastern Syria

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

Most repatriations to former Soviet republics

Nevertheless, appeals from the Autonomous Administration to the international community to shoulder their responsibility and bring back their citizens held in Northern and Eastern Syria have gone almost unheard for years. Most of them joined the ISIS caliphate at the height of the Syrian war. So far, only very few countries of origin have been willing to take their nationals back. Countries in Central Asia are leading the repatriation of ISIS prisoners. More than half of all repatriations from the AANES took place in former Soviet republics. So far, Kazakhstan has repatriated 710, Russia 481, Uzbekistan 339, Tajikistan 254 and Kyrgyzstan 333 nationals. France is in sixth place on the list with 226 repatriated nationals, followed by Kosovo (123), Germany (108), the Netherlands (62) and Belgium (45).

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Explosion kills 2, injures 17 in Manbij

ANF | MANBIJ | 11 DECEMBER 2023

An explosion occurred in the village of Yalanlı in Manbij due to the detonation of a mine residue on Monday. The explosion took place while local residents were harvesting the crops in an olive orchard. According to the initial reports, two people lost their lives and 17 people were wounded.

The victims, Samiya Ekreş, Zeîm Ebdulhisên, and the wounded residents were taken to the Berkel Hospital in the city.

Those wounded by the explosion were identified as Dendî Hisên, Alya El Ehmed, Nesrîn El Hisên, Hece Raîd, Mihemed Hisên El Hisên, Kewser Mistefa El Ekreş, Bitûl Ekreş El Mistefa, Mêrvet Zeîm El Hisên, Fatima, Hûriya Ebdulhisên, Necah Hisên El Ekreş, Rexed Hisên Ebdulhisên, Ednan Mistefa, Sebah Ebdulhisên, Heyfa Ehmed El Hisên, Nûr Raîd Ebdulhisên and Fitêm.

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Member of DEM Party killed in armed attack in Şırnak

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 11 DECEMBER 2023

Ahmet Gün, an executive member of the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) in the Şenoba town, was targeted by an armed attack in the countryside of Şırnak province on Monday.

According to reports from the ground, the car in which Ahmet Gün and his son Abdurrahim Gün were travelling, was targeted by gunfire in the village of Taloka in the countryside of Şırnak's Uludere (Qileban) district. Gün and his son were on their way to collect firewood when they were attacked.

Ahmet Gün died on the spot and his son was wounded as a result of the attack.

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Guerrillas continue their actions against Turkish forces

ANF | BEHDINAN | 11 DECEMBER 2023

The Press Center of the People's Defense Forces (HPG) issued a statement providing information about guerrilla actions and the Turkish army's attacks in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

According to the HPG statement on Monday, guerrillas struck the Turkish forces in Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region four times on 8-9-10 December. The strikes by the guerrillas by artillery and semi-automatic weapons left a soldier dead and two military positions severely damaged.

On the other hand, the guerrilla positions in the Girê Ortê Resistance Area in Metîna region was attacked three times with unconventional explosives on 8 December. On the same day, the guerrilla positions in the Sîda Resistance Area in Zap region was also attacked with unconventional explosives.

In addition, HPG reported 17 airstrikes by fighter jets between 8 and 10 December. Turkish jets carried out 3 strikes on the areas of Deştâ Kafya and Gundê Şiyê in Garê region, 4 strikes on the areas of Gundê Şêlazê and Serê Metîna in Metîna region, 7 strikes on the areas of Ava Lolanê, Goşînê, Sinînê, Girê Berbiz-

ina and Xinêra Jor in Xakurkê region and 3 strikes on the Girê Bahar Resistance Area in Western Zap region.

On 8 December, Xakurkê was shelled by attack helicopters and the regions of Zap, Şehîd Delîl Western Zap, Metîna and Xakurkê by artillery.



SDF confiscates rocket launchers in Shaddadi countryside

ANF | 12 DECEMBER 2023

On Tuesday, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) conducted an extensive combing operation near Shadadi town. According to SDF Media Centre, the operation was initiated “in response to a series of rocket attacks targeting one of our joint bases between our forces and our partners in the coalition.”

The SDF statement said: “During the meticulous combing operation, our forces successfully located several rocket launchers close to the village of Adla, south of the town of Shadadi. It is worth noting that the rockets not only targeted the joint military bases but also impacted neighboring villages near al-Shadadi town, posing a threat to civilian safety. Yesterday, the heavily populated villages of al-Hammad and al-Hariri in the vicinity of al-Shadadi town were subjected to rocket attacks.”

SDF affirmed that they will not hesitate to pursue and arrest the terrorists, to preserve the security and safety of the people and their joint bases and protect them from any threats to their areas.



Determination, the secret weapon in the hands of guerrillas

AMARGI ARHAT BA | BEHDINAN | 13 DECEMBER 2023

The war in the western Zap region is the epitome of all wars and uprisings in Kurdistan. The guerrilla war against invasion in the region is not only based on a long history, but also represents an important step towards a free future. And each of these steps is safer and stronger than the last.

While the Turkish army broadcasts footage of its mostly fruitless attacks against the guerrillas, it spends minutes advertising its reconnaissance and combat aircraft, tanks, artillery and all of its other military technology. When the images of their supposedly invincible war machine flicker in full length across the channels of the media apparatus controlled by the Turkish state, the aim is to suggest viewers that the Turkish army is “unstoppable”. However, not a single guerrilla fighter was injured in the air and poison gas attacks, the heavy bombings and explosions of the last few weeks. On the contrary, the guerrillas have carried out actions and major operations while being under these attacks. The guerrillas confiscated the weapons of the Turkish soldiers killed.

The decisive factor in war is not technology

But what are the PKK guerrillas fighting with? When we asked this question to one of the guerrillas before the revolutionary operation in the western Zap region, he took out his equipment from his backpack before answering. He then said: “A gun and its magazines, a radio, five hand grenades, a pair of gloves and, most importantly, a helmet camera. These are more than enough to defeat a unit of the Turkish army, because equipment alone does not wage war. The only thing you need to beat the enemy is the belief that you can actually defeat him. Yes, the enemy has reconnaissance drones, planes, tanks, surveillance systems, he outnumbers us, but there is something much more important that we have and the enemy does not: willpower, determination and exclusive focus on one goal. In other words, the will to sacrifice. As long as we have this willingness to sacrifice, we will achieve many more victories with just one weapon and a few bombs.”

Empty propaganda from the Turkish state

The action that followed this conversation demonstrated the meaning of these words. Despite all their heavy equipment, the Turkish soldiers could not defend their positions. At the first shell that exploded, they fled, trampling over each other and their dead to save their lives. What is reflected in the footage from the guerrillas' head cameras is one of the most important documents to understand the reality of the Turkish army's war and to see how empty the Turkish state's propaganda - “We have destroyed them and we are done” - is.

The guerrillas destroy the occupiers' strongholds with their will, determination and tremendous inner strength. As this guerrilla said, the only thing necessary to defeat the enemy in the mountains of Kurdistan is already deeply embedded in the heart, mind and practice of every guerrilla.

— ★ —

New Social Contract enters into force in North-East Syria

ANF | RAQQA | 13 DECEMBER 2023

During its 91st ordinary meeting on Tuesday, the General Council of the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria approved the Social Contract presented by the Social Contract Drafting Committee last week. The aim of the Social Contract is to create the framework for a decentralized administrative system in Northern and Eastern Syria. This applies in particular to the separation of powers and the protection of human rights.

Members of the General Council of the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, the Co-Chair of the Executive Assembly of the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria and members of the Justice Assembly came together in front of the Executive Assembly building on Wednesday for a statement about the approved Social Contract.

The statement was read in 3 languages, in Arabic by Fatme Xelîl, the Deputy Co-Chair of the General Council, in Kurdish by Ferîd Etê, the Co-Chair of the General Council, and in Syriac by Gebrîyel Şamûn, Deputy Co-Chair of the Executive Assembly.

The statement said that the new Social Contract charter, which was prepared by the Broad Committee for the Social Contract of North and East Syria as a result of meetings with the people and components in the Cizîr and Euphrates regions, was passed by the General Assembly and approved after being put to vote.

It was stated that on 14 December 2020, the General Council adopted resolution number 6, and in line with this resolution, it was agreed to establish a committee to secure the rights of the components of North and East Syria and to re-establish the basic contract of the Autonomous Administration.

The statement pointed out that the 158-member broad committee convened in Hesekê decided to establish a narrow committee of 30 members to review and reorganise the Social Contract charter, and that the result of the charter, which had been worked on for more than 6 months, was presented to the broad committee for discussion.

“Thereupon, a meeting was held between 4 December and 7 December 2023 at the building of the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria in the city of Raqqa. At the meeting, an agreement was reached on the creation of the final charter of the Social Contract. The charter was submitted to the General Council of the Autonomous Administration for approval by the General Council, representatives of the legislative assembly of the Autonomous Administration and the civilian assemblies of North and East Syria.”

The General Council of the Autonomous Administration noted that the social contract submitted by the Broad Committee on the Social Contract a few days ago was approved at its 91st ordinary meeting yesterday and entered into force with this statement.



Guerrillas shoot down Turkish explosive-laden drone

ANF | BEHDINAN | 14 DECEMBER 2023

The press centre of the People’s Defence Forces (HPG) published a statement providing information about the guerrilla resistance and the attacks by the Turkish army in the guerrilla-held Medya Defence Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) over the past three days.

HPG reported that the Turkish invasion forces attacked the guerrilla positions at Girê Ortê in Metîna eleven times with chemical gas red in colour and once with unconventional explosives on 10-11 December.

The guerrilla positions in Sîda Resistance Area in Zap region were also attacked with unconventional explosives on 12 December.

On the other hand, the guerrillas shot down a drone loaded with explosives while attacking a position in the Girê FM resistance area in the Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region on 12 December.

Turkish fighter jets bombed the guerrilla areas twenty times between 11 and 13 December. The targets were the areas of Gundê Dergelê und Gundê Bêşîlî in Metîna; the area of Şêx Nasir in Qandil; the areas of Goşînê, Şehîd Şerîf and Girê Rostê in Xakurkê; the areas of Dola Mêranê, Xêrê, Kanîsarkê and Zengil in Garê.

Artillery attacks by the Turkish troops targeted the regions of Zap, Şehîd Delîl Western Zap, Metîna and Xakurkê.



Body of HPG guerrilla handed over to his family after 2 years

ANF | MALATYA | 14 DECEMBER 2023

The body of Mahsum Yılmaz (Tolhildan Hîzan), an HPG (People's Defense Forces) guerrilla who was martyred along with Şoreş Ronî and Serhildan Garzan in a clash in Garzan on 23 November 2021, was received by his family.

After the DNA sample given by the family about a year ago matched, the family travelled from the Hizan district of Bitlis to Malatya today. The family went through the necessary procedures at the Malatya Chief Public Prosecutor's Office to receive the body and then went to the Malatya cemetery to wait for the body to be exhumed from where it was buried. The body was handed over to the family after an excavation that started only after 17.00.

After receiving the body, the family travelled to Hizan for reburial. The body will be buried in the village of Gayda.



Şamûn: New steps to be taken after approval of new Social Contract

ANF | RAQQA | 15 DECEMBER 2023

The Democratic People's Assembly of the Northern and Eastern Region of Syria adopted the new Social Contract, consisting of 4 main headings and 134 articles, on 12 December.

Gabrîêl Şamûn, deputy co-chair of the Democratic Autonomous Administration of Northern and Eastern Syria, spoke to ANHA about the steps to be taken after the adoption of the Social Contract.

Gabriël Şamûn said: “In the second stage, the Supreme Electoral Commission will be established. The Commission will carry out work for the elections to be held in the Northern and Eastern Syrian regions and all seven cantons declared in the Social Contract. The elections will be held in accordance with the provisions of the Social Contract. The new institutions of the Autonomous Administration, as well as their names, will be determined.

Autonomous Administration laws will be reviewed and amended according to the new Social Contract. This will also include the formation of some committees.”

Şamûn said: “We will start to form committees so that we could begin working in the next few days. Citizens in Northern and Eastern Syria will see all these changes and the whole process will be done under the supervision of the Democratic People's Assembly.”

— ★ —

HPG guerrilla Gelhat: We will never surrender to the invaders

DILARA NURHAQ | BEHDINAN | 15 DECEMBER 2023

In 2023, the mountains of Kurdistan turned into areas of great battles and historic resistance. Guerrilla Gelhat Gabar, one of those who took part in this historic resistance, spoke to ANF and about what contribution the freedom struggle made to the people of Kurdistan and what successes it achieved.

Gelhat Gabar from the HPG (People's Defense Forces) started his speech by drawing attention to the isolation of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan and said, “We have not heard from Leader Apo (Abdullah Öcalan) for a long time. This situation of course worries us. Despite all kinds of torture in İmralı, the Leader does not bow down. The enemy wants to weaken the guerrilla by intensifying the isolation. However, the guerrillas put up great resistance in 2023. This resistance is the result of the efforts of the Leader and our martyred comrades.”

Gelhat Gabar continued: “Our comrades resist with an Apoist spirit in every field, against all kinds of attacks. The Turkish state is making propaganda to the society as if it were successful, but it cannot advance against the resistance of the guerrillas. The enemy praises its technique so much that it thinks that it limits our movement or prevents us from taking action with its technical power, but everyone saw that it was wrong. The guerrillas are frustrating the enemy's attacks with by employing new tactics and methods. We often witness the fear and dread of the Turkish soldiers. The faith and will of those soldiers are just the techniques they rely on. But we also frustrated this technique. Whatever happens, the guerrillas will always resist the attacks and prevent Turkish invasion. As long as there is even one single guerrilla left, the enemy will not be able to live comfortably in the mountains of Kurdistan. Let the Turkish state know that we will never surrender to the invaders.”

— ★ —

435 people abducted in Turkish-occupied Afrin in 2023

ANF | 15 DECEMBER 2023

The Turkish state and its army recruited from ISIS and its affiliates are committing crimes against humanity in Afrin, which they occupied in 2018. According to the statement made by the Crime Documentation Centre on Friday, the Turkish state and its gangs have abducted 435 citizens in the city since the beginning of the year.

In recent days, 6 more people have been kidnapped by gangs in different parts of Afrin.

The Crime Documentation Centre said the gangs often raided houses, broke down doors, committed theft while they kidnapped residents.

Among the 435 people abducted were children and 180 sick civilians in need of urgent treatment.

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.

Feminicide

Narges Mohammadi: Compulsory hijab is neither a religious obligation nor a cultural model

ANF | 10 DECEMBER 2023

Narges Mohammadi has been held in Tehran's Evin prison since 2021 for her struggle against compulsory hijab and the death penalty in Iran.

Narges Mohammadi, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in early October, was not allowed to travel to Oslo to receive her award.

At the ceremony at Oslo City Hall, her 17-year-old twins Ali and Kiana, who have been living in exile in France since 2015, read out in French the message that Narges Mohammadi managed to deliver from her cell.

"I am a woman from the Middle East, from a region that, despite being the inheritor of a rich civilization, is now trapped by war and is a victim of the flames of terrorism and extremism," Narges Mohammadi said, adding that she wrote this message "behind the high and cold walls of a prison".

The 51-year-old activist, who has been repeatedly arrested and convicted in recent years, was one of the prominent faces of the "Jin, Jiyan, Azadi" (Woman, Life, Freedom) uprising in Iran.

"The compulsory hijab imposed by the government is neither a religious obligation nor a cultural model, but rather a means of controlling and subjugating the entire society," Narges Mohammadi said in her message.

Describing the obligation for Iranian women to wear the headscarf as a "shame on the government", Narges Mohammadi condemned the "cruel and misogynistic religious regime", painting a portrait of an Islamic Republic "essentially alien to its 'people'".

"The Iranian people will overcome repression and authoritarianism with determination," Narges Mohammadi said, condemning in particular repression, subjugation of the judiciary, propaganda and censorship, nepotism and corruption: "Do not doubt this, it is certain."

In the more than 100-year history of the Nobel Prize, Narges Mohammadi is the fifth person to receive the peace prize while imprisoned, after Germany's Carl von Ossietzky, Burmese Aung San Suu Kyi, Chinese Liu Xiaobo and Belarusian Ales Beliatzki.

"Narges Mohammadi's struggle (...) is comparable to that of Albert Lutuli, Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela (all Nobel Prize winners), which lasted for more than 30 years before the end of apartheid in South Africa," said Nobel Committee Chair Berit Reiss-Andersen.

"Women in Iran have been fighting against discrimination for more than 30 years. Their dream of a brighter future will eventually be realised."

Narges Mohammadi's twins, who have been separated from their mother for more than eight years, say they do not know if they will ever see her alive again.

"Personally, I am quite pessimistic," her daughter Kiana said on Saturday, while her brother Ali said he was "very, very optimistic".



Female journalists attacked by the police: Free press cannot be silenced

ANF | ISTANBUL | 11 DECEMBER 2023

Elfazi Toral was taken into custody in Istanbul last week while covering a public press conference organized by the provincial association of the HEDEP (Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party) in protest at the brutal police crackdown on demonstrators against Turkish violations of rights in Kurdistan. Almost fifty people were detained in the attack on the protest, and many were ill-treated in police custody. The security authorities prevented the press conference.

In addition to Toral, her colleague Sema Korkmaz from the Demokratik Modernite (Democratic Modernity) magazine and activist Edanur Aydoğdu from the HEDEP Youth Council were also taken into custody by the police in front of the HEDEP headquarters in Istanbul. After a mandatory health check, the three women were taken to the Vatan police headquarters in Istanbul's Fatih district, which is a notorious torture center.

After a night in the detention cell, Toral, Korkmaz and Aydoğdu were transferred to the court on duty in the morning. The detainees were released, with Toral being subject to judicial supervision.

Mesopotamia Women Journalists' Association (MKG) and Dicle Fırat Journalists' Association (DFG) made a statement for JINNEWS reporter Elfazi Toral and Demokratik Modernite employee Sema Korkmaz after their detention and violent treatment by the police. Many journalists attended the meeting at the Human Rights Association (IHD) building in Beyoğlu.

JINNEWS Correspondent Elfazi Toral said: "They repeatedly punched me in the chest and heart. I was kept in the detention vehicle for 5 hours. I was subjected to both physical and psychological violence. They kicked me in the vehicle. Although I told them that I had health problems, they did not stop. At the police station, the police said that I resisted them. The violence continued at the police station. I was sub-

jected to strip search. As journalists coming from the Free Press tradition, we will continue our resistance to the truth. We will continue our insistence against their attacks.”

Sema Korkmaz also spoke about the violence she experienced, saying: “Our work will continue. The Free Press cannot be silenced.”

Elif Taşdöğen, a member of the Association of Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD), said that the police officers ignored their own law, adding: “We see that there is a police state here rather than a state of law. We followed the whole process. We received reports documenting the police violence, and we will take the legal process to the end.”

JINNEWS Reporter and MKG Member Marta Sömek also stated that they will file a criminal complaint to the prosecutor’s office this week together with the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey (TIHV) and IHD. “We will not give up our professional activities and we will continue writing the truth in the face of these attacks,” Marta Sömek said.



Sakharov Prize awarded to Jina Mahsa Amini and the ‘Jin, Jiyan, Azadi’ movement in Iran

ANF | STRASBOURG | 12 DECEMBER 2023

The EP 2023 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought has been awarded to Jina Mahsa Amini and the ‘Jin, Jiyan, Azadi’ (Woman, Life, Freedom) movement in Iran, in a ceremony on 12 December.

The laureates were represented by Saleh Nikbakht, academic and lawyer representing Jina Mahsa Amini’s family; and Afsoon Najafi and Mersedeh Shahinkar, Iranian women’s rights defenders who left Iran in 2023.

Opening the award ceremony, President Metsola declared: “This years’ Sakharov prize for Freedom of Thought, awarded to Jina Masha Amini and the Woman, Life, Freedom movement, serves as a tribute to all the brave and defiant women, men and young people in Iran, who despite coming under increasing pressure, are continuing the fight for their rights and push for change. The European Parliament hears you and supports you. You are not alone.”

Jina Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old Iranian Kurdish woman, was arrested by police in Tehran on 13 September 2022 for allegedly ignoring Iran’s strict veiling laws. She died in hospital three days later after physical abuse suffered while in custody. Her death sparked massive women-led protests across the country. Under the slogan “Woman, Life, Freedom”, women have been protesting since her death against the hijab rules and other discriminatory laws.

On their way to France to receive the EP 2023 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, on 8 December 2023, Jina Mahsa Amini’s parents and brother were stopped at Tehran airport by the Iranian authorities,

and their passports confiscated. They are now subject to a travel ban. On Saturday, [Roberta Metsola, called on “the Iranian regime to reverse its decision”](#).

The family was represented in Strasbourg by their lawyer, Saleh Nikbakht, who read a message from Jina Mahsa Amini’s mother, Mozghan Eftekhari, during the ceremony: “Jina’s grief is eternal to me, and she is undying for people all over the world. I firmly believe that her name, beside that of Joan of Arc, will remain a symbol of freedom. From the birthplace of eternal Jina, I convey to you my and my family’s endless gratitude and I hope that you will stand firm and proud by your choice. Let us hope that no voice will fear the pronouncement of liberty.”

— ★ —

Kurdish journalist Ezîzî sent to Evin Prison

ANF | 13 DECEMBER 2023

According to the news in Iranian media, Kurdish journalist and former political prisoner Pexşan Ezîzî, who was detained by Iranian government forces, was sent to the women’s detention section in Evin Prison after 4 months of interrogation.

It was learned that Pexşan Ezîzî was deprived of all her rights during the interrogation process and was not allowed to use her right to phone calls with her family.

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Two femicides in Amed and Ankara

ANF | 14 DECEMBER 2023

A woman named Medine Polat was attacked with a gun on the street in Amed’s Bajarê Nû (Yenişehir) district on Wednesday evening. Polat was taken to the hospital after citizens called the emergency service. Polat could not be saved despite all the interventions at Gazi Yaşargil Training and Research Hospital, where she was treated.

Polat’s lifeless body was taken to the morgue for autopsy.

It was learned that Polat’s husband was taken into custody to be questioned about his wife’s murder.

Ankara

In Ankara, Nursena Kozan (25) met Ş.Ş., her ex-husband, in the neighbourhood of Sincan Tandoğan on Wednesday evening. She was shot by the man. Kozan, who was treated in a private hospital, could not be saved despite all the interventions. The killer was taken into custody.



KJAR calls for the defense of female political prisoners in Iran

ANF | 14 DECEMBER 2023

The Community of Free Women of Eastern Kurdistan (KJAR) made a written statement on the continued detention of Kurdish political prisoner Zeinab Jalalian, the lack of news from KJAR member Warishe Moradi, who was kidnapped by Iranian intelligence, and the pressures on female political prisoners in Iran.

Noting that the “Jin, Jiyan, Azadi” (Woman, Life, Freedom) resistance in Iran and East Kurdistan caused the Iranian state to panic, the statement said: “The ‘Jin, Jiyan, Azadi’ resistance, which energised women, continued despite intense pressures. In recent days, reports came out of the interrogation of Zeinab Jalalian, a Kurdish female political prisoner sentenced to life imprisonment, and everyone whose heart beats for freedom expressed their concerns. For 16 years, Zeinab Jalalian has not stepped back despite all the torture she suffered at the hands of the Iranian fascist government.”

The KJAR statement continued:

“Zeinab Jalalian is currently detained in Yazd Prison. She suffers from oral thrush, pink eye, visual impairment, asthma, digestive and kidney problems, and is still denied access to medical care and has her eyesight severely damaged. Of course, the attacks and violence against Zeinab Jalalian are not limited to these. Officials of the Ministry of Information have repeatedly imposed repentance on Zeinab Jalalian, but for 16 years, she has put up radical resistance to these pressures. The regime has never achieved its goal through repression.

Iran’s anti-women regime sees active women who speak out about their identity and existence as an obstacle to itself. Other active women such as our friend Warishe Moradi, Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraei, Azizi Phrafan and Narges Mohammadi have also spoken out about women’s identity, existence and rights during this period. Constant interrogations, pressure on the family, censorship, etc. are the regime’s psychological war against women. Meanwhile, the prison has become a mirror of the whole society. Whether it is the home, the city, the prison or the street, the strongholds of resistance are interconnected and inseparable. Neither execution, life imprisonment nor torture can help them achieve their goals because women’s resistance and prison have a long history. We have seen how the freedom-loving society all over Iran has become the voice of active women.

In addition to the transfer of Azizi Phrafan to the women’s ward in Evin Prison, there were also reports this week of a court ruling for the execution of Samira Sabzian. Samira is a young woman who has been in prison for ten years. She is the mother of two children and Iran’s anti-women government is trying to take her life.

KJAR has always believed that prisons are also the strongholds of struggle and resistance. Many women have sacrificed their lives in the struggle in Eastern Kurdistan and Iran. Finally, we state that we will con-

tinue our struggle for women's freedom and we ask all civil and political activists to be the voice of prisoners."

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EŞİK: At least 50 percent of candidates to be nominated in local elections must be women

ANF | 15 DECEMBER 2023

Women's Platform for Equality (EŞİK) issued a written statement regarding the candidates to be determined in the local elections. The statement, titled "We want candidates aiming for equal representation and gender equality in local governments", said that "Women are represented in almost non-existent numbers at all levels in local governments. According to the 2019 local election results, the female representation rate in local governments was only 3 percent. However, one of the basic conditions of democracy is equal representation."

'50 percent of candidates should be women'

In order to ensure equal representation and implement equalizing policies, the statement underlined that at least 50 percent of the candidates nominated by the parties in the local elections must be women. "Therefore, we expect political parties to nominate women for mayors from provinces, districts and towns where they have a high chance of being elected. Candidates to be nominated for municipal councils and provincial councils should be ranked as one woman and one man. Women should not be charged an application fee for candidacy applications, and practices such as 'compulsory donations' should be abandoned. Again, as a requirement of democracy, the candidate selection process should be conducted transparently."

The statement continued: "We insist that all candidates, men and women, embrace gender equality, be against all kinds of discrimination, and respect human, women, nature and animal rights. We expect candidates to be well-formed on these issues and to have proven this in the women's organizations and platforms they contribute to, academy, municipalities, unions, parties and democratic mass organizations. Considering the country's deepening problems, we insist that the candidates be people who defend secularism and the rule of law, respect science, look after the interests of the people and nature, not the capital, and aim to fight against poverty. We want to see candidates who come from the ecology movement, advocate climate justice, and can develop policies for the effects of the climate crisis and all disasters. We stress that candidates should be people who know the problems of the places they aspire to govern and who have the vision of producing solutions to these problems, who are reliable, innovative, peaceful and competent."

'If women win, democracy will win'

The statement said: "We can achieve the democratization that we all long for, solving the problems of the people and implementing the principle of equal citizenship, starting from the local level. We defend our

right to equal representation in local governments and everywhere! We say that if women win, democracy and the country also win!”

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Human Rights Violations

Orchid Group: Murals to develop street art on the walls of Rojava

NUJIYAN ADAR | QAMISHLO | 10 DECEMBER 2023

Painter Samir Tahir Kalo (33), founder of the Orchid Group, said that street art is an art form that can reach all segments of society and in this way, people can meet art more closely. Kalo emphasized that street art is an important platform for young artists in the region to express themselves.

The Orchid Group aims to develop street art with the murals they paint on the walls in the region. Members of the group have accelerated their work to color the streets and make them a part of the daily life of the society. The Orchid Group, which generally uses nature, history and culture elements in its paintings, aims to reflect the rich cultural heritage and natural beauties of the region with its arts.

Art reflects the voice of society

Samir Tahir Kalo, the founding member and instructor of the group, is a painter who started drawing at the age of 14 and improved his art with the exhibitions and painting competitions he participated in. Samir's goal, which also provides special training, is for the Orchid Group to become even more professional in 2024. Samir summarized why he started drawing as follows: “I feel my soul relax while drawing. Being a painter made my life easier. It makes me happy to convey my feelings to the society through painting and to be the voice of the society.”

Protecting cultural values

The Orchid Group, consisting of 7 women and 7 men, was founded on 24 June, said Samir adding that they operate in Northern and Eastern Syria, but currently they can only paint in Qamishlo. However, he said they will go to other cities in the coming period. “I give training in the Orchid Group. Our goal is to work professionally and increase our number in 2024. We have to prove ourselves. For the first time, an organized group was formed with this issue and such huge pictures. We drew many murals on the walls in Qamishlo. We are approaching New Year's Eve now. That's why we colored the walls with symbols representing New Year's Eve. Previously, on special days such as 8 March and 21 March, Newroz, we drew pictures on the walls showing the meaning and importance of those days. Peoples and religions live together in Northern and Eastern Syria. We are also trying to protect the values of the people.”

Making our cities more beautiful

Kalosaid: “We draw pictures on darkened and crumbling walls and brighten the walls with our paintings. We make our cities more beautiful. We want to be a hope for the new generation, and we want them to look to the future with hope, love and affection through the murals we draw on the wall. People are happy when they see our drawings, and we receive positive reactions. We provide all the materials needed for the Orchid Group ourselves. The materials we use are very expensive, it is difficult for the group to afford it on their own, but no one has provided financial support so far.”

Kalo said that the people of Northern and Eastern Syria demand peace, freedom and equality, and underlined that they express these demands in their paintings. Samir Tahir Kalo added: “Everyone should do whatever they can to make our cities more beautiful. As painters, we must prove ourselves in this regard. Could there be anything better than an activity that makes children happy, brings peace to the artist, and spreads hope to the city? We will continue to create art that points to peace and freedom, raises awareness in the protection of ecology, expresses the revolution, displays women's resistance, and touches the hearts of children.”

<https://anfenglishmobile.com/culture/orchid-group-murals-to-develop-street-art-on-the-walls-of-rojava-70696>



Kurdish Revolutionary Youth Movement holds 3rd Congress in Paris

ANF | PARIS | 10 DECEMBER 2023

The Revolutionary Youth Movement (Tevgera Ciwanên Şoreşger, TCŞ), the umbrella organisation of Kurdish youth organisations in Europe, held its third congress in Paris. Around a thousand people took part in the congress, with numerous participants also travelling from other European countries. The meeting took place under the motto “Organise yourself and free Abdullah Öcalan” and was opened with a minute’s silence in memory of those martyred in the Kurdish freedom struggle in the persons of Dîdar Harûn, Berxwedan Çiyager, Baran Mawa and Tavîn Tekoşîn.

Journalist Sefkan Kobanê gave a speech and began with the Öcalan’s quote “We started young and will succeed young”. Kobanê said that the Kurdish youth today know their identity and have the chance of a free life thanks to the freedom struggle initiated by Abdullah Öcalan. The journalist pointed out that unorganised young people are in danger of losing themselves under the influence of capitalist modernity and the special war against the youth. “Those who want to live freely should organise their lives in all aspects according to the paradigm presented by Öcalan,” said Kobanê and referred to the women’s revolution, which is spreading worldwide under the slogan “Jin Jiyan Azadî” (Woman, Life, Freedom) and is being re-

alized with concrete gains in Rojava. He stressed that 2024 will be the year of Abdullah Öcalan's physical freedom.

Members of the TCŞ stated that the main purpose of their actions and activities since their establishment has been the physical freedom of the Kurdish People's Leader, and that they get organised with the anger of the aggravation of the physical captivity that has left 24 years behind with a 33-month isolation, and that they are holding the 3rd Congress with the determination for the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan and Kurdistan.

In addition, the participants stressed that attacks are not limited to Kurdish youth, but that the capitalist system is targeting all young people in the world with different styles and immoral war methods because it is in the process of suffocation.

The activists also pointed out that the youth-led revolutions against the capitalist system, with the ideology of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan in Rojava, set an example to the whole world, and in this process of deadlock and chaos, the youth's dynamism and leadership are an unconditional condition for the revolution to succeed all over the world.

The participants stressed that they united around the Democratic Modernity paradigm created by Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan, saying that they have taken the lead in the construction of the alternative free life, which is the 3rd Way, against the attacks of capitalism on the basis of special war policies. They announced that they will continue the struggle against the AKP-MHP fascist partnership, the biggest enemy before the free Kurdish will, in response to the most immoral war crimes, until they liberate Abdullah Öcalan and conclude the struggle with victory.



Journalist Toral released under judiciary control

ANF | ISTANBUL | 10 DECEMBER 2023

The Turkish judiciary continues to take action against independent media, especially those in the tradition of the free Kurdish press. A court in Istanbul ordered journalist Elfazi Toral to sign at the police station, after she was released from custody. The correspondent for the JinNews news agency is said to have violated the Demonstration Law No. 2911. She is also accused of resisting state authority.

Elfazi Toral was taken into custody in Istanbul on Friday. She wanted to follow a public press conference organized by the provincial association of the HEDEP party. The statement was made against the background of a rally against Turkish violations of rights in Kurdistan that was violently broken up by the police the day before. Almost fifty people were arrested in the attack on the protest, and many were ill-treated in police custody. The security authorities prevented the press conference.

In addition to Toral, her colleague Sema Korkmaz from the magazine "Demokratik Modernite" (Democratic Modernity) and activist Edanur Aydoğdu from the HEDEP Youth Council were also taken into cus-

tody by the police in front of the HEDEP headquarters in Istanbul. After a mandatory health check, the three women were taken to the Vatan police headquarters in Istanbul's Fatih district, which is a notorious torture center.

After a night in the detention cell, Toral, Korkmaz and Aydoğdu were transferred to the court on duty in the morning. Only in the case of the JinNews reporter did the public court imposed signing at the police station.

JinNews

JinNews is a feminist news agency based in the North Kurdish city of Diyarbakır (Amed). It follows in the tradition of the world's first women's news agency Jinha, which was banned by emergency decree shortly after the pseudo-coup in July 2016 in Turkey. The entire JinNews workforce is made up of women - from the editor-in-chief to the driver to the technician. Their work is not easy, as the JinNews team repeatedly comes into the focus of the Turkish repressive authorities.



Human rights organisations call for a solution to the Kurdish question

ANF | 10 DECEMBER 2023

The Human Rights Association (IHD) promoted demonstrations in numerous cities in Turkey and northern Kurdistan to mark the 75th anniversary of the UN Human Rights Charter.

The organisations called on the Turkish government to take a democratic and civilised step to resolve the Kurdish question, the “mother of all problems” in the region, through dialogue and to achieve social peace. They pointed out that the lifting of the isolation of Abdullah Öcalan and a return to the negotiation table with him are indispensable for this.

“As rights defenders, we have always advocated for a democratic, peaceful and just solution to the Kurdish question. We insist on this. Therefore, we want the clashes to stop right now. With the establishment of the environment of non-conflict, it is necessary for all parties to develop sincere and effective programmes in order to strengthen and monitor the state of non-conflict and to ensure social peace,” said a statement read out at meetings organised jointly with organisations such as the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey (TIHV) and the Turkish Medical Association (TTB) in cities such as Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir and Hatay.

According to IHD, the unwillingness to solve the Kurdish question essentially results from the lack of democratisation in Turkey. Instead of insisting on enforcing the state doctrine of “one people, one language, one nation, one religion” to maintain the paradigm of an absolutely homogeneous society, a radical change in “Kurdish policy” is needed. This includes granting the Kurdish people their rights, ending the “terror” stigmatisation, criminalisation, persecution and exclusion of Kurds and entering into a dialogue

with them for a peaceful, political and just solution to the Kurdish question. “The still unresolved Kurdish issue, which results from the denial of fundamental and civil rights, is a human rights and democratic challenge for Turkey with far-reaching consequences for an entire region. It must be resolved in order to close the chapter of violence, wars and oppression in this country for good, and to pave the way for a democratic future.”

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Özak Tekstil workers protesting in Urfa attacked by gendarmerie

ANF | URFA | 11 DECEMBER 2023

Özak Textile factory workers in the 1st Organized Industrial Zone (OSB) in Urfa (Riha) have been on strike for 15 days. Workers protest mobbing, threats and dismissals.

The workers, who came to the front of the factory again early in the morning to continue the protest, encountered a gendarmerie blockade.

The gendarmerie closed the street where the factory was located with barriers and did not allow workers to pass.

Workers continued their protest by blocking the road in front of the mosque in OIZ and starting a sit-in protest.

The gendarmerie attacked the workers by spraying pressurized water from TOMA and took many workers into custody by using violence with batons and shields.

Other workers were forced to the outer gate of the industrial zone.

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HEDEP acronym changed to DEM Party

ANF | ANKARA | 11 DECEMBER 2023

The Green Left Party, which ran in the Turkish elections in place of the HDP (Peoples' Democratic Party), which was threatened to be banned, renamed itself HEDEP (Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party) in October. In November, the Chief Public Prosecutor's Office of the Court of Cassation rejected the use of the acronym HEDEP on the grounds that it is similar to HADEP, which was banned in 2003. The party then announced that they would change the acronym to reduce risks ahead of local elections due in March 2024.

HEDEP Spokesperson Ayşegül Doğan held a press conference at the HDP Headquarters in Ankara and shared information about the new decisions taken by her party. Doğan announced that the new acronym of the party will be “DEM Party” instead of “HEDEP”.

Ayşegül Doğan stated the following:

“The reason we are here today is to inform you about two important issues related to our party. Let me remind the story of this again. As you know, we held a very enthusiastic and magnificent congress on 15 October. At the congress, we changed our name due to compulsory reasons. The long and clear version of our name was determined as Peoples’ Equality and Democracy Party and the short name was HEDEP. After we completed all our preparations for the application process of the changes made at the congress, the Chief Public Prosecutor's Office of the Court of Cassation objected to HEDEP, the acronym our party, and notified us on 18 November that some articles of our statute needed to be amended. Actually, there is no need to remind the reasoning, but it is useful to repeat it for the sake of history. It was argued that HEDEP resembled HADEP and could even be confused with it. We were informed by the Political Parties Bureau of the Court of Cassation that “although not identical, it was concluded that it was likely to confuse the two political parties with each other, which would lead to confusion”.

However, HADEP was closed down. There is no such party. After HADEP was closed down, Turkey was condemned by the ECtHR for this decision. Actually, the reason is obvious. This is a new move of lawlessness, a new attempt to confront us with a new judicial trap before an election. But we are not without options against traps and conspiracies. This is evidenced by our performance, experience and the heavy price we have paid in our 30-year history of democratic political struggle. In 30 years, we had to establish dozens of new parties, but we succeeded every time. What did we achieve? We succeeded in gaining a place in the hearts of the peoples, we succeeded in leaving a mark in the history of our struggle. We succeeded in leading Turkey’s struggle for democracy, freedom, justice and peace. Therefore, we are not without options. We have not and will not run out of options. However, even though they know this, they wanted to make us deal with such a legal and judicial trap. They will fail again. As long as they choose these paths, we will continue our struggle with new names and meanings without slowing down, and moreover, by multiplying.

Only the changes requested and objected to by the Court of Cassation were made in our statute. It was limited to this. Apart from this, no changes were made to our statute, and both the decisions of the meeting we held regarding this change and the DEM Party, that is, our new name, have reached the Supreme Court of Appeals Office. We do not expect a new objection. Let us hope and wish that there will not be. DEM Party in short, Peoples’ Equality and Democracy Party in its open name. The essence and leaven of our party are the peoples. This has been the case since the day it was founded. Clearly, this was not understood, as they continue to deal with letters. However, our leaven is the peoples, not letters. Again, the essence and leaven of our party is the struggle for freedom, equality, democracy, justice and peace. It is our determination to resist and our ideas that define us and make history. With this feeling, I am pleased to share with you the acronym of the Peoples’ Equality and Democracy Party.

We are here with a new acronym flowing through a deep-rooted tradition of resistance, moments of struggle and time: DEM Party. DEM also describes us with the meanings of breath, word, moment and time. Our new name expresses the spirit of a new time, the moment of a new beginning and the realisation of a new promise. DEM is the revolution. DEM is this time. We say DEM is this era and believe that this era

will change starting with the trustees. We will continue to make our presence felt at all times with DEM Party. Despite the difficulties of time, the obstacles we face, judicial traps and conspiracies, our struggle will become even stronger thanks to our stance, determination and unity.

Those whose eyes, hearts, ears and hearts are with us, those who do not give up walking the road together despite the heavy costs of being an elector, thank you very much for your interest and countenance you have shown to our party with your applications for the local elections so far. The days are numbered for us to send the trustees away. I would like to announce here that we have extended the candidate nomination applications all over Turkey until 20 December, taking into account this interest and kindness, and that we have communicated this to our provincial and district organisations with a circular. As Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party- DEM Party, we invite everyone who wants Turkey to win to join us in this exciting, determined, hopeful, honourable and courageous struggle. Come on women, come on young people, apply for candidacy and let's win together and show the trustees what the will of the people is. Let's go to our provincial and district organisations and make our nomination applications until 20 December."

Asked "Will you come together with other parties with discussions on co-operation and alliance? What will be your attitude in the western provinces, is there anything determined in your road map?", Ayşegül Doğan said: "Regarding our road map for the coming days and the issues you have mentioned, both our Co-Chairs and our relevant committees make the necessary statements at the necessary times. My recommendation is that you ignore statements other than those. Because they have no binding effect. Today's agenda is not about this. I have nothing new to say on the statements made so far. Because there is no new situation, no new decision. I shared our last MYK (Central Executive Board) decision here in a very open and transparent manner. Our Party Assembly will convene soon regarding the issues you mentioned. I suggest that you take into consideration the decision to be taken by our Party Assembly and what our Co-Chairs will say, as well as the statements of our Party Spokesperson, our Group Deputy Chairpersons, our Women's Assembly Spokesperson and the relevant committees. This is the situation."

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DBP District co-chair taken into custody in Nusaybin

ANF | MARDIN | 12 DECEMBER 2023

Democratic Regions Party (DBP) District co-chair Remziye Bayhan was taken into custody by special operations police after a raid on her house in the morning.

Remziye Bayhan was taken to Mardin Provincial Police Department.

Bayhan had previously been taken into custody following the incident in the area in which YJA-Star member Kader Acar lost her life on 25 July.

It was learned that the Turkish police informed Remziye Bayhan's family that the reason for her detention was related to the same incident.

Background

Remziye Bayhan, who is co-chair of the district branch of the Democratic Regions Party (DBP), and her predecessor Bedia Adıgüzel were taken into custody on 25 July, after a raid on an apartment on Sakarya Caddesi in central Nusaybin and taken to the police headquarters in the provincial capital Mardin (Mêrdîn). Terrorism was cited as the reason for the arrests. What they are specifically accused of, however, is not known. The Turkish authorities refused to give any information.

In the course of the attack on the apartment, which the Interior Ministry and the pro-government press called a “security operation”, a fighter from the Kurdish women’s guerrilla YJA Star, later named as Kader Acar, died. There is still no reliable information on the circumstances of her death. The Ministry of the Interior spoke of “neutralizing a terrorist”, while residents of the neighbourhood assume she killed herself in order to avoid possible capture. The PKK has not yet commented on what happened.

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Aba: They are stripping us of our right to speak

ANF | AMED | 13 DECEMBER 2023

On 10 December 1948, 75 years ago, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations (UN). The human rights situation throughout Turkey and especially in Northern Kurdistan is becoming increasingly dramatic. Murat Aba, representative of the office of the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey (TIHV) in Amed (Diyarbakır) spoke to ANF of a “fight for basic rights in Kurdistan. People are being tortured, the right to demonstrate is being denied. Even the right to vote and stand as a candidate is being denied. Society should be deprived of its ability to breathe.”

Every action can be prosecuted under the accusation of terror propaganda

In 2022, a peak in reports of torture and ill-treatment was reported to TIHV, Aba said, adding: “The conclusion is that the number of people being tortured in Turkey continues to rise. Unfortunately, we live in a time when many things cannot be said and people are forced to remain silent. It is a time when everything can be prosecuted under the accusation of propaganda for a terrorist organisation. In Turkey, people are being deprived of their right to express their opinions. While we have rights such as the right to protest and criticise in democratic states, this right is unfortunately being undermined in Turkey.”

We are in favour of a pluralistic society

Aba talked about the increasing repression against journalists in recent years and said that clearly “this has led to a decrease in reporting on the rights violations that have taken place in Turkey. Torture is taking place more and more in the public sphere. The number of torture cases has increased dramatically, whether in prison or on the street, whether in places of assembly, at home or at work. It is in this atmos-

phere that we are celebrating this year's Human Rights Week. Unfortunately, society in Turkey is increasingly being denied its rights. Of course we are fighting against this.

To counter this trend, this week we will try to proclaim to the public and society that we are a pluralistic, multi-coloured society and that we will continue to raise society's problems loudly."

Standing against rights violations

Speaking about the situation of human rights work and civil society organisation, Aba said: "Unfortunately, we can no longer speak of democratic mass organisations, because the government has labelled human rights organisations and associations that stand up for fundamental rights as enemies and is taking action against them. Our ability to express ourselves is being increasingly restricted because the human rights organisations are bringing the problems of the people in this country, especially in Kurdistan, to light. For us, universal law is important. We stand against those who violated human rights, whoever they are. We keep shouting this: Yes, you can silence the country with repression, you can take away our right to speak, our right to write, but we will always oppose this. We will continue to protest against the attempt to level society."

All different, all equals

Aba described the situation in Kurdistan as particularly dramatic, because "people are being tortured, their right to demonstrate is being denied. People have been under siege for years. People are effectively imprisoned outside or thrown into prison. To put it in a different way, we can clearly observe this in the right to vote. Do we have the right to vote, do we have the right to be elected? The municipal administrations in the Kurdish cities have been usurped by trustees. If you look at it from this perspective, is there an active or passive right to vote? The right of a person who is elected is also the right to hold office for a certain period of time. Yet this is not happening. The government is trying to deprive society of the air it breathes, also by using all kinds of torture methods. This is precisely our problem. We need to create spaces to breathe. While the social component of the state is being reduced further and further, the security component is being strengthened with all its might.

We saw this after the earthquake. The state was absent, but immediately afterwards the security policy was carried out with police and military. Unfortunately, Kurdistan is a place where rights violations are constantly carried out. The entire society is deprived of its voice. We say that everyone is different and everyone is equal. This is the slogan of this year's human rights week. This government, unfortunately, is against diversity and equality."

DBP Islahiye co-chair remanded in custody

ANF | ANTEP | 13 DECEMBER 2023

Democratic Regions Party (DBP) of Islahiye (in the province of Antep), Zeki Manas, was taken into custody in Adıyaman (Semsûr) following the statements of Mehmet Akcan, a prisoner who benefited from the “regret” law.

After his procedures at the gendarmerie station, Manas was remanded in custody by the Criminal Judgeship of Peace that accused him of being “a member of an illegal organisation”.

Manas was sent to Urfa No. 2 T Type Prison.

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Gendarmerie once again attacks Özak Tekstil workers, arrests

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ANF | URFA | 14 DECEMBER 2023

The action by workers at Özak Tekstil, located in Urfa (Riha) 1st Industrial Zone, continues for the 18th day. The Turkish gendarmerie on Wednesday blocked the way of the workers who gathered in the early hours of the morning.

Labor Party (EMEP) Istanbul MP Iskender Bayhan and Antep (Dîlok) MP Sevda Karaca supported the workers who continued to wait in front of the barricades set up at the entrance of the factory.

The gendarmerie, citing the governor’s instructions as justification, first sprayed pressurized water with a TOMA and then attacked the workers, who wanted to stage a sit-in, with batons, shields and gas flares. As a result of the attack, 18 workers and one BİRTEK-SEN union representative were detained.

Many people, including the members of parliament and press workers, were beaten.

Workers chanted the slogan “We will win by resisting”, and continue to wait in front of the entrance gate factory.

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RSF's 2023 Round-up: 45 journalists killed in the line of duty worldwide

ANF | 14 DECEMBER 2023

According to the annual round-up compiled by Reporters Without Borders (RSF), the number of journalists killed worldwide in connection with their work (45 as of 1 December 2023) is the lowest since 2002, despite the war in the Middle East. In Gaza, at least 13 journalists have been killed because of their work as journalists since the war began between Israel and Hamas, a total that rises to 56 if we include all journalists killed in the Gaza Strip, whether or not in the line of their work. Worldwide, 521 journalists are currently detained on arbitrary grounds linked to their profession (down 8.4% from 2022).

Reporting an overall decline in the number of journalists killed in the line of duty or in connection with their work, RSF stated that in 2023, a total of 45 journalists were killed in connection with their work, 16 fewer than in 2022 (61). This is the lowest figure recorded since 2002 (33). In 2012 and 2013, more than 140 journalists were killed, mainly due to the wars in Syria and Iraq.

“Among civilians in Gaza, journalists are paying a heavy price. We’ve noted that the number of journalists killed in connection with their work is very high: at least 13 in such a tiny territory. We have filed a complaint with the International Criminal Court (ICC) to establish the facts and to what point journalists were knowingly targeted. On a global scale, it seems that the number of journalists killed in the course of their work or in connection with their work is in sharp decline, over a long period of time. The reasons? Security measures at news organisations, training and allocation of protective equipment, caution, the effects of the fight against impunity and actions by inter-governmental organisations. The work of NGOs is undoubtedly also having an effect,” said RSF Secretary-General, Christophe Deloire.

According to RSF, the gradual decline in the number of journalists killed in connection with their work over the past five years can be explained in part by security improvements for journalists and the end of deadly spikes in Iraq and Syria, where nearly 600 journalists were killed in the line of duty from 2003 to 2022. In times of peace, stronger measures to protect journalistic work, especially through legislative means, and mechanisms to combat impunity would seem to account for the less deadly toll.

This year, 23 journalists have been killed in the course of their reporting in war zones. Most of them – 17 – were killed in the war between Israel and Hamas (including 13 in Gaza), during which 63 journalists lost their lives in total (including 56 in Gaza) if we include journalists killed in circumstances unproven to be related to their duties. For the first time in five years, more journalists have been killed in war zones than in peace zones.

A total of 521 journalists will begin 2024 in prison—versus 569 in 2022. China is yet again the world’s biggest jailer of journalists, with 121 media professionals locked up in its prisons (including 12 in Hong Kong and 42 in Xinjiang). This is nearly a quarter (23%) of the total number of journalists detained worldwide.

“The fall in the number of journalists detained worldwide (50 fewer on 1 December 2023 than on the same date in 2022) can be partly explained by the drop in the number of journalists in prison on that date in Iran (down 24) and Turkey (down 23). Not being among the top three jailers doesn’t mean that these two countries don’t jail: One of the techniques of persecuting journalists in Iran and Turkey is actually to imprison them repeatedly. In 2023, a total of 43 Turkish journalists and 58 Iranian journalists spent time in prison,” RSF stated.

On the other hand, a total of 54 journalists are being held hostage around the world. Of the seven abducted this year, two are still being held by their captors. They are the Malian journalists Saleck Ag Jidou and Moustapha Koné, who were [taken hostage](#) in northern Mali on 7 November, just seven months after the French journalist Olivier Dubois was finally released by his captors in the same region of Mali. The other media hostages are located in just four countries: Syria (38), Iraq (9), Yemen (4) and Mexico (1).



Directors of ‘Bakur’ documentary sentenced to prison

ANF | BATMAN | 14 DECEMBER 2023

The 7th hearing of the retrial of journalist Ertuğrul Mavioğlu and director Çayan Demirel on charges of “making propaganda for an illegal organisation” in connection with the Bakur (The North) documentary they shot and directed was held today at Batman 2nd Heavy Penal Court.

Çayan Demirel and his lawyer Meral Hanbayat Yeşil attended the hearing via Audio and Video Information System (SEGBİS) from Istanbul, while Batman Bar Association President lawyer Erkan Şenses was present in the courtroom.

In the previous hearing, the prosecution had demanded a sentence for “making propaganda for an illegal organisation”.

Defence lawyer Meral Hanbayat Yeşil stated that the documentary in question served peace, not war, and drew attention to the peace process. She noted that this trial has been going on for years based on a police report.

Batman Bar Association President Erkan Şenses said, “It is out of the question to talk about any propaganda here. We need to look at the judgements of the ECtHR. Why would making this documentary in a time of peace process be an incitement to war? This is a documentary filmed within the scope of freedom of artistic expression. We demand the fulfilment of domestic law and the acquittal of our clients.”

Following the defences, the court announced its verdict after a short recess. The court sentenced Mavioğlu and Demirel to 1 year and 13 months each for “making propaganda for an illegal organisation”.

About the documentary

The film “A Guerrilla Documentary: Baku”, directed by journalist Ertugrul Mavioglu and Cayan Demirel and produced by Ayse Cetinbas, was shot during the 2013-2015 peace talks between Turkish government and Kurdistan Workers’ Party’s (PKK) to end the 40 year long Kurdish-Turkish conflict. Nearly three years after the film’s Turkish premiere, the directors were brought to trial. Both of them stand charged with disseminating propaganda in favor of a terrorist organization under Article 7/2-1 of Law no. 3713 on Counter-Terrorism for their documentary film.

Bakur documents the everyday life and political life of the guerrillas and also shows the withdrawal of the PKK from the mountains after 2013.

The 92-minute documentary starts with the historic call of the Kurdish Leader Abdullah Öcalan that was read out at Newroz on 21 March 2013 in Amed and films the HPG guerrillas’ withdrawal from Turkey, and features interviews with the guerrillas.

For decades Turkey has silenced reports on the armed conflict with the Kurds. *Bakur* investigates issues of national identity, the history of the PKK, human rights, and the role of women in the conflict. The narrative is set against a backdrop of scenes from different PKK training camps in the mountainous border region between Turkey, Syria, and Iraq, where the directors met confident young PKK members.

The documentary was to be screened at the 34th Istanbul Film Festival outside the competition in 2015. However, the screening was canceled by the festival management four hours before the scheduled screening.

The film is both honest and personal, linking individual lives with ideas of home and the right to resistance. The film expands this personal angle through political and historical evaluations by military and political PKK leaders. *Bakur* takes a clear political stance reclaiming self-determination as a universal human right.



Three members of Dem Party Youth Council taken into custody in Istanbul

ANF | ISTANBUL | 14 DECEMBER 2023

Three people were taken into custody as police carried out raids against members of the Youth Council of the Peoples’ Equality and Democracy Party (DEM, formerly HEDEP) in Istanbul on Thursday.

According to reports from within the youth organisation, the unnamed members were taken to the Vatan police headquarters in Istanbul’s Fatih district, which is notorious as a torture centre, following their de-

tention. A confidentiality order was imposed on the case file, as well as a 24-hour ban on lawyers for the detainees. The reason given for the order is that “personal contact between the suspects in custody and lawyers, as well as the authorisation to examine the contents of the file or make copies of documents, may jeopardise the purpose of the investigation”.

Measures such as bans on lawyers and confidentiality orders are common methods used by the police and judiciary to torpedo the defence, especially in proceedings with an alleged connection to terrorism. Experience shows that suspicions of terrorism against parties of the democratic Kurdish opposition and their youth structures are often fabricated and serve as a pretext for their criminalisation.



Kurds in Marseille call on everyone to attend march for Paris victims

ANF | MARSEILLE | 15 DECEMBER 2023

A demonstration will take place in Marseille to pay tribute to the Kurdish activists killed in the terrorist attack on the Kurdish Cultural Centre in Paris, Rue d'Enghien, on 23 December 2022.

The demonstration will be on 23 december at 1 pm in Stalingrad Square and it is organized by CSK 13 (Collective Solidarité Kurdistan 13), TJK-F, Centre Democratique Kurde Marseille and many other organizations.

On 23 December 2022, shortly before noon, William Malet killed a prominent member of the Kurdish women's movement, Emine Kara (Evîn Goyî), Kurdish artist Mir Perwer and Abdurrahman Kızıl. The man attacked the Kurdish activists near the Ahmet Kaya Cultural Centre in Paris.

Evîn Goyî was born in the village of Hilal in the Qileban district of the Botan Region of Bakur Kurdistan. She joined the ranks of the PKK in 1988, and fought against the misogynist terrorist group ISIS. She defeated the Islamic State leading the Rojava Revolution and was wounded in this war.



Fabien Roussel calls for mobilisation for Kurdish activists murdered in Paris

ANF | 15 DECEMBER 2023

Fabien Roussel, the national secretary of the French Communist Party (PCF), released an appeal calling for the widest possible mobilisation on 23 December and 6 January to put an end to impunity and demand justice for the Kurdish activists who were victims of the terrorist acts committed in the heart of Paris in 2013 and 2022.

In a video message on X, Roussel recalled both massacres, the first one of which claimed the lives of PKK founding member Sakine Cansız, KNK representative Fidan Doğan and Kurdish Youth Movement member Leyla Şaylemez on 9 January 2013. The second massacre on 23 December 2022 claimed the lives of KCK Executive Council Member Emine Kara (Evîn Goyî), Mîr Perwer (Mehmet Şirin Aydın) from the Cultural Movement and Kurdish patriot Abdurrahman Kızıl.

“Our pain is alive, we do not forget them and we salute their memory. Since 2013, 6 Kurdish activists have been massacred, victims of a terrorist act in the centre of Paris. We want justice to be done. The case regarding the massacre in 2013 has been blocked by state secrecy. We strongly demand that this be lifted. Regarding the attack in 2022, so far there has been no definition of a ‘terrorist attack’, although the CDK-F was deliberately targeted. We want the anti-terrorism prosecutor’s office to take action,” said the French politician.

The PCF leader continued: “The struggle for rights and justice demands the exposure of all aspects of these attacks, those who ordered them and their international extensions. Our country cannot remain silent and must end impunity. Therefore, I call for action on 23 December and 6 January to voice these demands loudly.”

A central march is planned on the first anniversary of the 23 December 2022 massacre. The march will take place from Gare du Nord to Ahmet Kaya Kurdish Cultural Centre at 11.00 am on 23 December.

Fabien Roussel stated that these actions will also give voice to the demands of the prisoners “in Erdoğan’s dungeons” and concluded his call as follows:

“We call for the lifting of the isolation of Abdullah Öcalan and his fellow prisoners and for their freedom. Their freedom will be an important step for the political solution of the Kurdish question. We condemn the policy of the European Union, we condemn the hypocrisy, and we demand strong action from the Council of Europe for democratic rights and the implementation of human rights. The Erdoğan dictatorship is carrying out a policy of persecution and arrest against the Turkish people, the Kurdish people and the peoples of Turkey. In the person of HEDEP, we reaffirm our solidarity with the progressive democratic Kurdish and Turkish forces waging a courageous struggle against the Erdoğan regime. The Kurdish movement must stop being criminalised. Freedom and justice for the Kurdish people.”

MKM's 32nd anniversary concert in Istanbul banned

ANF | ISTANBUL | 15 DECEMBER 2023

The Mesopotamia Cultural Centre's (MKM) 32nd anniversary concert, which was set to take place on 16 December at Yahya Kemal Beyatlı Performing Arts Centre in Küçükçekmece, Istanbul with the slogan "Free future, free art", has been banned.

A statement made by MKM on Friday said: "Our 32nd year concert has been banned again by the Küçükçekmece District Governorate without any justification. We will announce the venue and time of our concert at a press conference. The details will be shared with our people and the public at a press conference at 11.00 tomorrow."

MKM's 30th anniversary event had also been banned back in 2021. Istanbul 6th Administrative Court cancelled the decision banning MKM's 30th anniversary event on the grounds that it "violated freedom of expression, freedom of science and art, and the right to peaceful assembly". The court ruling, however, did not relieve the victimisation experienced by the group.

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Interview

'Success and victory will belong to the resistant people'

HIVDA HEBUN | QAMISHLO | 13 DECEMBER 2023

Rojava is under constant attack by the Turkish state and mercenaries affiliated to Turkey. Turkish drones are killing civilians, representatives of the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES) and the defence forces. At the same time, the Turkish state is trying to destroy civilian infrastructure and thus create hardship and discord. The Cizîrê region in the north-east of Rojava is also affected by these attacks.

The co-chair of the Cizîrê Region's Executive Council, Telat Yunus, spoke to ANF about the attacks and the defence mechanisms.

Since last year, Turkish attacks have mainly been directed against the infrastructure, especially against basic services for the population. Despite all these attacks, many of these autonomous administration institutions continue to operate. How do you evaluate the current situation?

The Turkish state's attacks on North and East Syria have continued since the beginning of the revolution. The Turkish state considers itself entitled to carry out any forms of attacks with the intention to break the

will of our people. It has made it its sole aim to annihilate the revolution for democracy and freedom that has emerged in North and East Syria and to eliminate the project of democratic autonomous administration. Sometimes it tries to occupy the region by force and sometimes it simply attacks to disrupt stability and security in the region. In this way, the Turkish state wants to ensure that the people in the region live in a climate of crisis and chaos. With this in mind, the most recent attacks have mainly targeted basic services for the population, service facilities and the region's infrastructure. The autonomous administration has created facilities to make people's lives more comfortable and meet their needs. It is precisely these facilities that the Turkish state has targeted. In this way, it tried to undermine the autonomous administration's ability to provide for the people. The aim was to render the people here, who have been resisting massacres, invasions and genocidal attacks for years, powerless and force them to flee. The attacks were intensified in order to prevent the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) from succeeding in their operations against ISIS cells, to weaken the fight against terror and thus enable ISIS to become more active in the region.

The autonomous administration was created by a revolution of the people. It has always developed its structure and defence system together with the people. All the institutions of the autonomous administration and our society, which has been resisting for years, have organised themselves on this basis. All of them have organised their daily lives according to the war, the embargo and the attacks. There are constant attacks, and there is a permanent embargo and isolation policy to restrict and neutralise the autonomous administration's ability to act. The autonomous administration has organised itself under these conditions to meet all the needs of the people and continues to carry out its work in this spirit.

What impact have the attacks had on people's lives and the region's infrastructure?

The recent attacks have of course had a very serious impact. In particular, the attacks on infrastructure in areas such as health, water, energy and fuel have led to difficulties in meeting people's basic needs. There were problems with the supply of water, electricity and diesel. The autonomous administration, its affiliated institutions and the people acted together. Thanks to this unity, there was not a single step back from the attacks. Everyone made their contribution without wasting time. The people, the social self-defence forces and the autonomous administration institutions made great efforts to restore the destroyed and damaged facilities. In a short space of time and with the limited resources available to the people, at least the shortage of water, bread, diesel and electricity was alleviated to a certain extent. In this way, a major crisis was prevented. The most effective response to these attacks by the enemy was the uninterrupted round-the-clock work of the people, the administration and our institutions.

These attacks caused delays in meeting the population's winter needs. In particular, there were difficulties in providing basic supplies of diesel and electricity. The region has been at war for years, is under constant attack and the region's infrastructure has suffered major damage as a result of these attacks. These attacks have further aggravated the situation. The autonomous administration has adapted to all types of war and attacks and continues to work to meet all the needs of the people in a timely manner. Regardless of the form of the attacks, it is making every effort to prevent further damage to the people and fulfil their needs.

You have stated that the damage has been partially compensated for and that people's needs have been met. Are further problems to be expected in the long term?

Diesel, electricity, petrol, water and energy supply facilities were particularly targeted by the attacks. There is also an embargo on the region, which has been encircled. Of course, it will take time before the infrastructure can be repaired and used as before. It also takes time to procure the defective parts again. There will therefore be problems in the future. In particular, there will be problems with the supply of diesel and electricity. There is a great need for diesel in this region, both in winter and at the start of the agricultural season. We are already making every effort to ensure that the population does not fall into a major crisis. The autonomous administration has mobilised all its resources for this exceptional situation.

You have said that one of the aims of the Turkish state is to force people to flee and leave the region. However, with the increase in attacks, people's resistance is getting stronger and stronger. What do you attribute this to?

Despite all these attacks, the people always stood behind their own institutions and defence forces. People did not leave their places. Everyone fulfilled their duties. Our people resolutely stuck to their decision to resist. This attitude and perseverance of the people not only ensured that the attacks did not achieve the desired results, but also brought great support to the defence forces and the institutions of the autonomous administration. Of course, it is the most natural right of our people to demand that their basic needs be met first and foremost. The autonomous administration belongs to the people. It always endeavours to ensure the needs and security of the people and society. Of course, it will do this together with the people. Without the people, autonomous administration cannot be successful both in meeting needs and in the event of war. If the people and the autonomous administration stand together and act together, success and victory will belong to the resistant people.

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Karasu: We pay tribute to the resistance of prisoners

ANF | BEHDINAN | 15 DECEMBER 2023

Mustafa Karasu, member of the KCK Executive Council, spoke about the resistance in the prisons of Turkey against the isolation policy of Imrali as well as the absence of news about Abdullah Öcalan.

First of all, we would like to take a look at the leader of the Kurdish people, Abdullah Öcalan. What can you tell us about his situation? And in connection with his situation, what developments are there in Turkey?

Lately there was an earthquake in the Marmara region. The epicentre of this earthquake was in Gemlik and the Imrali island. In this situation, of course Rêber Apo's [Abdullah Öcalan] lawyers wanted to meet him. But again they were not allowed to see him. There have been no meetings with Rêber Apo for almost three years. This shows the approach of the Turkish state towards Imrali and Rêber Apo. There is nothing alike in the world. They are giving disciplinary penalties of 3 months and 6 months on the basis of fabri-

cated scenarios and then still dare to state things like: “We are a state of law. If there are no meetings in a state of law, it is because there is a punishment”. It is an approach that deceives and mocks everybody.

If there would have been an earthquake elsewhere, they would immediately show all the prisoners, convicts and let them meet with their families. But when it is about İmralı, even the law does not work. There is a one-man law. There is psychological warfare on the Kurdish people, psychological warfare on İmralı, more precisely, the genocidal war being waged on the Kurds is being waged from there. It is obvious how a state waging a genocidal war against a people approaches the leader of this people. The Turkish state approaches Rêber Apo the same way it approaches the Kurdish people. It does not accept the existence of the Kurdish people, so it does not accept the existence of a leader either. In this respect, we need to know where the policies of the Turkish state stem from. If we know how the Kurdish genocide works, if we know what practices the Turkish state has carried out for the Kurdish genocide for a hundred years, we will know what the practices in İmralı mean. In this respect, of course we see the genocidal Turkish state's practices against Rêber Apo.

Of course, there is resistance against this. It is necessary to struggle against this. Otherwise, so without resistance, without developing the struggle, the freedom of Rêber Apo cannot be achieved and the isolation cannot be broken. Today there is a worldwide struggle for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo. The Turkish state is actually being forced, exposed and isolated. Everyone knows about the isolation, the way, the methods and pressure that is forced on Rêber Apo. There is no one left who does not know. The allies of the Turkish state know it, its friends know it. They are conducting this policy of oppression and isolation in İmralı in an environment known to the world. The other day Hakan Fidan said that the policy they are conducting is within Putin's knowledge, within the knowledge of the Council of Europe, within the knowledge of the European Union. He is openly saying that it is the European Union, the European states that legitimize what they are doing. In other words, he is saying that they approve of this. This clearly shows that they are accomplices. It shows that the Council of Europe is an accomplice.

It is necessary to criticize the policies of the Turkish state and fight against it. It is necessary to take a stance against the Council of Europe, against the CPT and against the European states. Because there are agreements signed with Turkey. The CPT can go and visit prisons. They have been given such a right. The reason why Turkey signs such agreements is actually to cover up and legitimize its genocide policy against the Kurds. To deceive people and say that there is democracy, there is freedom, that there are human rights being followed. There are also institutions that follow this deceiving. They are trying to legitimize this by saying “we are doing everything within the framework of democracy, we are doing everything within the framework of human rights”.

The struggle against the isolation in İmralı and the struggle to free Rêber Apo is a very important political struggle. Because it has become a political institution. It cannot be said that it has adopted an attitude according to human rights and law. The European Union approaches Turkey in the same way, the Council of Europe approaches Turkey, European states approach Turkey in the same way.

In this respect, while fighting against the isolation, while demanding the freedom of Rêber Apo, it is also necessary to take a stance against these institutions, to struggle against them, to wage a legal struggle, to expose them, to ensure that they act in accordance with their own laws and regulations. On the one hand they call it CPT, they call it the Human Rights Institution, but on the other hand they do not act according to the policies of the European Union. This needs to be exposed and isolated.

The Marmara earthquake was expected. There had been rumors about it since years. It is also said that there will be an earthquake in Istanbul. Scientists expect that such an earthquake will happen. But it is not clear how many precautions have been taken. After the first earthquake happened in the Marmara region, the 'earthquake tax' was created, but that earthquake tax was not for precautions against earthquakes. In other words, it was not used to strengthen the buildings. Then the earthquake of Maraş, Malatya, Adıyaman, Hatay happened and 13 million people were affected by it. Nearly 200 thousand people died. The official numbers say 50 thousand, but it can be clearly said that it were close to 200 thousand people that died. The Turkish state hides the figures anyway, it hides everything in the war, but especially it always hides these figures so that society does not see the truth, so that it is not exposed to the policies. Now, if there is an earthquake in Istanbul, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of people could die. None of this earthquake money has gone to earthquake retrofitting. Only maybe 10 percent of it was used. Ninety percent of it has been used for rent-seeking elsewhere, to make their own cronies rich. This is the situation. The people of Istanbul, the people of Marmara need to focus on this. In the future, tens of thousands will be sad, they will sigh. They need to hold the current government to account. They need to find out where these earthquake taxes have gone, how many buildings have been reinforced. In other words, such a social consciousness and social stance must emerge. The earthquake in Maraş, Malatya, Adıyaman, Antep was really big, but it seems forgotten right now. Not even a year has passed. How can such an earthquake be forgotten? Hundreds of thousands of people died, 13 million people were affected, but this government was not held to account. It is almost as if the people will be indebted to this government because the earthquake happened and this government is building houses. There is such a reality. It is very serious.

What is politics, if it isn't for the people, if it isn't for the society? Hundreds of thousands of people have died. In this respect, the opposition's approach is really inadequate. The approach of democrats and intellectuals is insufficient. This earthquake is not an earthquake to be forgotten. It is not an earthquake to say that it was a disaster, it struck and we should do what we can. It is an earthquake that was predicted in advance. They say it will happen in Maraş, right? But no measures are taken. Even in Maraş, Malatya, Adıyaman, zoning amnesty is granted to all buildings that are not earthquake resistant. They sell people their graves. Now there is really no voice against this. This is a serious situation. This really needs to be on the agenda. This government needs to be grabbed by the collar, they need to be held accountable. So many people have died because of their policies. Ten cities have been destroyed. This is really unconscionable. Everything in Turkey is rotten, consciences are rotten too. Thousands of people waited for their deaths under the collapsed buildings. Thinking about their death, that they may die in a day, maybe in 5 hours, they stayed under the debris of the city. They waited for help, but no one helped them. Thousands of people experienced this feeling under the earthquake. They died by experiencing that feeling. What literature can describe this, what novel can describe this? Which human emotion can really bear it? It is really unconscionable. In this respect, the fact that this is not brought up by the opposition shows how inadequately the opposition approaches the problems and how they follow the agenda of the government. Instead of holding the government to account for these crimes committed by the government, it follows the government's agenda and such an event is forgotten.

Tomorrow it will happen in Istanbul, tens of thousands will die, it will be approached in the same way. If the society approaches it this way, if the opposition approaches it this way, why should the government be worried? Why shouldn't it take the earthquake money and give it to its own cronies? It says, "I will give it to them, and if there is an earthquake tomorrow, I will pay for it. It is a situation that really disturbs and creates uneasiness. It is really irresponsible to accept this, not to think about it, not to pursue it, not to hold it to account, not to write literature about it, not to write novels about it, not to write poetry about

it, not to keep it alive in the memory, not to raise anger against it, anger against the government that caused this earthquake.

From this point of view, I am once again telling all democrats, democratic forces, socialist that they should bring this earthquake to the agenda. The murders are obvious. It was done on purpose. There is guilt. There is the spending of earthquake money. Even those were not held to account. Billions of aid was received, but AKP gave it here and there to solve its own economic crisis.

It is said that there will be an earthquake with its center in Imrali and Istanbul. A new approach to this earthquake issue needs to be developed. The Turkish government needs to develop a new policy. It needs to develop a new attitude. The people need to establish organizations and supervise it. They need to supervise the municipalities. The government needs to be supervised. How ready is 'The Disaster and Emergency Management Authority' [AFAD?] What can it do in case of an earthquake? The people need to follow up and hold them accountable. If this happens, then when an earthquake occurs, there will be the least pain, the least loss of life.

Since you have been talking about the isolation on Imrali, what is the situation of the political prisoners in Turkey? There is also struggle being waged and not long ago a hunger strike for the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan was started. How do you evaluate this?

I would like to respectfully greet the comrades in prison. Indeed, in the prisons a high price has been paid for the struggle of this people and this since 50 years. Along with the guerrilla, it was our comrades in the prison who paid the highest price. In this respect, the actions of the comrades in prison must be valued.

Right now there are almost 200 prisons in the state of Turkey. All prisons are full of Kurdish prisoners. They are isolated from each other and are under intense pressure. Even their families cannot go to them. In order to prevent Kurdish families from seeing their children, they have built prisons in the farthest places in Turkey and they drive them all over the country. But the comrades in the prisons have continued their resistance until today in accordance with their own traditions, in the spirit of July 14th, in accordance with the history of the prison resistance. Whenever there is an important agenda regarding Rêber Apo, about his freedom, about isolation, when there is pressure on Rêber Apo, the prisons have always felt really responsible, they have always done what was necessary. In this respect, the prisons fulfill their responsibilities. They show this attitude by melting their bodies in the prisons when they have no weapons, when they have no means. As a result of this, there are hundreds of seriously ill people in prisons. One of the reasons for these illnesses is that they are under so much pressure, they have gone on so many death fasts and hunger strikes. They are under psychological warfare under such heavy isolation, they are kept in an unhealthy environment, they are not taken to the doctor when necessary. All of these have of course created an important health problem in the prison.

The resistance of the comrades in the prison should really be saluted with respect. Their families support them and we need to support them even more. It is not enough if this responsibility is just left on the shoulders of the families. The whole Kurdish people should embrace the resistance in the prison. Our international friends, Kurdish friends and democrats started the global campaign for the physical freedom for Rêber Apo and status for Kurdistan. It is their campaign and it is being supported by our comrades in the prisons. They have taken action to ensure the success of the campaign. They felt responsibility again. They started such an action despite very difficult conditions. Of course, our people, everyone should un-

derstand this resistance, if they put forward such resistance under such difficult conditions, if they put their lives on the line, if they are melting day by day, our youth, our women, our people everywhere should develop more struggle. The stance of the comrades in prison is a stance according to the line of the party. It is a stance of loyalty to Rêber Apo. What Rêber Apo means for Kurdistan, what the Kurdish people's struggle for freedom means is best demonstrated in prisons. For years, by going on death fasts, hunger strikes, fighting against the isolation of Rêber Apo and for his freedom, paying very heavy prices in this regard, both our female comrades and our male comrades have shown everyone what Rêber Apo means to the Kurdish people.

While looking at the prisons, it is also necessary to evaluate the prisons' view of and approach to Rêber Apo. All our people need to understand the reality of Rêber Apo by looking at their children in prison. All the people in the prison are conscious people, educated people, people with a sense of responsibility. If they embrace Rêber Apo so much, then all our people should look at their own children and embrace Rêber Apo the same way. No people can deserve freedom without embracing their leadership. No people can deserve democracy without embracing the leadership. Only by claiming their leaders can they win freedom. A people who embrace their leader will gain freedom, but if they do not embrace their leader, they cannot gain freedom.

Why is there so much pressure on Rêber Apo? In few weeks 25 years will be over. It is not just a few years. In the past, seven folk songs were sung for those who had been in prison for seven years. Now the Leader has been in prison for 25 years. For what? For this people. Rêber Apo has never lived a day or a second for himself, he has given his whole life to this people. He continues to do so in prison. We all need to stand up for this leadership. Claiming this leadership cannot be left just to the prisons. What are the possibilities of prisons? What can they do? They can only put their lives on the line. In this respect, mainly our people, youth, women, international friends and democratic forces outside, we need to strengthen and participate in the campaign for the freedom of Rêber Apo. I take this opportunity to greet the comrades in prison once again. Despite all the oppression, they represent the honor and pride of this people. They represent all our martyrs, they are worthy of our martyrs. They are worthy of the Kemals, Hayris and Mazlums. In this respect, I greet them here once again with respect and love.

In the frame work of the global campaign for the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan and a status to Kurdistan, many actions are evolving. Most recently there was an action day to draw attention on the writings of Abdullah Öcalan. What can you tell us about this?

December 10th was Rêber Apo's Book Day, which was quite important. I would like to send my greetings to those who started such a campaign, it is a very important work that is being done. Indeed, starting, carrying out and developing days of reading Rêber Apo means spreading the thought that will ensure the freedom of humanity. It means ensuring that the ideas that will ensure the freedom of humanity and lead people to a democratic and free life are embraced all over the world. It means raising the consciousness of humanity. It means bringing closer the freedom of all humanity, of all oppressed people in the world.

It is clear that today, to free humanity, to free the peoples, laborers, women, youth, the oppressed from capitalist life, and to create a democratic socialist life, a democratic modernity, a modernist life, it is necessary to look upon the ideas of Rêber Apo. His ideas are now really important. We have made a lot of evaluations on this issue before, but I want to stress out this once again. The thoughts of Rêber Apo need to be

discussed. All intellectuals, democrats and socialists need to discuss them. It expresses a very important political philosophy. There is a thought, a paradigm that collects all 5000 years of values and knowledge created by the human, criticizes mistakes and puts forward correct ones. This needs to be seen. There is a deficiency in this respect. Let it be discussed. If there is a contribution to be made, let it be made. Shortcomings can be discussed, but most essentially let it be discussed and evaluated. Rêber Apo evaluates 5,000 years of history that will lead all humanity to freedom. There is no other philosopher, no other ideologist who evaluates 5,000 years of history in such a holistic way. Yes, there are many social scientists; we respect them and their evaluations. They have also put forward important analyses to raise people's consciousness. But there is Rêber Apo following an holistic approach, dealing with the entire history of humanity, dealing with social science in its entirety, dealing with politics in its entirety, and putting forward a comprehensive paradigm within this framework.

Rêber Apo is a socialist leader, a leader of humanity. Of course, his writings should be read, discussed and spread around the world. This is very valuable. Such a kind of treasure. It should be open to everyone, shown to everyone. It is really a deficiency for all of us that such a great idea has not been spread sufficiently until now. We are not saying it has not been spread. There are great efforts in the world being made. The books of Rêber Apo have been published, they have made friends. Conferences have been held and discussed in many places, but it is still insufficient. If the ideas of Rêber Apo are discussed in a very comprehensive way in the world, I can easily say that the life of this male-dominated intellectual, power, statist system will come to an end. The life of its last representative, capitalist modernity, will be shortened. We see what capitalist modernity has brought to humanity. It brings nothing but crisis, problems, war, fighting and poverty. It brings nothing but the death of society. Society is dying, humanity is dying. Reading the books of Rêber Apo is actually a solution, a remedy, a medicine. The more one reads and learns about Rêber Apo, the more one will find a cure for the diseases that humanity and societies are suffering from. It really is a solution. Rêber Apo has created a paradigm that synthesizes the knowledge and thoughts of all the philosophers and intellectuals who have struggled for humanity from the past to the present, taking from them, that is, based on them. Rêber Apo was nourished by Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, the era of Europe that was undergoing reform and Renaissance, and of course the theories put forward by Marx, Engels and socialists starting from the 19th century. He emerged as a Marxist, put forward this idea by appropriating them. But Rêber Apo saw the shortcomings and inadequacies of real socialism. He saw the lack of solutions on various issues, he saw the lack of solutions on women's freedom, he saw the lack of solutions on ecology and nature, he saw the state as deficient in its evaluation and he came up with an alternative paradigm.

We can no longer live in a state-dominated, power-oriented, male-dominated world. The way out of this male-dominated, power-oriented, statist world is to spread the ideas of Rêber Apo. We see this as very important. He needs to be constantly read. This is actually a great service to humanity. Rêber Apo once said it like this: "I present these evaluations, these analyses in the consistency of strained honey. It is really that clear." It shows people the way to salvation in the consistency of strained honey. Everyone should really read and learn this, and just as filtered honey is very useful, the thoughts of Rêber Apo are really valuable and useful for all humanity in the consistency of filtered honey. In this respect, I think that these reading days will give a great impetus to learning about Rêber Apo, and I would like to once again salute those who carry out this work for their efforts.

Opinion

‘Turkish occupation and the Syrian embargo are a crime’

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The Damascus government has been imposing an embargo on Sheikh Maqsoud and Ashrafiyah (Şêxmeq-sud and Eşrefiyê) neighbourhoods of Aleppo and the canton of Shehba for a long time, causing the people of the region to experience hard times. With the arrival of winter, there are serious problems in terms of basic needs such as health, education, heating and diesel. Citizens living in difficult conditions in the region want the embargo to be lifted as soon as possible.

Democratic Union Party (PYD) Afrin Executive Board Member Velantîna Ebdo spoke to ANHA regarding the embargo imposed by the Damascus government on Shehba and the neighbourhoods of Sheikh Maqsoud and Ashrafiyah in Aleppo.

Stating that the crisis in Syria is getting deeper and deeper, Velantîna Ebdo said that the governments are still unable to solve even the problems that emerged 100 years ago, and that they consider the crisis as a chance to continue their existence. She continued: “The war between national and international states in our regions has increased. The region has become the scene of the 3rd World War. We chose the 3rd Way. We rely on our people and our self-power. Our aim is to build a democratic and free country. That is why we are being targeted by states that oppose democracy and freedoms.”

Pointing out that it is a crime for the Turkish state to occupy Syria’s territory and target the leaders of the 19 July Revolution, Velantîna Ebdo said, “The infrastructure of the region is also targeted with the attacks. In addition, the Damascus government’s embargo on the neighbourhoods of Sheikh Maqsoud and Ashrafiyah is also a crime. These attacks are against the democratic nation project. The Damascus government is committing a crime by imposing an embargo on Shehba and the neighbourhoods of Sheikh Maqsoud and Ashrafiyah, preventing the passage of flour, medicine, fuel, food and basic living supplies. Doing this in winter aggravates the situation even more.”

“In Shehba, on the other hand, education was compulsorily suspended due to the power outage. The power cut and the lack of the necessary needs for heating jeopardise the lives of the people in the region,” she added.

Pointing to the concurrent attacks by the Turkish state, Velantîna Ebdo said: “The simultaneous attacks of the Turkish state and the embargo of the Damascus government confirm that there is an agreement between them. The return of Afrin residents is also not allowed. The demographic structure of the region is being changed, people are being displaced. They want to depopulate the region.”

Ebdo added: “For the liberation of the occupied regions and the return of those displaced, the people are putting up great resistance in line with the ideas of Leader Abdullah Öcalan. If the siege, embargo and starvation policies continue, serious problems will arise in the region.”



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