

THE IMRALI POST

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Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

Activists on vigil in front of the UN in Geneva: Peace cannot be achieved without Öcalan

ANF | GENEVA | 17 JANUARY 2024

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.

During today's vigil, which began with a minute of silence paying tribute to martyrs of the Kurdistan Freedom Struggle, activists protested the invasion attacks of the occupying Turkish state against North and East Syria and launched the "100 Thousand Cards to İmralı" campaign, which was started within the scope of the "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, solution to the Kurdish question" campaign.

Mustafa Albunbaş from the Geneva Action Committee condemned the latest Turkish attacks against civilian settlements and infrastructure in North and East Syria and the Iranian attacks on Hewlêr (Erbil). Albunbaş emphasised that the isolation imposed on Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan in the Imrali Island Prison in Turkey underlies these attacks and that peace cannot be achieved without Öcalan. "The only condition that will pave the way for the peoples of the Middle East and ensure lasting peace is the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan," he said.

Speaking after, Tuba Yılmaz, Co-Chair of the Geneva Democratic Kurdish Community Centre (CDK-Ge), stated that the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrillas dealt the heaviest blow to fascist-genocidal policies with the revolutionary operations they carried out in the Medya Defence Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq). "These revolutionary actions, which take place in severe winter conditions and crush the fascist gangs, do not only overwhelm the occupying-genocidal Turkish state and the forces behind it, but also give a great morale and excitement to our patriotic people and friends, and consolidate the hope and belief in victory," Yılmaz said.

Tuba Yılmaz noted that the hunger strike action launched by political prisoners in Turkey and North Kurdistan demanding the physical freedom of Abdullah Öcalan entered its 52nd day. She continued: "Both the revolutionary actions of the truth fighters and the resistance in prisons have added great strength to the global campaign for the physical freedom of Leader Öcalan and a solution to the Kurdish question. Everyone, friend and foe, has once again seen the fact that the colonialist-genocidal system is collapsing and the invincible power of the Apoist sacrificial guerrilla. We congratulate the historical achievements of all HPG and YJA Star commanders and fighters who contributed to the revolutionary operations, the resistance of the comrades in prisons, commemorate the martyrs with respect and gratitude, wish the continuation of such successful actions that create the free future step by step, and salute them with the spirit of Apoist comradeship."

After Co-Chair Tuba Yılmaz's speech, cards prepared to be sent to İmralı as part of the "100 Thousand Cards" campaign were signed.

Libyan human rights defenders who were in Geneva to follow the meetings at the UN visited the Kurdish activists and participated in the 100 Thousand Cards Campaign.

Journalist and human rights researcher Ali Alaspili, Director of Libyan Crimes Watch, and human rights defender Maksaut Attı, who works in Tunisia, spoke to ANF.

Ali Alaspli stated that he closely follows the struggle of Kurdistan and the Kurdish people and highlighted the importance of defending the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan. Alaspli stated that he would share the 100 Thousand Card Campaign with his circle.

Maksaut Attı also participated in the campaign, stating that the Kurdish people and Kurdistan must be free.



Activists from Marseille take over Freedom for Öcalan Vigil in Strasbourg

ANF | STRASBOURG | 18 JANUARY 2024

The Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan Vigil was launched on 25 June 2012 in Strasbourg, with the aim of ensuring the physical freedom of the Kurdish People's Leader and ending the isolation imposed on him. The action continues in its 603rd week.

This week, three activists from Marseille took over the vigil.

The activists are Nihat Ildan, Diyadin Gülen and Taner Karakaya.

Speaking on behalf of the group, Nihat Ildan said that the European Council and the European Parliament should fulfil their responsibilities towards Abdullah Öcalan, and added that there has been no news from the Kurdish leader for three years. Ildan added that the CPT should go to Imralı Island again and hold talks with the Kurdish people's leader and the other prisoners held there.

"We salute the hunger strikes launched by prisoners and the vigil carried out by the Peace Mothers to break the isolation of Abdullah Öcalan and ensure his freedom," said Ildan, asking the Kurdish people not to leave the prisoners and Peace Mothers alone.

Ildan called on Kurds living in Europe to intervene in the international campaign launched on 10 October by participating in all actions demanding freedom for Abdullah Öcalan.



Prisons in Turkey

Prisoners expose new violations of rights in Rize jail

ANF | RIZE | 13 JANUARY 2024

There are new reports of rights violations against political prisoners from Rize L-Type Prison. Umut Savaş Koçyiğit, Taner Ergün, Vefa Yılmaz and Hüseyin Karabulut told their families in their weekly telephone conversations about the attacks on the prisoners' right to life and health. They said that after the start of the hunger strike (on 27 November) for the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question, the prison administration imposed disciplinary sanctions, and prisoners who fell ill due to the fast were not taken to the infirmary, let alone referred to hospitals.

“Creating a basis for Öcalan’s freedom”

Despite the reprisals, the prisoners remain determined. In a telephone conversation with his family, prisoner Taner Ergün said that protests will continue until Kurdish representative Abdullah Öcalan is released. Ergün said: “We are currently experiencing the most intense form of isolation, which has spread from İmralı Island to prisons across the country. Although many of our friends in prison are seriously ill, their release is prevented. Our hunger strike is also for these friends. We have many friends whose release is prevented by arbitrary practices. We will continue our hunger strike until the isolation of Mr. Öcalan and the arbitrary treatment of political prisoners end.”

“A visit to the infirmary every two weeks”

Ergün recalled that many political prisoners will not be released even after their term has ended due to the new prison law, which makes repentance a possible condition for release. At the same time, the health situation in prisons is becoming increasingly difficult as an epidemic spreads. Ergün explained: “There is a spreading epidemic and almost all prisoners are currently sick. They are taken to the infirmary every two weeks but are not given any medication. When prisoners are taken to the infirmary, they are examined while standing for two minutes. Medication doesn't come into prison anyway, prisoners only receive medication for two months, if at all. Older, sick prisoners therefore have great difficulties. When we seek treatment, we are told that there is no medication. There are many problems in the prisons.”

Gülser Özbay released after spending 31 years and 6 months in prison

ANF | AGRI | 15 JANUARY 2024

Gülser Özbay (68) was released from Izmir Şakran Women's Closed Prison on 11 January after spending 31 years and 6 months in prison. She was welcomed with flowers by her relatives and friends in her hometown Doğubayazıt (Bazîd) on Sunday.

Özbay and her family and friends went to the Mem û Zin Wedding Hall, where the primary elections to select the candidates of the People's Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) for the local elections were held.

Gülser Özbay said: "Dozens of prisoners are still inside, showing great determination. There should be sensitivity towards ill prisoners."

— ★ —

Another ill prisoner dies in jail

ANF | ERZURUM | 18 JANUARY 2024

It was learned that ill prisoner Abdullah Varışlı, who was detained in Erzurum Oltu Prison and had been receiving cancer treatment for years, suffered internal bleeding and was taken to Van Yüzüncü Yıl University Faculty of Medicine.

Varışlı was treated at the hospital but could not be saved. He died on Tuesday.

Varışlı's body was taken by his family on Wednesday and buried in his hometown, the village of Emerînê in Şirnak's Cizîra Botan district.

Prisoners Eksi taken to hospital the day of his release

Ill prisoner Mesut Eksi, who remained in Afyonkarahisar T Type Closed Prison, completed his sentence and was released on Tuesday after 17 years of imprisonment.

The day he was released, he was rushed to Mersin City Hospital for an emergency surgery for a problem in his lungs.

— ★ —

Journalist Dicle Müftüoğlu not released from prison

ANF | AMED | 18 JANUARY 2024

Dicle Müftüoğlu, who works as an editor for the Mezopotamya news agency (MA) and is co-chair of the Dicle Fırat Journalists' Association (DFG), has been in custody in Sincan Women's Prison in Ankara since May on suspicion of founding and leading a terrorist organisation and alleged membership of it. Her lawyers, including Resul Timur, Veysel Ok and Emine Özarslan, argue that the accusations against the journalist are related to her work for the free Kurdish press - also because she was detained in the course of a wave of arrests only shortly before the parliamentary and presidential elections.

Imprisoned for about 9 months, the Kurdish journalist appeared before the judge for the second time today. Müftüoğlu was not brought to the hearing at Diyarbakır 5th Heavy Penal Court. She was connected to the hearing via Audio and Video Information System (SEGBİS) from Sincan Women's Closed Prison, where she is currently imprisoned. Her lawyers Resul Timur and Media and Law Studies Association (MLSA) Co-Director Veysel Ok were present at the hearing.

DFG Co-Chair Serdar Altan, Mesopotamia Women Journalists Association (MKG) executives, TGS (Journalists Union of Turkey) General Secretary Banu Tuna, TGS Adana Branch executive Sertaç Kayar, DİSK Basın-İş President Turgut Dedeoğlu, Southeastern Journalists Association executive, DEM Party MP Sinan Çiftiyürek, journalist Abdurrahman Gök and many others followed the hearing.

The hearing started with a delay of 2 hours and 50 minutes. At the same time, a number of riot police were deployed in the courtroom.

Müftüoğlu said that she would speak after listening to the witness, but when the witness was not available, she started her defence. Müftüoğlu stated that she has been under arrest for 9 months and said, "My journalistic activity is on trial in this case".

Remarking that freedom of the press is being prevented by her trial, Müftüoğlu said, "We are on trial for writing the truth. There is great pressure especially on Kurdish journalists. I am one of them."

The journalist pointed out that: "Witness statements are baseless. I went to Iraq in 2017 to follow and report on the referendum there. A journalist is obliged to go wherever the news is. There is no need for a witness statement. A search on the internet will show that I worked at the Mezopotamya Agency and made news. DFG is a legal association. We established DFG so that journalists can report news under freer conditions. This is also in the statute."

"The indictment includes records of meetings with my colleagues and news sources. There is nothing as natural as meeting with my journalist colleagues. Every move I made is shown as an offence in the indictment. I have been under arrest for nine months and my journalistic activity is on trial. I demand my release."

After Müftüoğlu's defense, witness Kerem Gökalp, who is also involved in the case of 11 journalists on trial in Ankara, was heard. Gökalp attended the hearing via SEGBİS. He repeated his statements in the indictment and accused Müftüoğlu.

Following the statements, the prosecutor gave a final opinion and demanded Müftüoğlu's continued detention.

Müftüoğlu said "I am a journalist, I am not engaged in organisational activities. For 15 years I have worked to convey the truth. I have fought for journalists to work in a free environment. The trial of a journalist for her news is a threat against journalists. Journalism is not a crime. I demand my release."

Announcing its interim decision, the court decided to continue the detention of Dicle Müftüoğlu. The next hearing is scheduled for 29 February.

Müftüoğlu has long been the focus of Turkish judiciary

Dicle Müftüoğlu has been the focus of Turkish prosecution authorities for some time. At the end of 2020, she was sentenced to one year and three months in prison for a photo she shared online in 2014 of the fight against ISIS in Kobanê in northern Syria. At the time, she was editor-in-chief of the DIHA news agency, which was banned by emergency decree in autumn 2016 following the alleged coup attempt in Turkey. The court accused her of "propaganda for a terrorist organisation". A few weeks later, a new investigation was initiated against her, also for alleged terrorist propaganda online. The journalist was arrested again in June 2022.

57 journalists behind bars in Turkey

According to DFG report on the violation of journalists' rights in Turkey in 2023, 57 journalists remain in prison in Turkey. During 2023, 36 journalists were attacked, 43 journalists' homes were searched, 119 journalists were detained, 36 journalists were arrested. Over the course of the year, 64 journalists were mistreated, 38 journalists were threatened and forced to act as agents, 110 journalists were prevented from following incidents for their reporting, 37 journalists were victims of assaults in custody.

In connection with violations of journalists' freedom of opinion and freedom of expression, the report presented the following data: "75 journalists were investigated. While 66 journalists were prosecuted, 44 journalists were convicted. In total, journalists were sentenced to 48 years, 9 months and 14 days in prison and fined 147,486 TL. While the trial of 280 journalists continued, they appeared before the judge 821 times. The number of imprisoned journalists as of 4 January 2024 is 57. 58 journalists were dismissed, the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) imposed 84 penalties on 68 broadcasts, and 112 news items were banned from broadcasting. 83 websites were closed, 7,106 news items were blocked and 3,761 pieces of content on social media were banned."

Mothers at Justice Vigils call for struggle to be spread

ANF | AMED | 19 JANUARY 2024

Numerous actions are taking place as part of the political campaign “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question”. On 27 November, prisoners from the PKK and PAJK went on hunger strike. At the same time, the Justice Vigils are carried out by relatives, especially the mothers of prisoners. The vigil in Amed (Diyarbakır) organized by the prisoner solidarity association TUAY-DER are taking place in the DEM party building in the Bağlar district. ANF spoke to the women taking part in the vigil.

“We want peace and justice”

Afife Kartal, the mother of Antalya political prisoner Muhammet Kartal, said: “I was visiting my son last week. The morale of the prisoners was good, but there is repression, oppression and injustice against them by the prison authorities. My son lost six kilograms in the ten days he was on hunger strike. Unfortunately, the prison administration does not follow the procedures it should apply to hunger strikers. The prisoners on hunger strike are not receiving either water nor salt. The prisoners have to drink water from the tap. We want justice. We, the mothers, say: justice, justice, justice. We want Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] to be able to receive visits from his lawyers and his family. We want the isolation of our representative to end. If the isolation of Rêber Apo ends, the isolation of our children will also end. We just want justice and peace. As long as the hunger strike started by our sons and daughters continues, we will continue the vigil. Let’s spread this campaign together.”

“We do not accept this injustice”

Zekiye Yılmaz called for wider support of the action. She said: “We want this torture to end in Turkey. They say there is justice in this country, but we don't see justice. Whatever the rights of people in prison are, we want our children to have those rights too. They are using enemy law against us. Our children are tortured and harassed in prisons. We are mothers, and it breaks our hearts when we see our children like this. They are illegally detaining our sons and daughters. As mothers, we will never accept this injustice. We are here to support our children's resistance. We will not end the justice watch until our children's demands are met.”

“Isolation is a crime against humanity”

Fatma Adak added: “We condemn the current solitary confinement of Rêber Apo. We do not accept that political prisoners are kept in solitary confinement. First of all, we want the isolation of our representative and our children in prison to be lifted. We are here to support our sons and daughters in prison. From here, I call on all our people to support our action. What the state is doing to us is an injustice. We do not accept this oppression. The Kurdish people should stand up for their will. I believe that our action will end successfully.”

“The struggle goes on”

Fatma Çağır underlined that Öcalan’s total isolation, which has been ongoing for three years, must end immediately and continued: “We are here to end the isolation in prisons. Our children in prison went on hunger strike for Rêber Apo. We are here to support them. Our children continue to struggle in prison, and we continue to struggle outside. The struggle will continue.”



IHD publishes report about rights violations in prisons in Central Anatolia region

ANF | ANKARA | 19 JANUARY 2024

Speaking at a press conference held in Ankara, Human Rights Association (IHD) Central Executive Board member Nuray Çevirmen, IHD Ankara Branch co-chair Ömer Faruk Yazıcı, and IHD Prisons Commission member Ümit Can Akbulut shared the report about the rights violations experienced in the months of October, November and December in the prisons of the Central Anatolia region.

According to the report, a total of 189 people applied to IHD, including 166 people from 31 closed prisons in the Central Anatolia region and 24 people from 13 prisons outside the region. At least 1,046 rights violations were detected within three months.

The report also said that at least 6 prisoners in different prisons in the Central Anatolia Region died within three months and 2 of them under suspicious circumstances.

As a reaction to the violations of rights, at least 4 prisoners in the prisons in the region started an indefinite and non-alternating hunger strike and some of them are still continuing the action.

The report added that political prisoners started periodic and rotating hunger strikes to protest the severe isolation conditions of Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan.

The report also said that the Hunger Strike Monitoring Coordination was established together with health, legal, human rights and professional organizations in the prisons of the Central Anatolia region.

The report also underlined the violations against ill prisoners, saying that at least 286 violations of the right to health were recorded in the last three months.

The report pointed out that even the greeting of prisoners to each other was considered a reason for disciplinary punishment, and added that a total of 52 rights violations were registered.

In the final section of the report, 17-article suggestions were made, calling for compliance with national and international conventions and implementation of the Constitutional Court and the European Court of Human Rights decisions against human rights violations in prisons.

The IHD called on the authorities to immediately intervene to end the violations of rights in prisons and hold those responsible accountable.



Hunger striker Taşdeviren: Everyone should join the campaign for Öcalan

ANF | 19 JANUARY 2024

Uğur Taşdeviren was arrested in the Kerboran (Dargeçit) district of Mardin (Mêrdîn) on 30 December 2015, during state terrorism under the curfew and was sentenced to life imprisonment six times.

Prisoner Taşdeviren participated in the hunger strike action carried out within the scope of the “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, solution to the Kurdish question” campaign.

Taşdeviren, who is in Manavgat S Type Prison, said in his weekly phone call with his family: “We will not stop until our actions achieve their purpose. It is important for everyone to take their place in this process,” he said.

Taşdeviren underlined that the isolation of Abdullah Öcalan is not independent of the international conspiracy that took place on 15 February 1999, and added: “The absolute isolation that has been intensified and imposed on Leader Öcalan for 25 years is not moral, humane or legal. Turkey draws strength from international powers while implementing these policies. The severe isolation imposed on Leader Öcalan is linked to the policies of denial and destruction carried out against the Kurds. We political prisoners see the campaign as an important action to expose these policies.”

Taşdeviren said: “We see Leader Öcalan’s physical freedom as the freedom of the Kurdish people, the Turkish people and the people of the Middle East as a whole. For this reason, everyone should do their best to ensure that the campaign achieves its purpose. We salute Leader Öcalan’s resistance.”



Military aggression and occupation

AANES calls for action against renewed Turkish attacks on northern Syria

ANF | 13 JANUARY 2024

The Turkish air force bombed the autonomous region of northern and eastern Syria last night, targeting oil fields near Tirbespiyê and rural areas in the east of Dêrik.

According to reports from the region, strikes by fighter jets and drones were directed against Tilxatûnê and Ûdê oil fields in Tirbespiyê, the agricultural area on the road to Zêhêri village of Dêrik, the power lines that supply electricity to the Lafarge factory near the village of Cidêde, west of Ain Issa. As a result of the bombardment, electricity was cut in dozens of villages of Ain Issa.

According to the Turkish Ministry of Defence, 29 targets in northern Syria and Iraq were destroyed in an air operation launched at 00:30, including caves, shelters and oil fields belonging to the “PKK/YPG/KCK and other terrorists”. Last night, the Turkish army once again recorded heavy losses during its invasion of the guerrilla area in southern Kurdistan and confirmed the death of nine soldiers. The invading army then carried out violent attacks, as with the last wave of airstrikes on the infrastructure and civilian population in northern Syria over Christmas.

The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES) issued a written statement regarding the attacks carried out by the occupying Turkish state last night.

The statement pointed out that the Turkish state continues its criminal policies against the region by targeting service centres and infrastructure in North and East Syria.

“The Turkish government bombed Tirbespiyê, Rimêlan, Derik and Chilaxa regions late at night,” the statement said, adding, “The aim of these attacks is to undermine the security of the region, to pose a real threat to counter-terrorism efforts and to prevent the resolution of the current conditions in the region.”

The statement pointed out that: “The attack is a continuation of the efforts of genocide, displacement of the inhabitants and evacuation of the region. This is a dirty game and warnings must be made against it and its dangers. We declare that these attacks on our territory must be stopped. The consequences of the attacks constitute a threat to the entire region and a gratuitous service to the return of terrorism, as well as an attempt to fuelling ethnic conflicts that Turkey has so far failed to resolve. Turkey clearly wants to take advantage of the events in the region to realise its plans against our people. It also wants to deceive the Turkish people and distract them from its failures.”

“We call on all active forces in Syria to recognise the danger posed by these illegal attacks and their negative consequences for efforts to stabilise the region. These attacks also threaten the work of social organisation and democratic solutions in our regions and the efforts to eradicate terrorism and extremism. In order to prevent these attacks, legal and humanitarian organisations must play their part and fulfil their responsibilities,” AANES said.

The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria emphasised that it stands by the people in the face of attacks and hostile policies against the region and said, “We call for the defence of our institutions, defence and self-defence, and the protection of the project of a democratic nation based on the fraternity of peoples and equal coexistence. The Project, the will and the determination of our people are the path to success and the defeat of all genocidal endeavours.”



SDF seizes weapons and ammunition near Shaddadi

ANF | 13 JANUARY 2024

In a recent operation conducted by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) on January 12 in the village of Olus near Shaddadi town, a substantial quantity of weapons and ammunition was successfully seized.

According to the SDF Media Centre, “these weapons were confirmed to be intended for use in targeting our people and joint bases in Shaddadi town in an attempt to undermine the security and stability of the region through indiscriminate shelling, the majority of which lands in heavily populated areas.”

“Our forces affirm that they will respond forcefully to those attempting to undermine stability and safety in our regions,” said the SDF statement.



Turkey shells residential areas and a base of the International Coalition in Rojava

ANF | 14 JANUARY 2024

The occupying Turkish state has resumed direct bombardment of civilian areas in northern and eastern Syria, following its large-scale genocidal offensive against the region in December.

Civilian infrastructures and service institutions were targeted in the attacks, which are considered war crimes.

International Coalition base bombed in Kobanê

The invading army bombed the coalition base in Çelebiyê district of Kobanê. No information was immediately available on the outcome of the bombardment.

Drone attack on power station in Kobanê

A Turkish Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle (UCAV) bombed a power station in Kobanê twice. Kobanê Canton Energy Office announced that the main power station that supplies electricity to the city and 300 villages went out of service as a result of the attacks.

The Lafarge company, which was closed down after the ISIS attacks on Kobanê in 2014 and then used by the forces in the fight against ISIS, was bombed three times in a row.

Power station targeted in Ain Issa

In Ain Isa, a power station and an Asayish (Internal Security Forces) post in the south of the town were targeted. No detailed information could be obtained about the damage caused in the attack on the station that supplies electricity to the district.

Grain silos bombed in Dirbêsiyê

Grain silos in Dirbêsiyê district of Hesekê and a house in Girbetli village were targeted by the attacks of the Turkish state. There is no clear information about the consequences of the bombing yet.

Attack on Damascus forces

The occupying Turkish army bombed a point belonging to the Damascus government forces in the village of Shewarxa in the Shera district of the Afrin Canton 3 times in a row.

Reaction from Girê Spî Council

Girê Spî Council made a statement after the bombing of the electricity station in the Ain Isa district of Euphrates Canton and the Internal Security Forces (Asayish) post close to the Russian base in the south of the city.

The statement was read by Sabrî Temo, Co-Chair of the Democratic Union Party (PYD) Office in Girê Spî, accompanied by the members of the council and committee employees.

“Our determination to fight against the attacks of the Turkish state is increasing and our commitment to our land is getting stronger,” the statement said.

HPG announces the outcome of the revolutionary operation in Zap

ANF | BEHDINAN | 14 JANUARY 2024

The Press Centre of the HPG (People's Defense Forces) announced the outcome of Şehîd Helmet Dêraluk Revolutionary Operation in the Zap region of the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

The HPG statement on Sunday said, "Our forces carried out the Şehîd Helmet Dêraluk Revolutionary Operation against the invaders in Zap on 12 January. The revolutionary operation, in which at least 61 invaders were killed, 4 invaders were wounded, dozens of weapons and military equipment were confiscated and all the rest were destroyed by fire, was successfully completed. Martyr Helmet Dêraluk Revolutionary Operation dealt a heavy blow to the invading Turkish army and shook the fascist AKP-MHP regime. The fascist AKP-MHP regime and the special war media concealed their own losses in order to overcome the shock of the blow and to prevent the truth of the war from being reflected to the public. At the same time, it claimed that it inflicted many casualties to our forces by carrying out random aerial and ground bombardments. However, the statements of the fascist AKP-MHP regime, its authorities and the Turkish army are completely false. Our comrades Serxwebûn and Rizgar, who fought heroically during the revolutionary operation and in the following days, fell as martyrs, and we did not suffer any losses other than these comrades. The detailed identity information of both comrades will be announced to our patriotic people and the public later."

HPG provided the following information regarding the actions by the guerrillas and the attacks by the invading Turkish army:

"Şehîd Delîl West Zap region;

On 12 January at 17:10, the Şehîd Helmet Dêraluk Revolutionary Operation was carried out against the invaders in Girê Amediyê Resistance Area. By our professional revolutionary operation forces, first of all, all mines, military techniques and wires laid by the invaders were deactivated. In the revolutionary operation, which started with attack and infiltration tactics completely on the initiative of our forces, all occupiers in Girê Amediyê Resistance Area were targeted simultaneously. Our revolutionary operational arms went over the bodies of 20 invaders, clarified and recorded and documented their deaths. Other places belonging to the invaders were also effectively hit with heavy, medium automatic and individual weapons. Our professional revolutionary operational force confiscated 4 crates of grenades, grenade launchers and cannon balls belonging to the invaders and used them against the invaders and shot the enemy with their own weapons.

It was clarified that 61 occupiers were punished and 4 were wounded in this revolutionary operation. Many invaders in tents were also punished, but their numbers could not be clarified. In this revolutionary operation, our forces set fire to and destroyed 6 living spaces, 3 containers, 11 positions, 2 logistic places, 1 ammunition place, 1 communication system, 1 generator, 1 radar system, 1 normal surveillance camera, 1 thermal surveillance camera, 2 A4 guns, 2 large chain grenade launcher guns and 8 mobile phones be-

longing to the invaders. In the revolutionary operation, our comrades Serxwebûn and Rizgar were martyred whilst fighting with Apoist sacrificial spirit and high courage. Apart from our two comrades, there were no casualties on our side. In this revolutionary operation, our forces seized the following from the invaders; 7 MPT-55 individual weapons, 250 MPT-55 weapon bullets, 4 drum grenade launchers, 1 single grenade launcher, 2 BKC medium automatic weapons, 200 BKC medium automatic weapons bullets, 5 thermal binoculars, 7 night binoculars, 2 weapon lasers, 5 weapon scopes, 1 weapon spotter, 2 communication devices and 1 spare battery, 2 searchlights, 2 knives, 3 smoke bombs, 5 thermal binocular batteries, 3 armoured assault vests, 2 military coats and 2 headphones.

On 13 January at 13:10, the invaders in Girê Amediyê Resistance Area were targeted with individual and medium automatic weapons. In this action, 1 invader was punished and 1 position was destroyed.

ACTION BY YJA STAR GUERRILLAS

Zap region

On 13 January at 12:00, the invaders in Şehîd Îbrahîm Resistance Area were targeted with heavy weapons and 1 position was hit. This action was carried out by our YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) forces.

Attacks carried out by the occupying Turkish army;

On 12 and 13 January, the Turkish army carried out 23 airstrikes by fighter jets, including 4 on the areas of Şiyê and Girê Zengil in Garê; 5 on the areas of Ava Lolanê, Xinêreya Jor, Sinînê in Xakurkê; 7 on the areas of Girê Bahar Resistance Area in Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region; 2 on the areas of Bêşîlî, Serê Metîna area in Metîna region; 5 on the areas of Balayan, Boblîska in Qendîl. These bombardments did not result in casualties in our ranks.

Zap, Şehîd Delîl Western Zap, Metîna and Xakurkê regions were bombarded with artillery.”

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Numerous institutions out of service after Turkish attacks on Rojava

ANF | QAMISHLO | 14 JANUARY 2024

The Executive Council of Cizîr Canton Democratic Autonomous Administration made a press statement in front of Mihemed Şêxo Culture and Art Centre in Qamishlo about the latest wave of Turkish attacks on the region which followed the serious blow suffered by the Turkish army in its war against guerrilla forces in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Turkish attacks on northern Syria have been going on since Friday night, targeting not only residential areas but also service institutions.

The press statement was read by Talet Yûnis, Co-Chair of the Executive Council, and Gulistan Îsmâîl, Co-Chair of the Board of Education and Training.

The statement said that the Turkish army bombed infrastructure, services and strategic places in Dêrik, Tirbespiyê, Rimêlan and Çilaxa districts of Cizir Canton between 12-14 December. As a result of the on-going attacks, service organisations providing water, electricity and agriculture to the region were left out of service, it noted.

The Executive Council pointed out that these attacks, which violate international law, hinder efforts to fight terrorism, vowing that solidarity and resistance will be strengthened in the face of the attacks, the gains of the revolution will be protected, and the plans for displacement and demographic change in the region will be foiled.

The Cizîr Canton Democratic Autonomous Administration called on the active forces in Syria, the international community, legal and humanitarian organisations to stop the attacks of the occupying Turkish state and to hold it to account for its crimes against humanity.

The Executive Council also called on the people of the region to unite around their institutions and protect the gains of the revolution.



Turkish attacks on North-East Syria continue unabated

ANF | 14 JANUARY 2024

The Turkish state's genocidal campaign against the autonomous region of northern and eastern Syria under the guise of "fighting terror" continued unabated on Sunday afternoon. Turkish warplanes and drones continue to circle in the skies over the region, attacking infrastructure and civilians.

In Kobanê, firefighters were targeted by Turkish fighter jets as they carried out firefighting operations on the site of a former cement factory. The factory in the village of Çelebiyê (al-Jalabiyya), southeast of the canton, had already been hit from the air at least three times earlier in the day. Footage published by the Hawar news agency (ANHA) shows that the impact occurred in a warehouse just a few metres from a fire engine on which a fire brigade employee was standing.

Further attacks in Kobanê were directed against grain silos and a small forest on the southern outskirts of the city. Previously, a cattle farm, a base of the Asayish (Internal Security Forces) and a power plant that supplied around 300 villages in the region with power had already been bombed in the canton. The plant went out of service and thousands of households were cut off from power supply.

In Qamishlo, air strikes were carried out against the power supply facility in Hîzama Bakur and a major fire broke out. Attacks on vital energy infrastructure were also reported in Amûdê. A substation was affected by the attacks, which also targeted the villages of Merkeba and Kotih. In addition, the mill located

on the edge of the road connecting Amûdê and Heseekê was hit by fighter jets. Two workers were injured and taken to hospital.

The granaries in Dirbêsiyê district of Heseekê Canton and the house of a citizen in Girbetli village were directly targeted by Turkish attacks. Brothers Can and Rojan and their mother were wounded during the attack, while the house became unusable. The wounded civilians were taken to the district hospital for treatment.

For the third day in a row, Turkey is attacking the autonomous region of northern and eastern Syria from the air, in addition to heavy bombardments in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). The government in Ankara justifies the attacks with “retaliation” for the deaths of Turkish soldiers during “cross-border operations” in northern Iraq.

Meanwhile, activists are warning that Turkey could attribute attacks carried out by its air force on its own territory to the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) or the People’s Defence Units (YPG) in order to create a basis for a new war of aggression against northern and eastern Syria. In the Kurdish border town of Suruç, which is located in the province of Urfa and directly opposite Kobanê, bombs were dropped on a rural area.

Local media claimed that it was a suspected drone attack from Rojava. It would not be the first time that Ankara has had its own territory bombed and attributed the incident to the YPG/SDF in order to fabricate a basis for war crimes.

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SDF: Turkey’s attacks on Northern and Eastern Syria are an act of barbaric and terrorist aggression

ANF | 15 JANUARY 2024

The General Command of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) has strongly condemned the Turkish state’s current wave of air strikes on the autonomous region of Northern and Eastern Syria.

Sources from the region said that the attacks continued on Monday morning.

The SDF statement once again rejected Turkey’s claim that nine of its members were killed by the Turkish army in an alleged infiltration attempt in the occupied zone in northern Syria. The Turkish Ministry of Defense recently claimed this and used it to justify “retaliatory strikes” against the autonomous regions.

The statement said: “As part of its repeated lies and propagated disinformation, the Ministry of Defense in the occupying Turkish state has falsely claimed the martyrdom of a number of our fighters during the recent and ongoing Turkish aggression against our north and eastern Syria regions. We categorically confirm that these allegations are untrue, and they are disinformation used by the occupation to conceal its crimes in targeting infrastructure, civic services, population, and the sustenance sources of the people in the re-

gion. The evidence documented these crimes is clearer than all the repeated Turkish claims and directly holds the occupying state convicted.”

The SDF continued: “Over the past two days, the Turkish occupation has targeted, using warplanes and armed drones, key energy and electricity facilities, as well as grain storage warehouses and silos and fire-fighting crews. These attacks have extended to the homes of civilians, their farms, and the sources of their daily sustenance, impacting major roads and city outskirts, and causing extensive destruction. Consequently, these attacks have disrupted the delivery of essential services, including power, electricity, water, and other necessities, affecting hundreds of thousands of people.”

The statement added: “These direct attacks and barbaric terrorist aggression clearly and explicitly prove the hostility of the Turkish occupation state to all forms of life in the region. They constitute blatant and deliberate war crimes aimed at causing maximum harm to the lives of civilians, instilling fear, and inflicting suffering on their daily existence.

In the face of the Turkish occupation’s brutal aggression, we reiterate our right to a legitimate response and our unwavering commitment to safeguarding our people and territories more than before. Our fighters, now more steadfast and resilient against the assaults of hostile forces, will not allow the Turkish occupation’s aggression to go unanswered. This is our renewed covenant to our brave and great people.”

Dead and injured

The Turkish state has been carrying out a wave of air strikes against northern and eastern Syria since Friday evening. This is the third “air offensive” since last October. On Sunday, at least six civilians were injured as a result of the bombing, including two children and a journalist. At least two Syrian Arab Army soldiers were also killed.



Turkish attacks on civilian settlements in Rojava continue

ANF | 15 JANUARY 2024

After suffering heavy blows in its war against the guerrilla in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq), the Turkish state directed its attacks against civilian infrastructure and service institutions in Rojava.

Houses bombed in Qamishlo

This morning, a house was bombed in Sina neighbourhood in the east of Qamishlo city in Cizir Canton. No more detailed information about the attack has been received yet.

A few minutes later, another house close to the city centre market was bombed.

Power station attacked

A third attack took place against the Qamishlo power station. The attack caused major damage to the station.

Petrol station attacked in Tirbespiyê

Another airstrike was carried out against Udê petrol station in Tirbespiyê district of Cizir Canton.

Warehouse and power station bombed in Rimelan

In Rimêlan in Qamishlo canton, a warehouse and power station with oil well materials were targeted by the attacks. Material damage occurred as a result of the bombardment.

Seven villages attacked in Zirgan

The Turkish state and its gangs launched a bombardment on the villages of Til El Werd and El Rebîat in the south of Zirgan district of Heseke canton and the villages of Mihermele, Dada Ebdal, Bobî, Til Hirmil and Esediyê in the west and northwest with heavy weapons at 11.00 local time. Vineyards and gardens belonging to civilians were damaged in the attacks.

Wedding hall bombed in Dirbêsiyê

A wedding hall was bombed in Dirbêsiyê district of Heseke canton. Detailed information about the attack could not be obtained.

Turkey also bombed a power station in Dirbêsiyê. In the last two days, war crimes have been committed by directly targeting power stations in Amûdê, Dêrik, Qamishlo, Tirbespiyê, Kobanê and Ain Issa.

Grain silos bombed in Til Temir

At around 09.00 local time, the occupying Turkish state shelled the grain silos in Um Kêf village of Til Temir with heavy weapons.

Balance sheet for the past 48 hours

The occupying Turkish state escalated its attacks against North-East Syria on 12 January, following the large-scale attacks it had carried out in December.

The attacks targeted power, oil and gas facilities, as well as factories, security posts, mills, agricultural centres, wheat silos and workplaces.

According to ANHA, 56 areas were attacked by warplanes and UCAVs in the last 48 hours. In these attacks, 6 citizens, including 2 children aged 3 and 4 and a journalist, were wounded and 5 Syrian soldiers were killed.

The Euphrates Canton Energy Office announced that as a result of the attacks on power stations in Kobanê and Ain Issa, electricity was cut off in both cities and 660 villages.

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Houses and Internal Security Forces headquarters bombed in Qamishlo

ANF | QAMISHLO | 15 JANUARY 2024

The Turkish state has been bombing civilian settlements, infrastructure and service institutions in Rojava since the morning hours.

The invading army bombed a building in Alaya neighbourhood in the east of Qamishlo city in Cizîr Canton.

In the morning, a house in the Sinai neighbourhood and a house close to the Sonî Junction and the city centre market were bombed.

A headquarters belonging to the Internal Security Forces in the east of Qamishlo was also bombed.

Another shelling was directed against a checkpoint close to the village of Shirk in Kocherat district of Dêrik city in Cizir Canton.

The village of Girbelat in Dêrik was also targeted by the invaders. Detailed information about the attacks was not immediately available.

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Turkish attacks on Rojava leave 2 million people without electricity

ANF | 15 JANUARY 2024

The occupying Turkish state targeted power, water, oil and gas facilities in the region in its latest wave of attacks against North-East Syria that started on 12 January. The Turkish attacks on civilian infrastructure, as well as the houses of the local people, led to heavy victimisation in winter conditions.

According to information provided by the Energy Council of the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, the Siwêdiya Station in Derik, which meets the electricity and gas needs of the Cizîr Canton, was completely left out of service. Similarly, 7 power stations in Cizîr and Euphrates cantons also went out of service.

Ziyad Rustem, Co-Chair of the Autonomous Administration Energy Office, informed ANHA that the power stations in Tirbespiyê, Qamişlo, Amûdê, Dirbêsiyê, Ain Issa, Kobanê and Til Temir were left out of service as a result of the latest attacks.

According to Rustem, power supply has been interrupted in all of Dêrik, 70 percent of Qamişlo, Çilaxa, Til Koçer, Tirbespiyê, Til Hemîs, Amûde, Dirbêsiyê and Til Temir districts in the Cizîr Canton, Ain Issa district in the Euphrates Canton and hundreds of villages.

Ziyad Rustem stated that approximately 2 million people in the mentioned cities and districts and more than 800 villages were left without electricity.

The occupying Turkish state had also bombed the power, water, oil and gas stations in the region in October and December 2023, depriving millions of people of vital services.

According to local sources, 56 areas were attacked by Turkish warplanes and UCAVs in the last 48 hours. In these attacks, 6 citizens, including 2 children aged 3 and 4 and a journalist, were wounded, and 5 Syrian soldiers were killed.



HPG: 12 Turkish soldiers were killed in Metîna

ANF | BEHDINAN | 15 JANUARY 2024

In a written statement on Monday, the Press Center of the People's Defense Forces (HPG-BIM) provided information about an action by the guerrillas and attacks by the Turkish army in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

HPG-BIM reported that at least 12 soldiers were killed, and many positions were destroyed in Girê Hakkari Resistance Area on January 13.

In the statement, the details of the guerrilla action and the attacks by the invaders were given as follows:

“Metîna region;

At 09:00 on January 13, the invaders in the Girê Hakkari Resistance Area were targeted by the guerrillas. In the coordinated action that started with infiltration tactics, the first action arm effectively hit the invaders with grenades, individual and medium automatic weapons. In the first strike, 1 invader was killed. The second action arm targeted a 14-member group of invaders and hit them effectively from close range. 3 positions were destroyed and 4 invaders in them were killed.

The third strike group targeted 4 invaders with assassination tactics and killed them. Another position of the invaders was destroyed with medium automatic weapons and 3 invaders were killed.

The invaders who tried to flee in fear after the effective strikes of our forces were also struck and 8 of them were wounded. In this coordinated action, a total of 12 invaders were killed, and 8 others were wounded.

In addition, 1 large camellia, 2 tents and 4 positions were destroyed. Our comrade Jêhat, who participated in this action with an Apoist spirit of sacrifice and high courage and fought heroically, fell as a martyr. The detailed identity information of our comrade Jêhat will be shared with our patriotic people and the public later.

Attacks carried out by the occupying Turkish army;

- On January 14, the invading army carried out 5 strikes by warplanes, including 3 on the Ava Lolanê area in Xakurkê region and 2 on the Bereşê area in Qendîl region.
- The regions of Zap, Şehîd Delîl Western Zap, Metîna and Xakurkê were shelled with artillery.”

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SDF denies Turkish claims: Our forces suffered no losses on the third day of the Turkish aggression

ANF | 15 JANUARY 2024

The Media Center of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) released a statement refuting the Turkish state’s claims that several of their fighters have been killed on the third day of its brutal attacks against North-East Syria.

The SDF statement on Monday said: “The Turkish occupying state has claimed the martyrdom of several of our fighters on the third day of its terrorist aggression against our North and Eastern Syria Region. We categorically deny this disinformation and assert that none of our fighters have been martyred or injured during the ongoing brutal aggression, which is mainly targeting the essential infrastructure, service facilities, energy institutions, residential areas, and civil establishments.”

The documented war crimes committed by the Turkish occupying state have exceeded fifty violations within three days, including the systematic destruction of essential service institutions and the deliberate targeting of vital life-supporting elements for millions of people, said the SDF, adding: “Once again, the disinformation propagated by the Turkish occupation in promoting its terrorist aggression against our regions and people is debunked and the scenes on the ground unequivocally affirm the failure of the Turkish occupation in propagating these fabrications.”

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MSD: Everyone should raise their voices against the new Turkish Nazism

ANF | 15 JANUARY 2024

The Syrian Democratic Assembly (MSD) issued a written statement regarding the latest wave of Turkish attacks against North-East Syria ongoing since 12 January.

MSD condemned the Turkish state's attacks, defining the aggression as a grave threat to the security and peace of the region and a clear violation of international law.

"We condemn the silence of the international community, the US and Russia in the face of the attacks. Remaining silent in the face of crimes is a disregard of human values, human rights and basic rules of justice. The Turkish state continues its terrorist attacks on the region, seeking to disrupt the security of the region, create chaos and resurrect ISIS. It wants to occupy parts of northern and eastern Syria and change the demographic structure," said the MSD statement.

MSD called on Syria and Arab countries to work to end the Turkish occupation in Syria and its dangerous impact on Arab security. The Syrian Democratic Assembly also called on the US and Russia to take urgent measures to protect the rights and lives of citizens, to play an active role in the Security Council and to hold the Turkish government accountable.

The statement concluded: "We call on the Syrian people to resist in unity against the invasion attacks of the Turkish state. We call on all peoples to fight against the attacks. We call on everyone to raise their voices against the new Turkish Nazism."

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HPG guerrilla martyred in Bagok buried in the cemetery of the nameless

ANF | MARDIN | 15 JANUARY 2024

The bodies of HPG guerrillas Özgür Ay and İslam Ölçay, who were martyred in an airstrike on December 27 in the region of Mount Bagok in the countryside of Mardin's Nusaybin district, were taken by their families and buried in recent days after DNA tests showed a match.

The body of Lokman Muhammed from North-East Syria, who was martyred in the same bombardment, had been kept in the morgue since. Lokman Muhammed's family was not able to come to Turkey and take the body, which was buried in the "nameless" section of Kamor City Cemetery in the central district of Artuklu in Mardin.

According to reports, the bodies of the three guerrillas were severely desecrated and unidentifiable, burnt and some parts missing. So, the families gave blood samples for identification.

The Turkish state has been conducting a sort of *necro-policy* against Kurdish society since the 1990s by exploiting the bodies of the martyrs. Bodies are mutilated, dismembered or publicly displayed. After the Turkish government abandoned the peace process in 2015, a new era began. Massive police operations have turned funerals of fighters, which were attended by thousands and often even hundreds of thousands before 2015, into small events surrounded by police in which a maximum of ten family members can take part.

At the same time, the bodies of the fallen guerrillas are often only delivered after a long period of time. The remains are often buried in cemeteries of the nameless and have to be exhumed, which represents further harassment for the families. However, the state goes even further by sending packages containing the bones of the fallen Kurdish fighters to their relatives or simply burying the remains in undignified places. This approach aims to break society's spirit of resistance.

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SDF reports attack on prison where ISIS mercenaries are kept in Heseke

ANF | HESEKE | 16 JANUARY 2024

The SDF Media Center said in a statement that “at approximately 7:30 on Tuesday morning, the Sina Prison in Heseke, housing ISIS terrorists, was subjected to a missile strike targeting the so-called ‘Cubs of the Caliphate’ section. The attack resulted in minor injuries among the detainees.”

The statement added that “following the attack, dozens of ISIS detainees attempted to escape from the prison. However, the security measures implemented by our SDF forces and internal security have foiled the attempted escape.”

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Turkish attacks leave central power station in Cizre Canton destroyed

ANF | QAMISHLO | 16 JANUARY 2024

The Energy Department of the Autonomous Administration Cizre Canton made a statement regarding the recent attacks of the occupying Turkish state on power supply centres.

The statement said that warplanes of the occupying Turkish state bombed the Siwêdi power station 9 times.

According to the statement, the Electricity Authority and the production system of the Rimelan Oil Company and the areas connected to them were targeted in the attacks.

The statement said:

“These attacks are one of the biggest war crimes committed against the resisting people who sacrifice themselves to end ISIS terrorism.

We condemn the silence against the Turkish state's attacks on the livelihood of 5 million people. Russia and the International Coalition Forces in the region are responsible for this destruction.”

It is reported that the bombed facility was the only central station in North and East Syria and was 100 percent destroyed.



33 parties in North-East Syria denounce Turkish attacks in front of the UN office in Qamishlo

ANF | QAMISHLO | 16 JANUARY 2024

33 political parties in North and East Syria made a press statement in front of the United Nations (UN) office in Qamishlo to denounce the genocidal attacks of the Turkish state ongoing since 12 January.

The statement was read by Ciwan Abd al-Kerîm Siko, Secretary of the Syria-Kurdistan Democratic Party.

The statement drew attention to the invasion attacks of the Turkish army targeting the infrastructure, service institutions, economic and civilian settlements in North and East Syria, saying: “As political organisations and movements, we condemn the invading Turkish state’s aggression on the region. We call on the international community, represented by the UN and the UN Security Council, to condemn the attacks conducted by the Turkish state and to take all necessary measures to protect the people of northeastern Syria.”

The statement continued:

“We also call on the international community to pay more attention to the launch of a serious and effective political pathway in which all Syrians and their true representatives are represented, including representatives of North-East Syria. A political solution must be found to end the Syrian crisis and build a decentralised democratic system. Let us unite more strongly as the peoples of the region and protect our

gains. The attacks are aimed at breaking the free will of our people. However, let us condemn these attacks in a unity of the peoples and show that our free will is not broken.”

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KCK calls for action to defend the Rojava Revolution against Turkish war crimes

ANF | BEHDINAN | 17 JANUARY 2024

The Co-Presidency of the KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union) Executive Council released a statement about the latest wave of the Turkish state's genocidal campaign against northern Syria in violation of international law.

Condemning the silence of international institutions regardless the war crimes committed by the Turkish army, KCK said: “The Tayyip Erdoğan administration wants to escalate, deepen and spread war in the Middle East. Its policies are based on this. It is wanted to draw everyone into conflict, to pit them against the Kurds and each other. It aims to do this with the attacks on Iraq, Syria, South Kurdistan and Rojava.”

The KCK statement released on Wednesday includes the following:

“The Turkish state has been attacking Rojava [West Kurdistan/North Syria] since January 13, 2024 within the scope of its genocidal plans and has been continuing these attacks for 4 days. Once again, warplanes and drones targeted residential areas, infrastructure both above and below ground, production sites, oil production centers and energy facilities, warehouses, depots, hospitals and schools. We strongly condemn these brutal and despicable attacks by the genocidal colonialist Turkish state. With these attacks, the Turkish state has once again shown to the whole world how strongly hostile it is regarding the Kurds, that it is hostile to the people, and that it has no share in humanity and morality.

We have underlined in many of our statements that the Turkish state has an anti-Kurdish mentality and aims to occupy Rojava within the framework of its policy of Kurdish genocide. The Turkish state proves this fact every time with its inhumane attacks. Kurdish enmity has reached the level of a disease in the Turkish state and Tayyip Erdoğan's administration. The damage of this diseased mentality, which grows like a tumor as long as it lives, increases a little more every day. The uprooting of this diseased mentality will benefit not only the Kurdish people, but all the peoples of the Middle East, especially the peoples of Turkey, and humanity.

The genocidal colonialist Turkish State is committing war crimes in front of everyone's eyes. The attacks against Rojava are within the scope of war crimes and the Turkish state also commits the crime of genocide by continuously committing massacres. Striking supply depots, electricity, water and energy stations, leaving cities without electricity, water, bread and fuel is the gravest war crime. The Turkish state has repeatedly committed these crimes in front of the eyes of the world. But the world remains silent. This attitude is unacceptable. Keeping silent against these attacks of the Turkish state means being a partner to the at-

tacks, to the war crimes and genocide crimes committed by the Turkish state. This attitude is criminal and, in essence, no different from what the Turkish state is doing. First and foremost, the United Nations (UN) must oppose these inhumane attacks and war crimes of the Turkish state, declare them unacceptable and take measures. Also, other international institutions should take a stand in this direction and oppose the Turkish state's invasion, annexation and genocide attacks. Again, the Coalition forces in Rojava should have an attitude not only against ISIS attacks but against all attacks. It is unacceptable to take a stance against ISIS but remain silent against the attacks of the Turkish state. There is a coalition force of more than 70 countries in Northern and Eastern Syria. If they are not going to oppose the attacks on Rojava, including the attacks of the Turkish state, then why are they in Rojava?

The Turkish state is not only harming the Kurdish people with its policies, it is harming the whole region. The Tayyip Erdoğan administration wants to escalate, deepen and spread war in the Middle East. Its policies are based on this. It is wanted to draw everyone into conflict, to pit them against the Kurds and each other. It aims to do this with the attacks on Iraq, Syria, South Kurdistan and Rojava.

From here, we once again call on the UN and the relevant international organizations, as well as the Coalition forces and states in Rojava, not to remain silent in the face of these attacks and war crimes, and to take a stance. The people of Rojava have so far shown the necessary resistance and attitude against the attacks of the Turkish state. We salute this resistance attitude of the Rojava people. The genocidal colonialist Turkish state wants to intimidate the peoples of Rojava and North East Syria with these attacks, deprive them of opportunities and make them leave their homes and migrate. Thus, it wants to realize its genocide plans. This is the main purpose of the attacks. The people of Rojava, with the consciousness of freedom and being aware of this reality, must continue their attitude by further strengthening their resistance and unity and frustrate this plan of the enemy. Stopping the attacks and being free is only possible through struggle. The people of Rojava, who know and realize this, must continue this attitude. The Syrian state must also take a stance against the attacks and war crimes of the Turkish state and must not accept this. The unity, liberation and freedom of Syria is only possible by opposing the attacks of the Turkish state and the gangs it feeds and attacks. For this, the Syrian state must act and struggle together with the peoples of Rojava, Northern and Eastern Syria against the Turkish state's invasion, annexation and genocide attacks. Likewise, Arab public opinion and states must react to the attacks of the Turkish state, reject and oppose them and take a stance.

The Kurdish people in the four parts of Kurdistan and abroad must mobilize for Rojava and defend it. All our international friends and revolutionary democratic forces must stand in solidarity with the Kurdish people and defend the Rojava Revolution. The Rojava Revolution is the common heritage of all humanity. First and foremost, revolutionaries, socialists, women and all democratic forces must develop a strong stance against it, create political pressure with the stance they will put forward and force everyone to take a stance. One cannot remain silent any longer against the attacks that the Turkish state has carried out since January 13, 2024, and are still continuing. Once again, we strongly condemn the inhumane attacks of the Turkish state and call on everyone to be responsible and take a stance against the attacks and war crimes committed by the Turkish state.”

Cizre Autonomous Administration: Turkish state's terror will not be able to break our will

ANF | QAMISHLO | 17 JANUARY 2024

Cizre Canton Democratic Autonomous Administration made a press statement regarding the latest wave of genocidal attacks of the occupying Turkish state against North and East Syria.

The statement made in front of Mehmed Şêxo Culture and Art Centre in Qamishlo city was read by Telat Yunis, Co-Chair of Cizre Canton Executive Council.

“Through these attacks, the democratic project is wanted to be destroyed within the scope of the policy of genocide, destruction and eliminating the security of the region,” the statement said.

Talat Yunis stated that in order to realise their plans in other parts of Syria, the invaders resorted to methods such as embargo, water cut, destruction of living resources and displacement in order to break the will of the people of the region. Yunis noted that Turkey, taking advantage of the international silence and regional and national crises, used the lack of international organisations dealing with human rights as an opportunity to attack.

“Electricity was cut off in the villages and towns of Cizre Canton due to the failure of Siwediye station and other power stations. Due to the attacks, water stations, hospitals, health centres, flour mills and many other service institutions went out of service. Fuel and gas have also decreased. The occupying Turkish state bombed oil refineries, wells and gas and fuel fields that meet the needs of more than 5 million people.”

Yunis pointed out that the attacks on the checkpoints of the Internal Security Forces increased the danger posed by ISIS cells, families of ISIS gangs in Hol and Roj camps and thousands of ISIS gangs in Sîna prison.

The statement concluded, “We emphasise once again that no matter how much the terror of the occupying Turkish state increases, it will not be able to break our will, which we take from the strength of our resisting people, we will win. Our people continue to protect their own institutions by preserving their unity and struggle against all kinds of terror, attacks and special war policies. Our people, who have taken a strong stance against the attacks that have been continuing since the beginning of the revolution, continue to move forward on the path of freedom and democracy, making it clear that the free will cannot be broken.”

Telat Yunis called for solidarity from the international community and the people of the region.

Turkish attacks in Qamishlo leave hundreds of thousands without water

ANF | 17 JANUARY 2024

The occupying Turkish state continues its attacks on areas in North and East Syria. In 72 hours, the Turkish army carried out airstrikes on 80 centres, most of which are basic life sources and service centres. The new attacks hit power infrastructure, damaging electricity and oil stations already battered by previous raids, injuring 6 civilians. Suwaydiyah gas and electricity station, Odeh, Zarba, Rimelan, and Gir Dahol oil stations, the electricity stations of Qamishlo, Amude, Kobane, Tirbespi and Ain Issa have been the key targets. Turkey carried out 10 airstrikes on Suwaydiyah alone.

The Energy Department of the Cizir Canton of North and East Syria said in a statement on Wednesday that the Turkish state bombed the Suwaydiyah power station and the production system of the Rimêlan Oil Company and the connected areas. As a result of the attack, the power station ended up completely out of service.

Dozens of villages and towns in Qamishlo and its surroundings, such as Dêrik, Girkê Legê, Çilaxa, Til Koçer Koçerat, Tirbespiyê, Til Hemîs and Amûdê were left without electricity after the destructive attack.

Water stations also stopped operating due to the power outage.

According to the statement, 3 water stations and 105 water wells went out of service, including the Hîlaliye, Iwêce and Ceqceq water stations supplying water to 9 thousand houses in Qamishlo, 12 water wells supplying water to 3,500 houses in Dêrik, 14 water wells supplying water to 1,900 houses in Tirbespiyê district, 9 water wells in Keşke town of Girkê Legê, 36 in Çilaxa district, 10 in Til Hemîs district and 24 in Amûdê district.

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KDP evacuates 3 villages in Amadiya, clearing the way for the Turkish army

ANF | 17 JANUARY 2024

According to reports from the ground, forces of the KDP, the ruling party in the Kurdistan region of Iraq, evacuated the villages of Spîndarê, Mijê and Kevne Mijê villages in Amadiya on the instructions of the occupying Turkish state.

According to the information provided by local sources, the KDP established checkpoints on the roads leading to the evacuated villages in order to pave the way for the invasion attacks of the Turkish state and the villages were closed to entry and exit.

The occupying Turkish state, Asayish (local public order forces) and KDP-affiliated Peshmerga forces have forcibly evacuated and depopulated nearly 600 villages in Southern Kurdistan so far.

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

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

In the last two years, in particular, the Turkish state, with the help of the KDP, has attempted to connect many areas from which the civilian population has been displaced and to create a buffer zone along the border of South Kurdistan. This area stretches from Behdînan to Bradost. Numerous bases have been established along the Amêdîyê front. Although these are ostensibly KDP forces, there are Turkish troops in these bases. The Turkish army, which recently established a new base in the Bradost region, is trying to further increase its activities in this region. It has established many new bases in the Balekayetî region. The KDP forces have made all preparations for this. The Turkish state has also established new bases in the Mehmudiyê region on the borders of Rojava with South Kurdistan as well as on the borders of Zaxo and Batûfa. The aim is to expand this buffer zone and prepare a hinterland for a new invasion operation against Rojava. Those who oppose the occupation are attacked and murdered on the basis of intelligence provided by the KDP troops. At present, attempts are being made to completely encircle the Medya Defence Zones in South Kurdistan and create a military buffer zone with these bases and bases that have already been built before.

Turkey has been attacking the Medya Defence Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) for years. In April 2022, a comprehensive operation was launched in the guerrilla regions of Zap, Metîna and Avaşîn. As the invasion did not achieve the desired success, the Turkish state is attempting to establish itself in the area via the KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party), the ruling party dominated by the Barzani clan. KDP forces are establishing new bases and building military roads for the Turkish troops. In order to grant Turkey free access, the villagers are being driven out of the affected areas.

According to journalist Baran Germiyanî, who lives in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and spoke to Mezopotamya news agency (MA) in November, 158 villages have already been evacuated and at least 600 villages are threatened with eviction because the KDP is exerting pressure during the ongoing Turkish at-

tacks. Germiyanî stated that Turkey has not achieved the desired results in the region and that the KDP is clearing the way for Turkey with its depopulation policy.

In an interview in November, Cemil Bayık, Co-Chair of the KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union) Executive Council, commented on the KDP's role in the Turkish state's genocidal campaign against the Kurdish people, stating the following: "Those in the KDP who currently dominate the Behdînan region are from Massoud Barzani's side of the family. They are working only for their own interests and those of their families, thus serving the genocidal policies of the Turkish state. This is happening under the eyes of public opinion. Anyone who claims to be Kurdish, patriotic, politically conscientious and moral must see this. This is not a policy that anyone can accept. Serving the policy of the genociders does not benefit the Kurdish people. Therefore, democrats, patriots, politically conscientious and moral people need to see who is serving the Kurdish people and who is serving the politics of genocide. Patriotism means standing up against the politics of genocide. The Turkish state is waging this war with the support of the KDP. Not only in the Medya Defense Zones, but also in Northern and Southern Kurdistan, as well as in Rojava and in different parts of the world. The Turkish state's policy against the Kurdish people is carried out with the support of the KDP and especially Masoud Barzani. If they did not support them, the Turkish state would not be able to carry out this policy of genocide against the Kurdish people."



120,00 people without water and electricity in Tirbespiyê

NUJIYAN ADAR | TIRBESPIYE | 18 JANUARY 2024

The Turkish attacks on the civilian infrastructure in Northern and Eastern Syria continue and have already led to massive destruction. In the city of Tirbespiyê and its surroundings alone, around 120,000 people have been left without electricity and water. While in larger settlements, electricity can be supplied via generators for at least five hours a day, 182 villages are completely cut off from the supply. At the same time, people are also at risk of running out of gas in the middle of winter because the central gas plant in Tirbespiyê was hit. It is expected that the generators will also fail shortly due to the lack of fuel.

In Tirbespiyê district, 14,700 students are unable to attend classes due to the attacks.

Tirbespiyê is organized on a grassroots democratic basis.

Mizgîn Lezgîn comes from the village of Gir Bikêlê near Tirbespiyê. He has lived there for 20 years with his family of seven, including his four children, his brother and his wife, and is deputy co-chair of the Tirbespiyê County Council.

Lezgîn spoke to ANF about the difficulties that people in the city and surrounding villages are facing due to the attacks. The district council is making every effort to provide the population with the necessary services, said Lezgîn adding that there are constant attacks on the infrastructure of Tirbespiyê. "The families living in Tirbespiyê are going through difficult times. All villages and towns in the region are currently without electricity. We have been completely cut off from electricity and water since 13 January. The district's main gas, oil and electricity plants were hit. At the moment there is still gas available, but we will

soon be without gas as the main gasworks has been bombed, and the available gas is running out. Important facilities have been attacked. The oil mined here is put at the service of the people. It provided people with electricity; it provided electricity for hospitals and schools. Before the recent attacks, we could provide power from the generator for eight hours, but now we can only provide power for five hours. The diesel will soon run out. We are therefore on the verge of further restricting the power supply.”

“Children become sick from fear”

Lezgîn reported that children in particular were affected by the attacks: “Many children in the district are sick. According to the information we received from the hospital, jaundice is the most common disease. Doctors said the high infection and disease rates were due to excessive fear. The attacks have had a negative impact on our children. Their inner balance is disturbed. One minute they’re screaming and the next minute they’re panicking at even a normal noise. Before the attack, our children had their own bedrooms. Now we have to sleep in a room together because they are afraid to sleep alone. Bombings and attacks can happen at any moment. We hug our children to sleep. Even if the attacks stopped, the impact they had on them would continue. In the last few days, they haven’t even been able to go to school. Our children have their future denied.”

Lezgîn pointed out that people used to get water from wells drilled with their own resources: “Without the wells drilled by the people and the services of the city administration, we would not be able to get even a drop of water. Of course, this water is not enough for even a quarter of the people who live in this district. The district is large, there are hundreds of villages. The Autonomous Administration can only provide services to a certain extent. And there is an embargo on the region.”

“The Council stands by the people”

Lezgîn underlined that the district council is doing everything in its hands to alleviate the suffering and has mobilized all its resources. “Power plants and oil fields were attacked as early as December 2023. As a result of these attacks, more than 20 villages near Aliya were affected by power and water outages. A week ago, we had a small amount of electricity and water restored, but with the recent attacks we are back to square one. We solved the electricity problem in these villages using our resources as a council and were able to provide electricity to the villages for three hours so that they could meet their water needs. It took a long time to repair the damage caused to our facilities, people faced great difficulties; and now, just when they can see light on the horizon again, there is darkness again.”

“The government in Damascus must respond to the attacks”

Lezgîn spoke of a “dirty war” against the region and said: “While the Turkish state is shedding tears over the children massacred in Gaza, it is dropping bombs to kill children here. He condemns it when hospitals in Gaza are hit, yet, in Northern and Eastern Syria, however, it is shelling hospitals and places where people are receiving care. Turkey is waging an immoral war. Syria keeps talking about its territorial integrity. Don’t Northern and Eastern Syria belong to Syria? To date, the Syrian government has not responded to the attacks, condemned them or called for a halt to the attacks.”

“Our hope is resistance”

Mizgîn Lezgîn concluded: “Our children are being killed. There is no reaction from the world public opinion. While the people in the region are putting up enormous resistance, the world public is turning a blind eye to these attacks and remaining silent. We, the people of Northern and Eastern Syria, do not rely on states, because states only act according to their own interests. Our hope is for the peoples who resist and do not bow to oppression.”

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Turkey and its mercenaries hit 8 villages north-west of Manbij

ANF | MANBIJ | 18 JANUARY 2024

The Turkish state and its mercenaries bombarded the villages of Qirtwêran, Kawklî, Boxaz, Til Torîn, Siyade, Yanlî, Cat and Tûxar in the northwest of Manbij with heavy weapons.

Manbij Military Council said that material damage occurred in the targeted villages.

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Grave of YPS member Sertan Tiken in Cizre vandalized

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 18 JANUARY 2024

The grave of Sertan Tiken (Agit Botan), one of the 12 YPS members who fell as a martyr during the genocidal attacks in 2016, in Idil (Hezex), in the province of Şirnak was vandalized.

Tiken's grave in Cibriyê village of Cizre (Cizîr) district was desecrated. The tombstone was destroyed.

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MEPs call on EU to protest Turkish aggression and crimes in North-East Syria

ANF | 18 JANUARY 2024

In a letter to Josep Borrell, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, François Alfonsi of the Greens/EFA, Andreas Schieder of the Social Democratic Group and Nikolaj Vil-lumsen of the Left Group in the European Parliament drew attention to the Turkish state's ongoing attacks on Rojava.

The letter stated the following:

“Turkish bombs and shells are targeting and destroying vital civilian infrastructure, leaving millions without power, water, and gas, and after Turkey’s President Erdoğan has publicly announced his intention to continue these attacks.

We request you, as High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, to protest on behalf of the European Union against Turkey’s unprovoked aggression and war crimes being carried out against the people of the Democratic and Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, and to use the power of your office to put pressure on the Turkish government to stop.

Despite ceasefires negotiated by the United States and Russia in 2019, Turkey has kept up constant low-level attacks on the region, undermining efforts at stability. Now, for the third time in 3 ½ months, they have bombed sites essential for daily life. Since 13 January, they have destroyed power stations, oil fields (the region’s main source of revenue), homes, warehouses, factories, and other civilian buildings. Many of these places had just been brought back into action with emergency repairs after the previous attack. Two million people are without electricity. No power means no water that relies on pumps, reduced medical care, no ovens for bread, no functioning schools or universities, and huge economic damage. The region’s only gas-bottling plant has also been destroyed. People are left unable to heat their homes or get gas for cooking.

The targeting of vital infrastructure is itself a war crime and these attacks are also an unprovoked act of aggression. The region has never posed a threat to Turkey. Indeed, their Syrian Democratic Forces have spearheaded the fight against ISIS, alongside the International Coalition. They are vital allies of the Coalition, who recognise that the SDF is separate and independent of the PKK. Yet whenever the PKK carries out an action in Turkey or against Turkish forces in Iraq, Turkey strikes civilian targets in Syria. If their claim that this is covered by the Right to Defence is not challenged, that sets a very dangerous precedent indeed.

These attacks also pose a physical danger for Europe. They are targeted to destroy regional stability and are creating conditions that could allow a revival of ISIS. Immediately, they make it harder for the SDF to guard the many thousands of ISIS prisoners that have been abandoned to their charge, and just yesterday, (16 January) there was an attempted breakout from the prison housing ISIS prisoners in Hasaka, following a rocket strike.

Silence in the face of these crimes and dangers is simply not an option.”

Many houses destroyed in Turkish bombing of a village in Amadiya, South Kurdistan

ANF | DUHOK | 18 JANUARY 2024

According to a report by RojNews based on Iraqi media, the village of Mijê in Amadiya district of Dohuk, located at the foot of Garê Mountain, was bombarded at around 16.20 local time today.

According to reports, many houses were destroyed in the bombardment carried out by the occupying Turkish state.

Reports say that Mijê village was evacuated a few days ago due to threats of attack by the Turkish state.

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HPG: Guerrillas stopped several attempts by the Turkish army to advance in Zap

ANF | BEHDINAN | 19 JANUARY 2024

The Press Center of the People's Defense Forces (HPG) has published a report on guerrilla actions and attacks by the Turkish army in the Medya Defense Zones in South Kurdistan. On 16 January, a drone belonging to the Turkish invasion troops carrying explosives was shot down by the guerrillas while flying to attack the Shehid Diyar position in the Zap region.

From the western Zap region, the HPG reported seven interventions against the Turkish army in the resistance areas of Girê Cûdî and Girê Amêdî on 15 and 16 January. The YJA Star and HPG fighters attacked with semi-automatic and heavy weapons and damaged two enemy positions. In four cases advancing troops were stopped. In Xakurke, YJA Star fighters fired heavy weapons at the occupying forces at Girê Şehîd Kamuran on 13 January.

Attacks by the Turkish army

According to HPG, the Shehid Diyar position in the Zap region was attacked by a drone loaded with explosives on 15 January.

In addition, on 12, 14, 15, 16 and 17 January, a total of 25 air strikes were carried out by fighter jets, affecting the areas of Ava Lolanê, Sinînê, Kolît and Goşînê in Xakurke, Girê Bahar in the western Zap region, Kanîsarkê in Gare and Serê Metîna in Metîna. In addition, there were artillery attacks in the Zap, Metîna and Xakurke regions.

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Turkish army launches operation in Lice

ANF | AMED | 19 JANUARY 2024

According to reports from the ground, the rural neighborhoods in the northern part of Lice district became the target of a new military operation of the Turkish state.

Reports are coming through of helicopter activity in the region where military units have been dispatched.

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Femicide

Women's conference 'Chain of Silence' salutes the resistance in prisons

ANF | AMED | 13 JANUARY 2024

The Free Women's Movement (Tevgera Jinên Azad-TJA) is organising a conference titled 'Chain of Silence: Breaking the Walls Surrounding Women Political Prisoners' in Amed (Diyarbakır). The conference with international participants is being held in a hotel in the central district of Sur.

A banner reading "Towards Freedom with Jin Jiyan Azadi" and photographs of murdered Kurdish women politicians were hung in the hall, and an exhibition of pictures of prisoners was opened.

Democratic Regions Party (DBP) Co-Chair Çiğdem Kılıçgün Uçar, Socialist Refoundation Party (SYKP) Co-Chair Canan Yüce, political party representatives and MPs, feminist activists from different countries, women released from prison, Justice Vigil activists and Peace Mothers, journalists, writers and representatives of civil society organisations are attending the two-day conference.

TJA activist Kader Uzun made the opening speech of the conference. Greeting the participants in many languages, Kader Uzun cited examples of women resisting in prisons and their resistance and stated that women continue to resist everywhere.

Afterwards, TJA activist Hacer Özdemir addressed the conference participants. Hacer Özdemir started her speech by commemorating the women who lost their lives during the resistance in prisons, condemned the isolation of Abdullah Öcalan and his fellow inmates in İmralı Prison and demanded an end to the isolation in İmralı and other prisons as soon as possible.

“The existence, geography, language and culture of the Kurdish people are not recognised,” said Hacer Özdemir, noting that Kurds have been struggling for years for the recognition of their existence in the four parts of their country. Özdemir continued, “Kurdish women have been resisting in prisons for this cause for years. You all know about the disaster in Amed Prison after the 12 September coup. There was great resistance there. In this resistance, Mazlum Doğan became the symbol of the Amed Prison and Sakine Cansız and her comrades became the symbol of Kurdish women and the women of the world with the level of their struggle.”

Hacer Özdemir remarked that the Kurdish women’s participation in the struggle increased as the struggle grew, despite the increase in repression and arrests, and added: “Kurdish women’s participation in the revolution also brought about some difficulties. In 1990, our comrades were subjected to the worst torture, harassment and rape. In Kurdish history, dungeons have always been the areas of resistance and a great struggle was waged. We see that there is almost no Kurdish women’s movement activist who has not been in prison, or most of the activists are in prison.”

Özdemir emphasised that when women were detained in the past, this situation was not welcomed in the society, but women also destroyed such perceptions with their resistance: “In four parts of Kurdistan, great struggle was experienced in dungeons. Leyla Qasim’s place is known. While Leyla Qasim was executed, she said: ‘Braid my hair, make it a flag of Kurdistan and hang it everywhere. They will execute me, but thousands of Kurds will revolt and hang this flag everywhere’. When Şirin Elemholi was executed, she said; ‘I resist as a Kurdish woman. I hope that the Kurdish people will not submit either.’ Although Sakine Cansız was severely tortured in the Amed dungeon, she resisted greatly and did not even sigh in the face of her torturers. In other words, the more arrests and torture there are, the more resistance there is. This resistance continues to spread with the philosophy of Jin, Jiyan, Azadî (Woman, Life, Freedom).”

Özdemir also stated that it is not only Kurdish women who resist in prisons. She said that with this conference they want to create a ground that further unites the women’s resistance in prisons and said: “This conference will lead to an increase in relations and sharing and to a common ground for future great work and international work. This will also be very good for international solidarity. Women exist and will exist. We want to be a voice for the resistance and make their voices heard. I hope this conference will be instrumental for this and for international solidarity. We hope that our discussions will reach a conclusion and lead to good results. As Kurdish women, we dedicate this conference to Şirin Elemholi, Leyla Qasim, Sakine Cansız, Sema and their likes. Again, we send greetings to Sabahat Tuncel, Leyla Güven, Figen Yüksekdağ, who are not with us but in cold cells. As a result of the exchange of ideas for two days, the relations to be established here will have an impact on all dungeons. Success will be for women and those who resist in prisons.”

After the opening speech, messages from women prisoners were read.

‘Chain of Silence’ Conference in Amed: Women’s freedom is the freedom of society

ANF | AMED | 13 JANUARY 2024

The Free Women’s Movement (Tevgera Jinên Azad-TJA) is holding a two-day conference titled “Chain of Silence: Breaking the Walls Surrounding Women Political Prisoners” with the participation of international guests in a hotel in Sur district of Amed (Diyarbakır).

During the conference, Martina Anderson, a former member of the European Parliament, made a speech about women’s struggle and approaches towards women in prison. Anderson said, “As TJA, you struggle against the unequal, hierarchical and violence-producing ideology that gives birth to and sustains patriarchy with the idea that ‘when women are liberated, society is liberated’. You struggle to build ‘a democratic life in a democratic society’. Your determination to address human rights issues affecting women, particularly in challenging political environments, speaks directly to me.”

Martina Anderson stated that Ireland has gained political experience in the centuries-long struggle for national independence.

‘Women will live a democratic life in a democratic society’

Recalling her visit to the imprisoned Kurdish politician Leyla Güven during her hunger strike in 2018-2019, Martina Anderson said, “Once again, I send a message of solidarity to Leyla in prison. There is no doubt that we women have a lot more work to do to throw patriarchy off our backs. We can rightly say to this conference that ‘the cause of women’s freedom is the cause of society’s freedom, and the cause of society’s freedom is the cause of women’s freedom’. They cannot be separated. The unequal, hierarchical and violent ideologies that give birth to and sustain patriarchy will come to an end. Because as women in struggle, we will continue to challenge them wherever and whenever they raise their ugly heads. I stand here with the belief that together we will eliminate them from society. I have no doubt that one day women will live a democratic life in a democratic society.”

‘Nation states on the verge of bankruptcy are attacking women’s struggle’

Speaking after, TJA activist Figen Ekti said, “At such a time when nation states on the verge of bankruptcy are raising the wave of fascism to attack women’s struggle in order to establish themselves in the Middle East, Kurdistan and all over the world, it is really historical that TJA brings together hundreds of women from different geographies. This will also enlighten the coming period of struggle.”

Figen Ekti stated that both she herself and her relatives had been imprisoned at different times, recalling that she had been jailed in Sivas Prison along with 125 women in 1993, and that she had been sent to Sincan Prison during her last imprisonment. She said that 21 years later, she met again in prison with the women she had been imprisoned with years ago.

Figen Ekti pointed out that prisons are places to take over the will with more subtle methods and said, “After the 1980s, Sakine Cansız’s words ‘I was ashamed to say ‘ah’ as a militant of a just cause’ against a general like Esat Oktay Yıldırım, who had no sense of humanity, are enough to explain the resistance against torture there.”

‘Abdullah Öcalan’s paradigm has spread everywhere’

Figen Ekti emphasised that an unspoken agenda in prisons is the incidents of sexual violence and rape during detention and imprisonment and recalled what was done to Garibe Gezer. Ekti continued, “Leyla Güven is still in prison. When she went on hunger to end the isolation, we saw how the women’s struggle grew in the world. Women are resisting all over the world. There are women resisting and struggling everywhere, both in the ranks of freedom, outside and in exile. No matter how they attack, we have a spirit of resistance that does not take a blow. It is very important that this spirit sprouts again.”

Figen Ekti stated that the slogan “Jin, Jiyan, Azadî” (Woman, Life, Freedom), which is in the paradigm of Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan, has spread everywhere and added, “If this slogan is rising, the winner and success of the struggle in the 21st century is the women’s freedom struggle.”



‘Chains of Silence’ conference continues in Amed

ANF | AMED | 14 JANUARY 2024

The second day of the international conference organized by the Free Women’s Movement (Tevgera Jinên Azad-TJA) and titled “Chain of Silence: Breaking the Walls Surrounding Women Political Prisoners” has kicked off in Amed (Diyarbakır).

The first day ended with a session moderated by lawyer Ruken Gülağacı. Lawyer Diana Restrepo Rodriguez spoke via Zoom about the situation of women in prisons in Latin America. Rodriguez said that even legally talking about politics to women is considered a crime in Latin America, and added: “All torture in the world was first tried on women. When it was successful, it was also used in male prisons.”

Referring to the arbitrariness in prisons, Rodriguez said: “Silence creates loneliness. It strengthens fear. This causes us to make decisions to betray. First we need to see the right path. We also need to remember that silence can take on all forms. This is a part of deception and assimilation. It continues to drag us into unnecessary struggles. It is important that we break the silence in this sense. I want to express that if we do not eliminate punishment as women, we will not be free. We need to overcome fear. Jin jiyan Azadi.”

Activists presented as terrorists in the Philippines

Lawyer Maria Kristina Conti spoke about Filipino women who have problems with the law. Maria Kristina Conti spoke about discriminatory examples experienced by women, in a system resembling the Spanish legal one, and presented the stories of women arrested for different crimes. Referring to the anti-terrorism law in the Philippines, Conti said: “A person who is against the government is portrayed as an

activist, an activist as a communist, and a communist as a terrorist.” Referring to the prisoners who gave birth in prisons, the lawyer pointed out legal improvements and said: “We must work on putting pressure on the institutions. This pressure may lead to the release of some prisoners. That is why I say Jin jiyan Azadi.”

The Catalan case

Catalan Lawyer Altemira Guelbenzu Gonzalo also attended the conference online. Pointing out the situation of international institutions in the defense of female prisoners in the Catalan case, Gonzalo gave examples of conflict between police and citizens in the Catalan referendum protests and said that there were protesters who were sentenced to 11 years in prison. Gonzalo said: “Prisons are places of torture and pain. What happens to women in prison is of little importance to the general population. Prisons are patriarchal and at the same time they lead to a new position of obedience where female prisoners are tried to be subjugated.”

Stating that the bad conditions of prisons make those inside ill, Altemira Guelbenzu Gonzalo said that “a high percentage of women in prison are exposed to sexual violence.”

Lawyer Ebru Akkal, a member of the Association of Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD), said that when we look at the last 40 years of Turkey, there has been systematic judicial harassment against women and added: “As women’s movements become socialized, and we see the women’s struggle grow, we see that judicial violence also increases.”

Akkal said that situations such as Turkey’s prosecution of the Kurdish Women’s Movement’s working areas and institutions, the arrest of thousands of activists, and the criminalization of the co-chairmanship reveal the government’s approach to women, and continued: “The Kurdish Women’s Movement, women’s institutions and associations, the closure of women’s institutions in local governments and the arrest of women activists are a reflection of the AKP-MHP’s view of women. We have seen women in organizations such as TJA, KJA, DÖKH, Rosa Women’s Association being put on trial. All of them are accused of participating in the 8 March and 25 November marches, protesting the massacres of women, and defending the co-chairs system. For these “crimes”, women have been detained for a long time. As a result, the existing legal system continues to intimidate society with its politicized judiciary. This situation gave birth to and developed its own struggle on the women’s side.”

The first day of the conference ended with the speech of People’s Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) Amed Deputy Ceylan Akça.

TJA conference ends: Women will break the chains

ANF | AMED | 14 JANUARY 2024

The Free Women's Movement (Tevgera Jinên Azad-TJA) organised a conference titled "Chain of Silence: Breaking the Walls Surrounding Women Political Prisoners". The two-day conference, which started on Saturday, ended after the workshops on the second day.

During the closing forum titled "How can we move forward together?", Dr. Shahrzad Mojab made a presentation titled "From Dialogue to Action: Developing cooperation strategies and creating concrete and measurable plans for women political prisoners".

Shahrzad Mojab, who connected to the conference online, drew attention to the violence against women in Iranian prisons.

'Prisons are real stories'

Pointing out that sexual violence is used as a torture system especially against women, Shahrzad Mojab said, "When we look at the political agenda, we are all responsible for this. It is necessary to break this chain of silence. It is necessary to document and archive them. It is of great importance locally to carry them to the international arena. These need to be transformed. While telling these stories, my aim is to draw attention to torture and survival. Going beyond a cultural interpretation, attention should be drawn to the oppressive attacks of Turkey and Iran. It is necessary to unite in solidarity."

Stating that the state manipulates violence, Shahrzad Mojab said: "Prisons are real stories. As you know, there are some repressions and revolts. This is how the revolution took place in Iran. It was born carrying the seeds of its own defeat. Although I am out of prison, I am not free from the violence of the state. If you are out of prison, you have a responsibility wherever you are. We need to prevent global punishment."

'Fascist games are being played'

Noting that there are an incredible number of political prisoners of women in the Middle East, Shahrzad Mojab continued: "We must all directly challenge the rules and social norms, because they violate women's rights. Nationalist, capitalist and imperialist forces are playing fascist games. Platforms have been established that only create destruction. I am talking about the lives of Kurds in Syria and Turkey, where women are sold as 'sex workers', imprisoned in care labour, and many women are rendered disabled. The majority of people are completely deprived of their lives. Their right to life is being taken away. The current wars are a war of civilisations. The policy of war also serves domination."

Shahrzad Mojab also pointed to the continuing international silence and lack of solidarity and said, "A very important report was published in 2018. It was about the situation of political prisoners in the Middle East. It was called 'silent genocide'. It is said that the number of political prisoners has increased and the pressure in the region has increased. It increased because those people criticised the state. This is an alarming situation for all of us. In Syria, as a result of the civil war, approximately 118,000 individuals have been arrested, forcibly disappeared and their rights have been constantly violated. They are con-

demned to live in appalling conditions. It is stated that there are about 60 thousand political prisoners in Egypt. In Israel, we know that there are about 10,000 prisoners. There is incredible pressure on activists in Iran. People in prison were subjected to incredible pressure during the 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadî' (Woman, Life, Freedom) protests. The proportion of Kurds among political prisoners is very high; 40 percent".

'All political prisoners must be freed'

Emphasising that women's struggle is very important, Shahrzad Mojab concluded as follows: "The freedom of every political prisoner here is an important slogan. This means that this demand is not only about the abolition of the prison system here, but also about the abolition of authoritarian regimes. This is the content of the slogan 'Woman, Life, Freedom'. It is an important platform established for the freedom of all political prisoners and the solidarity of international organisations."

Mojab's presentation ended with a question and answer session.

'Women's politics is a unifying force'

After the presentation, the closing speech was made by Gülbahar Alpsoy from TJA, who stated: "This conference was not only an exchange of experiences. It will be meaningful if these experiences become organised. In the 4 workshops held in connection with this, perhaps it will be an important step for us to evolve our experiences into an organisation."

Stating that women are always strong together, Alpsoy said: "Sovereigns and states established borders. Those who established borders also separated beliefs according to colours and languages, and separated people from each other by the logic of divide and rule. The main policy of women is their unifying power. Women also have the philosophy of reconstruction with a democratic nation perspective."

'Society will breathe if İmralı isolation is broken'

Alpsoy continued: "Women and children are the ones who suffer. In these very seconds, attacks are being carried out on Rojava. These attacks are an intervention against Kurdish gains. As women, it is women themselves who will put a stop to war and occupation. It is very important to produce policies against these attacks. Our conference, which we call the chain of silence, was a conference against torture and rights violations, and most of all against the current isolation policies. If we are to break all attacks in prisons and in all areas of life, first, it is necessary to understand the isolation of Mr. Abdullah Öcalan in İmralı well and to reveal a state of organisation to break this isolation which is aggravated further every day. The isolation that started in İmralı affects all areas of life of society today and has made it unable to breathe. Society needs to breathe, and this can be achieved by breaking the isolation in İmralı. As the Kurdish Women's Movement, we have never run away from the truth."

'Women will break the chains'

Stating that it is women who will break the chains of silence, Alpsoy said, "Although the rulers want to keep us in the dark, we will not remain in this darkness. It is women who will break the chains, it is women's conscience, morality and justice. Women can achieve this together. It does not matter which country we live in."



‘Chain of Silence’ conference to establish an international network and launch a global campaign

ANF | AMED | 15 JANUARY 2024

The Free Women’s Movement (Tevgera Jinên Azad-TJA) made a written statement regarding the conference it organized in Amed (Diyarbakır) on January 13-14, titled “Chain of Silence: Breaking the Walls Surrounding Women Political Prisoners”.

The statement noted that the international conference was attended by women from South Kurdistan, Iran, Turkey, Canada, Palestine, Catalonia, Northern Ireland, Basque Country, Latin America and the Philippines and said, “On the first day of the conference, sexist, racist and colonialist prison systems produced by capitalist nation-state systems were discussed. Participants made presentations about their experiences. It was stated that high security prisons are spaces designed by capitalist modernity in Asia, Europe, America and the Middle East to punish and isolate dissidents, especially women.”

Pointing to the panels held on the first day of the conference, the statement emphasized that women who struggle for freedom and political rights are imprisoned through judicial manipulations and forced to obey and to give up their struggles in prisons designed by the system with a male mindset.

The statement further included:

“The participants expressed that sexual violence is used as a method of torture, but often remains an ‘untouched and unspoken’ issue by women. It was also highlighted that prisons are spatially designed in a way contrary to women’s physiology and sociology, that women are systematically isolated, that their rights to health and communication are systematically violated, that these practices are covered by a veil of silence, and that it is essential to break this silence. Women have transformed these oppressive places of imprisonment into spaces where they organize objection and resistance, and where they continue to learn and develop. Women behind bars participate creatively in art, media, politics and social life.

The participants stated that electrocution, rape, isolation, solitary confinement, communication and disciplinary punishments are part of attempts to break the will of women and make them surrender, and that the struggle and solidarity must continue until these practices against human dignity are brought to an end. The narratives of women from all over the world inspired each other.”

The statement emphasized that the ongoing hunger strikes in prisons against the isolation (of Abdullah Öcalan) in İmralı were also saluted.

Some of the decisions taken at the conference were announced as follows:

- Establishing an 'international women's network' consisting of women's organizations, intellectuals, artists, politicians and volunteers in order to make visible the violations of rights experienced by imprisoned women, raise awareness and ensure solidarity,
- Strongly supporting the struggle and demands of all women political prisoners who are still held in prisons in various parts of the world and resist, and effectively using the local media and international media to this end. Prompting relevant mechanisms for the exposure of the sensitivity and violations of regional and global structures (ECtHR, CoE, UN, AI, HRW, etc.) as an alternative to the domestic legal mechanisms that nation states consider as useful manipulation devices.
- Organizing a global campaign for the freedom of all women political prisoners.”

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Women will continue to fight, say activists following arrests in Istanbul

ANF | ISTANBUL | 18 JANUARY 2024

Numerous activists, politicians and artists were arrested in Istanbul on Tuesday. Among the 21 people arrested and accused of “terrorist acts” are the chair of the Kadın Zamanı (Women’s Time) association, Dilek Başalan, activists from the Kurdish women’s movement TJA and the Peace Mothers Initiative, DEM politicians and two musicians from the Mesopotamian Cultural Center (MKM). The association Kadın Zamanı held a press conference on Wednesday at its office in the Beyoğlu district of Istanbul and clearly stated that the women’s movement cannot be silenced. The association advocates for the rights of Kurdish women and works with the feminist movement in Turkey.

“The women’s struggle cannot be stopped”

“The women’s struggle cannot be stopped” was written on the banner behind which Berivan Saruhan and lawyer Esra Biber read out the association’s statement on the repression against Kurdish activists in Turkey. The statement was read in both Kurdish and Turkish. Esra Biber, who represents the association as a lawyer, explained that the judiciary in Turkey has lost its independence and acts “arm in arm” with the male-dominated government. The lawyer classified the arrests as a criminalization of women’s work, as well as of all those who fight for an equal, free and humane life against the government’s sexist and misogynistic politics. Those who fight against this policy are called “terrorists” by the government.

Biber said: “The arrests of Dilek Başalan, the chair of our association, a human and women’s rights defender who has been working for years to ensure that Kurdish women living in Istanbul have access to mechanisms to combat violence against women, our TJA friends, who have an active role in the struggle of Kurdish women and the women who advocate for the cultural rights of Kurdish women in the Mesopotamian Cultural Center are an attempt to silence the fight against the various rights violations that Kurdish women are subjected to.”



Female politician murdered in Kirkuk

ANF | 18 JANUARY 2024

A woman was murdered by two attackers on motorbikes in front of Sêgirme Secondary and High School in the Rehimaya neighbourhood of Kirkuk on Thursday.

The identity of the female politician who was shot eight times with a silenced pistol was announced as Firyal Silêman Xalid from the city of Hesekê in northern Syria.

According to reports, the body of Firyal Silêman Xalid was taken to Kirkuk Forensic Medicine Institution.



Tevgera Azadi condemns assassination in Kirkuk, calls for arrest of ‘terrorists’

ANF | 19 JANUARY 2024

Tevgera Azadî (Freedom Movement) based in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) released a written statement on the assassination of revolutionary woman Feryal Silêman Xalid in Kirkuk on 18 January and noted that ISIS gangs and the occupying Turkish state have agreed to massacre Kurds.

“Firyal Suleiman, a political activist who came to southern Kurdistan to engage with women’s movements, was martyred yesterday in Kirkuk’s Serchinar neighbourhood in an armed attack. We condemn this cowardly terrorist attack and call on the security forces to capture the terrorists.”

The statement continued: “It seems that the occupying Turkish state and ISIS gangs have once again agreed to massacre Kurds. A few days ago, a policeman was murdered by ISIS gangs in Kirkuk. The enemy, who suffered heavy blows and defeats, started terrorist attacks against the civilian population in Kurdistan.

As Tevgera Azadi, we call on all libertarian groups and women to embrace the freedom fighters and take a stance against these attacks. The security forces and Kirkuk police are obliged to arrest the terrorists who organised the attack and expose them.”



Women's organisations condemn the murder of political activist in Kirkuk

ANF | 19 JANUARY 2024

Firyal Silêman Xalid was shot dead in the middle of the street in the Kurdish metropolis of Kirkuk in northern Iraq on Thursday. She was travelling in the Serçnar district north of the city when she was shot at close range by a man armed with a pistol with a silencer. The gunman and an accomplice turned up on a motorbike, which they used to escape unrecognised. The Kirkuk police have started an investigation and launched a manhunt for the suspects.

The attack on Firyal Silêman Xalid, which was carried out in front of a school in the Rehîmawe neighbourhood, was apparently aimed specifically at the Kurdish woman. According to witnesses, one of the attackers is reported to have said shortly before the shooting that they had come to eliminate the activist. An initial autopsy revealed that Xalid was hit by nine bullets. Most of them were fatal, a police spokesman said.

Firyal Silêman Xalid lived in Hesekê in the autonomous region of North and East Syria, where she was born, and joined the Kurdish movement 31 years ago. She was in Kirkuk at the invitation of women's organisations from South Kurdistan. The aim of the trip was to discuss women's issues and gender equality.

The murder of activist Firyal Silêman Xalid has caused anger and grief among women's organisations. "This is not the first political assassination of struggling women, and there is no justification for such heinous and cowardly acts," said the spokesperson of the DEM (Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party) Party's Women's Council, Halide Türkoğlu, at the organisation's weekly press conference in Ankara.

"Wherever they are in the world, women activists and politicians have been the target of patriarchal power structures at all times in history. Those who murdered women like Rosa Luxemburg, Sakine Cansız, Sêvê Demir and Nagihan Akarsel have once again shown their bloody faces, this time in Kirkuk. The assassination of Firyal Silêman Xalid is a political murder. We know very well which forces are behind it," said Türkoğlu.

The Kurdish Women's Movement in Europe (TJK-E) also spoke of a political murder. Firyal Silêman Xalid is the latest victim of a series of deadly attacks on Kurdish women that has been going on for years and is part of the Turkish state's anti-Kurdish genocidal policy, the movement said in a statement: "The murder of Firyal, which resembled an execution, is a massive attack on the will of all women and their protagonist role in organising society."

The umbrella organisation of the women's movement in North and East Syria, Kongra Star, condemned the bloody deed and demanded that the Iraqi authorities fully investigate the murder. "They must bring the truth to light. Otherwise, they will be complicit and become accomplices to the murderers of Firyal Silêman Xalid," emphasised Kongra Star. The organisation called on women to "rise up and stand up for the fight for freedom" in order to help solve the murder and demand accountability.

The Coordination of the Kurdistan Women's Community (KJK) has also condemned the deadly assassination. "The fascist, misogynist and genocidal Turkish state has once again shown its dirty, bloodthirsty and sinister face with the murder of the Kurdish revolutionary Firyal Silêman Xalid. The government led by the AKP/MHP alliance, the scourge of the world, has systematically included the murder of leading women figures in its war against the Kurdish people since 2013. Since the massacre of our companions Sakine Cansız (Sara), Fidan Doğan (Rojbîn) and Leyla Şaylemez (Ronahî) on 9 January 2013 in the heart of France's capital Paris, dozens of Kurdish women revolutionaries, politicians and activists have been killed in Europe as well as in Northern, Southern and Western Kurdistan."

The KJK further stated: "These attacks, which are nothing but massacres, are undoubtedly closely related to the awareness gained through the Kurdish freedom struggle that has been going on for decades and the representation of women in leading positions of this resistance. The Turkish state is acting like an assassination network to weaken the level of struggle achieved by Kurdish women. It assumes that by massacring women and Kurds, it can dissuade them from the struggle for freedom and resistance. However, the resistance practice of Kurdish women over the past five decades shows that this is a big mistake. Every massacre and every attack has strengthened the will of Kurdish women and reaffirmed their determination to maintain their place in the ranks of the revolutionary struggle."

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Local Elections in Turkey

Kaya: DEM Party candidates are chosen through primary elections this weekend

ANF | AMED | 14 JANUARY 2024

Local elections will take place in Turkey on 31 March. The People's Equality and Democracy Party (DEM) has taken over from the HDP, which was threatened with illegalization, and advocates for a decentralization of the political government system and the consideration of regional peculiarities.

The DEM party is going into the local elections with the demand to solve the Kurdish question and to bring Turkey's general question of democracy back onto the agenda in order to overcome the numerous crises in the country. A road map was published in December.

After the last two local elections, almost all municipalities won by the DBP and the HDP were placed under state administration. In 2016, 93 mayors were arrested, and in 2019 a further 43 were arrested. Nevertheless, many people applied to the DEM party to run for a mayoral office or for a seat on the city and municipal councils.

Saturday and today, people will select their final candidates in the primary elections organized in dozens of cities.

Co-presidency system was criminalized

The fact that there are many women among the applicants is a positive development, said DEM Amed MP Adalet Kaya. The Kurdish politician, who was elected as a member of the Turkish parliament in May last year, was previously the chair of the Rosa women's Association. She served time in prison because of her commitment to women's politics. She described the appointment of state trustees in Kurdish communities instead of elected co-mayors as an anti-democratic practice that violates national and international law and ignores the people's resistance to assimilation policies. "Above all, - Kaya said - the achievements of women and the work they do were attacked. The most important of these achievements was the system of co-representation, the other was the mechanisms put in place to strengthen the network of women's solidarity, the cooperatives, the advice and solidarity centers and the shelters for women."

The trustees, a story of theft, extortion and corruption

Adalet Kaya pointed out the monistic, racist and sexist nature of the Turkish state and said: "They do not want women to be empowered in any area and to be represented equally in the communities. The good functioning of the communities in the Kurdish provinces and the positive response that there was even abroad exposed the poor functioning of the communities they managed, and this was an aspect that they could not bear. They could not conquer our communities, and they imposed trustees on them, thus usurping what was not freely given to them. They engaged in theft, extortion and corruption."

Women's struggle threatens the government

Kaya underlined that the dual leadership system was fought for by the Kurdish women's movement and has now become official: "Now every party can legally use the co-presidency system. This model has also been introduced at the local level. This ensures that women can be involved in local and decentralized administration in all areas of life and not just in specific areas. We have implemented this model in the municipalities over the last three electoral periods. It has not yet acquired legal status in relation to municipalities. We will continue our fight on this issue. This is, of course, a very critical issue for the government. It sees this as a threat, and for this very reason it criminalizes the co-mayor model as a terrorist structure. Many of our mayors are still in prison. Some have been released after long prison terms, but their trials continue. Gültan Kışanak is a very important political figure in this context. She is still being held as a political hostage and is seen as a threat. She has made a very important contribution to the struggle of Kurdish women and to the dual leadership system. Dozens of mayors and TJA activists are in prison, and the main reason is that the achievements of our women are strong. The government sees women's struggle, their leadership and equal representation as a serious threat to itself and is trying to restrict us in all areas."

Keeping our ecological, democratic and women-friendly system alive

After the parliamentary elections last May, a lot of criticism was expressed about the party's strategy and this criticism from the base was taken into account, said Adalet Kaya: "Our party executive committee has evaluated this criticism, and we are going into the local elections taking this criticism into account. For this purpose, public meetings were held to strengthen and develop the party. These meetings were very

productive and ground-breaking. We have initiated a period of democratic and public participation both in the selection of candidates and further down the line. The candidates are chosen through primary elections at the base; even in small districts, everyone, from civil society organizations to business owners. The result is determined by consensus, and we think that is very important. The people want to get rid of the trustees, they want their own communities back. We want to govern our cities and communities ourselves and keep our ecological, democratic and women-friendly system alive. Let us establish mechanisms that empower women and protect them from violence. That's why we want everyone to be involved in this process."

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Human Rights Violations

Police take 113 people into custody in 32 cities

ANF | 13 JANUARY 2024

The Turkish state carried out political police operations in 32 cities early this morning.

Houses were raided by police in Adana, Adıyaman (Semûr), Agri (Agirî), Amasya, Ankara, Antalya, Aydın, Balıkesir, Bingöl (Çewlîg), Amed, Antep (Dîlok), Hakkari (Colemerg), Hatay, Îdir, Maraş, Kastamonu, Kayseri, Kilis, Konya, Malatya (Meletî), Manisa, Mêrdîn, Mersin, Muğla, Mûş, Osmaniye, Sakarya, Siirt (Sêrt), Sivas, Şirnex, Dersim and Wan.

Some 113 people have been taken into custody so far. It was learned that those detained were taken to the provincial police headquarters.

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DEM MP Konukçu: They murdered Metin under torture

ZEYNEP KURAY | ISTANBUL | 13 JANUARY 2024

On 8 January 1996, the then journalist and current MP from the DEM party, Kezban Konukçu, as well as the correspondent of the newspaper Evrensel, Metin Göktepe, tried to attend the funeral of murdered revolutionary prisoners at the Cemevi (Alevi place of worship) in Alibeyköy. Their lives met there when they both ended up in police custody. While Konukçu was taken to the police station as a correspondent for the Direniş (Resistance) newspaper, Metin Göktepe was tortured to death by the police in the Eyüp sports hall.

In this ANF interview, Konukçu remembered this event almost exactly 28 years after it took place.

“Kurdish journalists were murdered; socialists were tortured”

Kezban Konukçu was active as a journalist for the socialist newspaper *Direnış* in Istanbul between 1995 and 1997. She reported that the repression against journalists was massive during this time. Kurdish journalists were murdered, while socialists in western Turkey were tortured and mistreated. In such an atmosphere of oppression, as a journalist she followed the same events as Evrensel correspondent Metin Göktepe.

“When I was arrested, I saw Metin”

She said that the detention centers were one of the places of the state repression, and recalled the killings of four revolutionaries in Ümraniye E-Type Prison. The guards had killed the prisoners in the bloody suppression of a prison riot. The murders caused great public outrage. The funerals of the murdered became targets of attacks. Konukçu, like Metin Göktepe, attended the funeral of political prisoners Orhan Özen and Rıza Baybaş at the Cemevi in Alibeyköy on 8 January 1996 as a journalist.

Thousands wanted to attend the funeral. “I was traveling to the funeral on a city government bus. The area around the Cemevi, where the funerals of the revolutionary prisoners were to take place, was cordoned off by the police. The buses had to turn around one by one and identity checks were carried out. When it was our bus's turn, the police, seeing the camera around my neck, turned directly to me and demanded my press pass.

When I showed the reporter's card of the *Direnış* newspaper, they said: ‘Get out of the bus, socialist press outside.’ I remember seeing Metin there, but I couldn't talk to him because they put us in a prison van. We were taken to Küçükköy police station, which is notorious for torture. They couldn't even accommodate us in the prisoner collection center because there were so many of us.” In fact, 1,052 people were arrested and distributed to different districts, 705 ended up in the Eyüp district sports hall due to lack of space - including Metin Göktepe.

“They released everyone in a hurry.”

The deputy continued: “They selected fifteen people from among us to be sent to the terror department. At 11 pm, they hurriedly put all of us, including the 15 friends, onto buses and released us at a central location. We were surprised that they were in such a hurry. Since there were no mobile phones at the time, we didn't hear the news right away. Only in the morning did we understand the reason for their haste. They had beaten Metin to death. He was arrested at the same place that day and taken to the Eyüp sports hall.”

“After Metin's murder, repression increased”

Tens of thousands of people attended Metin Göktepe's funeral. They walked for miles to demand justice, Konukçu said, describing how after his murder, she and other journalists once again found themselves in the police's crosshairs: “The police officers who checked our press cards pulled us out and shouted ‘Socialist press, down with you’. At the time, we had friends who worked in the mainstream media and were Democrats. Ahmet Şık was one of these friends. He was working at the *Cumhuriyet* newspaper at the time

and that day he immediately defended us against police violence by saying: ‘Let our friends go.’ Otherwise they would have confiscated our photos, broken our cameras or openly tortured us.”

“Repression has not changed, but solidarity is weaker”

Konukçu said that state repression has not changed to this day and that the free press and political prisoners are still under heavy attack. Solidarity, however, has weakened. In the past, there was great support to people who really believed in the revolution, but today in the “post-truth era” many things have become meaningless and the practice of ruling through discourse control and “appearances” has increased. More and more people fell for these suggestions. In direct connection with this development, it can also be observed in the political movement that the criterion is no longer whether you systematically change and re-design something, but rather how many “likes” you receive and how visible you are.

“We must strengthen the path and methods of common struggle”

It is necessary to understand these facts correctly and discuss them, said Konukçu, adding: “What is important is the attitude that the power of the capitalists must be ended through the joint struggle of the oppressed and working people. As the revolutionary struggle has become weaker, the methods of collective struggle have also become weaker compared to before. Today there is just as much oppression, there are no more laws, the system of exploitation has become more and more blatant, there are hunger strikes in prisons. Today we need to organize ways and methods to fight together against all these problems. A system like that in Nazi Germany is being rebuilt, we have to understand that, understand it correctly and strengthen the right line of battle against it. Just as it is possible to keep the memory of Metin Göktepe alive by defending his values, the fight can only be carried out through lived work and not through self-expression.”



Autonomous Assembly of Shengal calls for recognition by the international community and Baghdad

ANF | SHENGAL | 14 JANUARY 2024

Today marks the anniversary of the establishment of the Democratic Autonomous Assembly of Shengal (MXDŞ), which was declared on 9 January 2015. For 9 years, the Yazidi people, with their popular institutions and organisations, have been calling on international institutions and the Iraqi Federal Government to officially recognise their Autonomous Administration. Although the Iraqi constitution recognises the right to autonomy or federalism for ethnic components and beliefs, Iraq does not respond to the demands of the Yazidi people due to the pressures of the Turkish state and the KDP.

All institutions affiliated to the Autonomous Administration, the Committee of Martyrs’ Families, TAJÊ (Yazidi Women’s Freedom Movement), PADÊ (Yazidi Democracy and Freedom Party) came together on the occasion and made a joint press statement at the Martyr Dilgeş and Martyr Berxwedan Cemetery on Mount Shengal.

Autonomous Administration Co-Chairman Nayif Şemo stated that they gathered on the occasion of the foundation anniversary of the Shengal Constituent Assembly, which was established upon the request of Yazidis.

Şemo said, “This was the only way of resistance. The leaders of the Constituent Assembly are still on duty without a moment's hesitation.”

Şemo continued, “All institutions and organisations in Shengal gathered under the Êzidxan (Yazidi land) flag that will be hoisted on the summit of Mount Shengal thanks to our heroic martyrs. We promise our people that we will be a bridge between our forces and our people until the last drop of our blood.”

Calling on the Iraqi state to recognise the Shengal Autonomous Administration, Şemo said, “Iraq should recognise our autonomy, which is our fundamental right in its constitution. Shengal has a special place in this geography. When the Autonomous Administration is recognised, it will be a model for all the peoples living in Iraq.”

Pakize Zelal, spokesperson of the Committee of Martyrs' Families, started her speech by commemorating Zerdeşt Şengali, a commander of the Shengal Resistance Units (YBŞ) who fell a martyr along with fighters Şervan Cila and Êzdîn Şengali in an airstrike on the Dugirê village of Shengal on January 15, 2020.

Zelal said, “By targeting comrade Zerdeşt and his companions on the anniversary of the founding of the Constituent Assembly, they sought to make us step back. However, we resisted all attacks. On the anniversary of the founding of the Assembly, we commemorate all our martyrs in the person of Mam Zeki.”

TAJÊ member Kinê Xidir said, “We have been a bulwark for our people until today by frustrating these plans with the strength and will of our people. Yazidi women played an important role in the establishment of the assembly. As TAJÊ, we celebrate the anniversary of the founding of the Constituent Assembly.”



IHD: The state uses systematic pressure to recruit politically active Kurds as informants

ANF | AMED | 15 JANUARY 2024

The Turkish state uses systematic pressure to recruit politically active people as informants. Kurds are particularly affected. In Amed (Diyarbakir), further recruitment attempts have become known in recent months.

Meliha Cömert, district leader of the DEM party in Sur, was pursued by police officers in October and pressured into becoming an informant. In November, students from Dicle University made public the brutal methods used by the Turkish police to recruit informants. Students at Munzur University in Dersim also reported such attempts in December. The case of trade unionist Erhan Gümüş recently became

known in Amed. The ESM secretary has been systematically harassed since August 2023. On 18 December, he was stopped on the street by people who claimed to be secret service agents who threatened him because he refused to be recruited as an informant.

The chair of the human rights association IHD in Amed, Ercan Yılmaz, told ANF that the authorities' pressure and attempts to recruit informants have increased since the Turkish state unilaterally broke off negotiations on a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question with Abdullah Öcalan in 2015.

Yılmaz said: "After 2015, when the conflict process began again and the pressure on society increased, Turkey resorted to anti-democratic practices more and more frequently. We searched our archives from 2018 to the present and found that 81 citizens contacted us with allegations of spy recruitment by law enforcement authorities. We looked at the profiles of those affected and came across very different profiles. There are public workers, relatives of prisoners, union members and students who face these pressures. We believe that law enforcement is using this method to deter people fighting for their rights as well as unions. According to our archives, we received the first application for support on this topic in 2006."

After that, the recruitment of agents increased systematically, said Yılmaz, adding: "In some periods, we did not receive any applications, especially during the period of negotiation and resolution process between 2013 and 2015. We are of the opinion that the current situation in Turkey is an example of the work being done to resolve the Kurdish question as part of the supposed anti-terrorist struggle. When police officers, members of the security forces and people posing as secret service agents approach citizens in this way and make suggestions or threats to them, it is, to say the least, an offense that constitutes abuse of authority. At the same time, there are cases of psychological torture in the applications. Constant stalking, harassing people on the phone, visiting the workplace and making suggestions and threats for that matter have turned into psychological torture. Many applications contain information about threats and insults. Some of those affected do not want to go public with it. We are bound to the applicants' demands. The majority demands our support on this issue. They are asking us to take initiatives to end the threats and pressures they face. Based on these requests, we make inquiries to the Ministry of Interior, Diyarbakır Security Directorate and the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission and demand an investigation into the incidents. Many applications contain very detailed information; cell phone numbers, license plates and personal descriptions."

Yılmaz pointed out that very serious cases of forceful agent recruitment have been received recently, and said: "However, we have not received any feedback from the ministry on the requests made so far. This strengthens our belief that these people are actually civil servants. Otherwise, the state would address this issue and do something about this allegation. The lack of any explanation, any work on this matter and the silence on this issue strengthens our suspicion that the allegations are true and that the people committed these crimes by taking advantage of their public office. We want citizens to contact the Human Rights Association about any rights violations they have experienced. The IHD has almost 40 years of experience. Such violations can only be stopped by exposing those who cause them. We ask our citizens to contact human rights organizations, bar associations and public prosecutors' offices regarding this matter and any other rights violations they experience. These procedures deprive people of their freedom. We see citizens' applications as an important step in holding this regime accountable."

German police raid Kurdish association in Bremen

ANF | BREMEN | 16 JANUARY 2024

The Kurdish association Biratî in Bremen was raided and searched by the German police on Tuesday. The search began at six o'clock in the morning and drawers were broken open in the association's boardroom. The police confiscated two pictures of Abdullah Öcalan hanging on the wall as well as invitations to a cultural event that took place in Bremen in December.

At the same time, Kurdish activist Kadri S. was taken into custody after a raid on his flat in Bremen-Huckelriede.

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Police take 165 people into custody in new wave of political arrests

ANF | 16 JANUARY 2024

Turkish police raided many houses within the scope of the police political operation carried out in many cities. 165 people, including Peace Mothers, were detained during the raids.

Istanbul

Many houses were raided in Istanbul in the morning hours. Many women, including Peace Mothers, were taken into custody during the raids. Those detained were taken to the Istanbul Provincial Police Department.

The names of those detained are as follows: Justice Vigil activists Kumri Akgül and Gülsüm Öztürk, Peace Mothers Fatma Yılmaz and Bedia Gökguz, Women's Zamani Association President Dilek Başalan, DEM Party Women's Council member Beser Çelik, Free Women's Movement (TJA) activists Vetha Bingöl and Suna Kaymaz, HDP Yüksekova (Gever) former district co-chair Selcan Saygı, Mesopotamia Cultural Centre (MKM) artists Dilan Suyu and Zehra Suyu, Sihat Yılmaz, Şükran Tugay, Gönül Kahraman and Yusuf Açar.

Antep

Detention were carried out by police under the instructions of the Chief Public Prosecutor's Office in Antep (Dilok). Kamile Aras (55) and DEM Parti Youth Council member Ferhat Özmen were taken into custody in Güzelvadi. Aras and Özmen were taken to the provincial police headquarters. It was learned that the police went to the house of DEM Parti Youth Assembly member Bünyamin Doğan to detain him, but he was not at home.

Amed

Three people, Mehmet Oruçlu, Ferhat Çiçek and Umut Oktay, were taken into custody during house raids in Amed. The detained young people were taken to the provincial police headquarters.

Adana

Police raided some houses in Yüreğir following orders by the Adana Chief Public Prosecutor's Office on the grounds of "making propaganda for a terrorist organization". A woman named Berivan Akalın was detained and taken to the provincial police headquarters on the grounds that she was "making propaganda for a terrorist organization" through social media posts.

165 Detained in 28 Provinces

Turkish Minister of Internal Affairs Ali Yerlikaya announced that 165 people were taken into custody in 28 provinces.



KON-MED condemns criminalisation of Kurdish community in Germany

ANF | 17 JANUARY 2024

The umbrella organization for the self-organization of the Kurdish diaspora in Germany, KON-MED, condemned the raids and arrests of Kurdish associations and activists on Tuesday in Bremen and on 10 January in Hanover.

In the statement, the organization said: "We condemn the German state's attempts to criminalize Kurds and Kurdish institutions and call on Germany to distance itself from its stance towards Kurds."

The statement continued: "Both in Hanover and Bremen, the police searched Kurdish homes. In Bremen, at Biratî e.V., the administration room was vandalized and the desk drawers were broken. As KON-MED, the largest organization of the Kurdish community in Germany, we condemn this inhumane behaviour towards the Kurds by the police and their superior Ministry of the Interior!"

The statement added: "We appeal to the German Ministry of the Interior to stop criminalizing Kurds! Like other communities, Kurds living in Germany have the right to freedom of assembly within the framework of German law. Kurds who have come to Germany and settled here due to the repression of the Turkish state, which occupies our country, and the pressure from the states of Iran, Iraq and Syria, fulfil their tax obligations and also exercise their rights of freedom of association and freedom of expression, as required by a democratic society."

The statement also appealed “to the residents of Germany to protest against the attitude of the German state and the criminalization attempts of Kurds and Kurdish institutions.

Do not forget that the state institutions that prevent Kurds from exercising their basic human rights today will do the same to you tomorrow. The anti-Kurdish policy of the German Ministry of the Interior and Justice has become an all-consuming legal maelstrom. This maelstrom is targeting Kurds today, but tomorrow it will also affect you.

We call on the Kurds in Germany to stand up against this criminalization by the German state and to organize themselves. Now is the time to fight together against criminalization policies. Now it's time to live in solidarity. Now is the time for all Kurds in Germany to raise their voices against criminalization!”

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21 people remain in custody in Istanbul

ANF | ISTANBUL | 18 JANUARY 2024

During the police political operations carried out in 28 cities, including Istanbul, Amed, Adana and Antep, many people, including members of the Peace Mothers' Assembly and members of the People's Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) Youth Assembly, were taken into custody.

Those detained in Istanbul were taken to the Istanbul Provincial Police Department, where they learned that they had been taken into custody on the grounds of “membership in a terrorist organization”. A confidentiality decision was applied to the file.

The detention period for 21 people held at the police station was extended by one day.

The names of some of those detained are as follows:

“Justice Vigil activists Kumri Akgül and Gülsüm Öztürk, Peace Mothers Fatma Yılmaz and Bedia Gökguz, Women's Time Association President Dilek Başalan, DEM Party Women's Council member Beser Çelik, Free Women's Movement (TJA) activists Vetha Bingöl and Suna Kaymaz, HDP Gever (Yüksekova)) former District Co-chair Selcan Saygı, Mesopotamia Culture Association (MKM) artists Dilan Suyu and Zehra Suyu, Sihat Yılmaz, Şükran Tugay, Gönül Karaman and Yusuf Açar, Birgül Muhikancı, Nezihe Işık, Pervin Tumbul, Tülay Güler, Remzi Çelik, Zübeyde Aktay.”

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ECCHR and STJ urge German Federal Public Prosecutor's Office to investigate crimes in Afrin

ANF | 18 JANUARY 2024

Since 2018, armed militias with the support of Turkey have been committing crimes under international law in Afrin in northern Syria. To address these crimes, the human rights organizations the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR) and Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ) have filed a criminal complaint with the German Federal Public Prosecutor's Office.

Six years ago, in January 2018, Turkey and allied armed militias of the Syrian National Army (SNA) began bombing the Afrin region as part of the so-called "Olive Branch" military operation. The military offensive lasted over two months and led to the displacement of more than 300,000 civilians, the majority of whom were Kurds. With the support of Turkey, the armed militias established an arbitrary rule that continues to this day.

"Afrin's population, and especially its Kurdish citizens, have faced widespread and systematic violations since 2018. These abuses range from forced disappearances, arbitrary arrests and torture to sexual violence. The seizure of the local population's property through looting and occupation as well as exorbitant taxes prevent the displaced inhabitants of Afrin from returning to their homes and is intended to force those who remain to flee," explains Bassam Alahmad, Executive Director of STJ.

These human rights violations committed by pro-Turkish and Islamist militias are crimes under international law and can be investigated anywhere in the world. Together with six survivors of the crimes, STJ, ECCHR and their partners filed a criminal complaint with the German Federal Public Prosecutor's Office on 18 January 2024, calling for a comprehensive investigation of the perpetrators.

"Three years after my release from prison, I still find myself in a painful nightmare. Everything I experienced in Afrin was cruel. Because I know that the population still has to live in similar conditions, I have dedicated my life to bring the injustice to the attention of the world, in the hope that justice will be done and that the perpetrators will be held accountable," says one survivor and complainant.

So far, the crimes of the Assad regime and Islamist groups, such as Jabhat al-Nusra and ISIS, have been the focus of investigations by the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office. However, the suffering experienced by the predominantly Kurdish civilian population in northwestern Syria has not yet been addressed.

"Since 2011, the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office has been investigating many human rights crimes committed in Syria. The trial on Syrian state torture before the Koblenz Higher Regional Court was groundbreaking. However, the atrocities committed by predominantly Islamist militias against the Kurdish population in northern Syria have so far been a blind spot in these investigations. This must change, as the militias ruling in Afrin have established a reign of violence and arbitrariness with Turkish support," comments Patrick Kroker, who is responsible for ECCHR's work on Syria.

ECCHR has been working since 2012 to address the serious crimes committed in Syria. Together with around 100 torture survivors, Syrian and European partner organizations, ECCHR has filed a number of criminal complaints in Germany, Austria, Sweden and Norway against high-ranking members of the Syrian security apparatus.

Afrin occupied since 2018

Afrin, also known as Çiyayê Kurmênc, is a city located in the western part of Rojava, 63 km away from Aleppo and 90 percent of its residents are Kurds (pre-occupation figures). Before it was occupied by the Turkish state after intense attacks in 2018, Yazidis, Arabs and Armenians lived in unity and solidarity in the city, which has 6 districts and nearly 400 villages. Despite being exposed to a massive migration wave from Syria's other cities such as Aleppo, Deraa, Homs, Idlib, Hama and Raqqa in 2011, the city maintained peace and stability for Syria as well. It was also a potential economic hub.

The hegemonic powers that regarded the democratic management model in North-East Syria as a threat to their own interests, found a pretext and made the fascist Turkish Republic to invade Afrin on January 20, 2018, under the name "Operation Olive Branch". With this attack, fascist chief Erdoğan was planning to invade the city with his army in a few days. However, an outstanding resistance was put up for 58 days under the leadership of YPG and YPJ forces with the broad participation of the people.

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 Air Force 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.

Turkey has more than 50 military bases in the city which has been under occupation for more than 5 years. Moreover, various crimes including kidnapping, pillage, theft, torture, rape, cultural historical genocide and demographic change have been committed in almost all the streets of the city. Around 700 civil-

ians have been tortured and killed, and around 9,000 others have been kidnapped. These figures cover only the crimes that were reported. There are also those whose whereabouts remain unknown. Furthermore, many media outlets and human rights organizations revealed that more than 100 historical sites were plundered and nearly 400,000 trees were cut down in the city.

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Armenian intellectual and Agos editor Hrant Dink was killed in Istanbul 17 years ago

ANF | ISTANBUL | 19 JANUARY 2024

Prominent Turkish Armenian journalist Hrant Dink was murdered in Istanbul on 19 January 2007. He was Agos newspaper editor and had written and spoken at length about the 1915 Armenian Genocide. He was well known for his efforts for reconciliation between Turks and Armenians.

At the time of his death, he was on trial for violating Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code and “denigrating Turkishness”.

Dink was assassinated in Istanbul at around 12:00 GMT on 19 January 2007 as he returned to the offices of Agos.

The killer was reported to have introduced himself as an Ankara University student who wanted to meet with Mr. Dink. When his request was rejected, he waited in front of a nearby bank for a while. According to eyewitnesses, Dink was shot by a man of 25 to 30 years of age, who fired three shots at Dink’s head from the back at point blank range before fleeing the scene on foot. According to the police, the assassin was a man of 18 to 19 years of age. Two men had been taken into custody in the first hours of the police investigation, but were later released.

One day after the assassination, the police announced that the shooter had been identified from video footage collected through both the Istanbul MOBESE electronic surveillance network (4,000+ cameras throughout the city) and local security cameras. They later released photos to the public while urging every citizen to aid with the investigation.

News agencies reported that the shooter had been identified as “Ogün Samast”, a teenager born in 1990 and registered as residing in Trabzon.

Samast’s father identified him from the publicly released photos and alerted the authorities. Six people, including Samast’s friend Yasin Hayal, who had been involved in a bombing of a McDonald’s restaurant in Trabzon in 2004, were taken into custody and brought to Istanbul.

On 25 July 2011 Samast was convicted of murder and possession of arms by the Heavy Juvenile Criminal Court. He was sentenced to 22 years and 10 months in prison.

On 16 January 2012, Istanbul 14. Heavy Criminal Court ruled that there was no conspiracy behind the assassination and stated that the murder was an ordinary killing. Yasmin Hayal was found guilty of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment, while two other men were found guilty of assisting him and sentenced to 12 years and 6 months in prison.”

In 2013, a secret witness told prosecutors of JITEM and Gendarmerie involvement in Dink’s murder.

On 12 January 2015, arrest warrants were issued for two police officers, making them the first public servants arrested in the investigation.

A Turk convicted of aiding and abetting the murder of Armenian journalist Hrant Dink has begun serving his prison sentence after years on the run. Ahmet Iskender was found guilty by an Istanbul court in 2012 of helping the ultranationalist Ogün Samast, who was convicted of the murder of Armenian paper *Agos* editor-in-chief Hrant Dink. Iskender received twelve and a half years in prison because he disposed of the murder weapon, gave the assassin money and provided him with his telephone. This sentence was confirmed by the Turkish Court of Cassation in 2013. In 2019, he was given another two years in prison for membership of an armed terrorist organization.

However, Ahmet Iskender, who was arrested together with the assassin and three other accomplices a few days after the murder of Hrant Dink on January 24, 2007, had already absconded abroad shortly after his release from custody in July of the same year.

In 2015, it emerged that he was staying in Belgium. In early March, the Kyrgyz Interior Ministry then announced that it had apprehended Ahmet Iskender in the capital Bishkek on February 26.

The 38-year-old used a forged identity card and driver's license to identify himself and was subsequently arrested for illegal possession of weapons, organized crime and document forgery.

Samast released in 2023

Ogün Samast, who killed Hrant Dink, was released on 15 November 2023.

Samast was caught at Samsun bus terminal on 20 January 2007 and sent to prison on 24 January 2007. In February 2023, he was transferred from Kandıra F Type prison to Bolu F Type prison. The prison administration decided to release Samast on the grounds of his “good behavior”.

DEP co-chair Tülay Hatimoğulları said: “Gültan Kışanak, Selahattin Demirtaş, Osman Kavala, Can Atalay are in prison just because of their thoughts, but Ogün Samast, the murderer of Hrant Dink, is free! We will continue our fight against this discriminatory execution practice by the government, those responsible for Hrant's murder and the political power behind it. We will continue our struggle for peace, which our beloved Hrant left us as a legacy.”

Six people imprisoned in Şırnak and Osmaniye

ANF | 19 JANUARY 2024

3 of 10 people who were detained in house raids in Şırnak and its districts 3 days ago were arrested.

Those detained in house raids conducted within the scope of the investigation by Şırnak Chief Public Prosecutor's Office were kept in Şırnak Provincial Security Directorate. After the procedures here, the detainees were referred to Şırnak Courthouse on the charge of “making propaganda of an illegal organisation”.

While 3 people were imprisoned on the grounds of social media posts, 7 people were released on judicial control conditions.

On the other hand, house raids were conducted in 28 cities, including Istanbul, Amed, Adana and Antep on 16 January.

15 people who were detained in Osmaniye, Adana, Hatay, Mersin and Antalya on the allegation of “making propaganda for an illegal organisation” were brought before a judge in their cities on Friday.

In Osmaniye, where 6 people had been detained, the Criminal Magistracy of Peace ruled for the imprisonment of 3 people and the release of 3 others under judicial control.

In the meantime, Berivan Akalın who was detained in Adana, DEM Party Provincial Organisation executive Şevket Temel and Berivan Iğın who were detained in Antalya, Newroz Baran, Gamze Baran, Hüseyin Sapa, Ramazan Sapa and Rojat Töre who were detained in Erzin district of Hatay, Abdulhalim Sungur who was detained in Toroslar district of Mersin, have been released.

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Interview

Muslim: Kurds fought for a place in the Middle East - Part Two

CEMIL EBDO | ROJ DENİZ | SHEHBA | 13 JANUARY 2024

Salih Muslim, co-chair of the PYD, analyzed the changing political conditions in the Middle East in an in-depth interview with ANF.

In the [first part](#) of the interview, the Kurdish politician underlined that Turkey's political, economic and social collapse can only be stopped by resolving the Kurdish question.

In the second part of the interview, Muslim described the state's involvement in the drug trade and the influence of the so-called “Gang of Five” on politics in Turkey: The five companies Cengiz, Limak, Kolin, Kalyon and Makyol control a large part of the economy in Turkey divided and receive the majority of state contracts, for which troops are sent abroad and jihadists are recruited as mercenaries in Syria.

The Kurds have, meanwhile, fought for a place in the Middle East. Salih Muslim said world powers are still undecided about how to respond to the coexistence project being practiced in Northern and Eastern Syria.

In recent years, the Turkish state has intervened in Azerbaijan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, the Russia-Ukrainian war and many African countries. What goal did Turkey pursue with this?

For its neo-Ottoman project, the Turkish state must bring about changes at home and abroad. It wanted to change something using its own methods, and now Turkey's fate is in the hands of the capital. Five companies in Turkey have everything in their hands. They are the ones who control foreign policy. An elite group now runs Turkish politics, and they are all in the service of Erdoğan.

Apart from these companies, there are other organizations. They include the MHP and Ergenekon. They are responsible for the entire drug trade in Turkey and have relationships with mafia gangs spread across the world. Tons of drugs from Latin America are transported to Europe via Turkey. The situation in Turkey is very chaotic and representatives of the state are involved in these criminal networks. An investigation was started but was not completed because that would have gone too far.

Five Turkish companies wanted to get involved everywhere

These five companies wanted to get involved everywhere in order to expand their empire even further. For example, in Libya. In the 1970s and 1980s they maintained relations with Libya over the oil issue. When the situation in Libya changed, troops were deployed. And when their own soldiers became a problem, they recruited mercenaries in Syria and sent them there. In order to open a trade corridor from Armenia, they turned their attention to Azerbaijan. They even spoke of Azerbaijan as a nation living in two states. After a while, they had to stop because that would have meant dealing with Iran or other giants.

Their investments in Africa, in Sudan, in Nigeria, in Kenya, involved million dollar projects that all went bankrupt. They acted very uncontrollably. Their neo-Ottoman dreams were crumbling day by day. Their own politics turning against them. This led to a major economic problem in Turkey. Where have all the millions of dollars invested in African countries gone? This question has still not been resolved. Why were troops sent to Somalia? None of this is clear.

The Kurdish question is like a black hole

Erdoğan turned politics in the service of these five corporations and thought that in this way he could create a new Ottoman Empire. Now Turkey is on the verge of bankruptcy and cannot solve its own problems. The Kurdish question is like a black hole. Although the figures are not official, it is said that a trillion dollars were spent on the Kurdish question. It is also said that 110,000 people have died in the war against the Kurds so far. The war continues, and it is not clear how far it will go.

Erdoğan's rule is a major threat not only to the people of Turkey and the region, but also to Europe. Look at whom the Turkish state has taken under its wing. There are terrorists from all over the world in Turkey and the areas it occupies in Northern Syria. ISIS emirs, Jabhat al-Nusra, the al-Qaeda affiliate Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, are all there. Erdoğan has gathered these jihadist gangs around him and is using them as a threat to the world. The entire policy of the Turkish state is based on blackmail. With this understanding, the Turkish state cannot pursue either domestic or foreign policy. That's why Turkey's end looks very bleak.

The Kurdish question and the reshaping of the Middle East

We should not forget one fact: for a long time, the Kurds simply did not exist in international politics. After 1923, after the Treaty of Lausanne, they no longer figured in the global balance of power. Only with the imperialist project of redesigning the Middle East were they gradually included in the calculations again. One of the results is the autonomous system created in South Kurdistan, which meets the standards of this project. However, the Kurds are not limited to this region. There are 50 million Kurds in the world. If they were united and made a common policy, then they would have a great influence on world politics.

Such a system should be created not only in Iraq, but also in Syria. There was the Rojava Revolution, which created the autonomous region of Northern and Eastern Syria. People have resisted and defended themselves. The Kurds are now part of the equation. However, a new situation has arisen here. The mere existence of the Kurds might have been accepted, but the Kurds also have their own projects. And it is a project of fraternity and unity of peoples. Recently a new social contract was declared.

The world powers have not yet decided

This project applies not only to Northern and Eastern Syria, but to all of Syria and the Middle East. Everyone has recognized this, including the world powers, Turkey and the regional forces. Everyone was wondering what to do in light of this fact. Some of them, such as Turkey, Iran and Syria, have become enemies of this project. They still want to enslave the Kurds. On the other hand, there are world powers that are just watching and wondering whether to recognize it or not. It's a very different project than her own, and that leads to her indecision. They haven't made a decision yet. Turkey is opposed to this project, but they have not yet decided.

On the other hand, they have had agreements with Turkey since 1952. They still have common interests to this day. However, it is becoming clearer every day whether they will accept this project or not. But it is still not decided, so they remain silent towards the Turkish state. And Turkey is raising the whip against anyone who wants to have a dialogue with it. They have made many agreements with each other for seventy years. Of course, they will not accept our project so easily because they will not give up their own interests. Of course, for this reason, we also have difficulties. On the one hand, the hostile states that act barbarically against us, and on the other hand, the hesitation of the powers that are supposedly friendly to us to recognize our project or not. This means that the situation remains unclear. However, I believe that thanks to the resistance of our people, we have become part of the Middle East equation. No one can leave us out of the Middle East equation. If they want stability, then they should rethink their own policies and recognize the autonomous administration. But if they continue to insist on their old policies, they will not achieve stability.

There is a possibility that the war between Hamas and the Israeli state could spread to other countries. What should the Damascus government's policy be in this process?

Since the Baathists came to power in 1963, politics in Damascus has never been concerned with internal problems. Damascus has always focused on foreign policy and dealt with issues such as the Palestinian question and the Arab League. There is no democratic development in Syria and the population is dissatisfied. Therefore, Damascus must change its policies and solve the problems of the Kurds, Syrians and other populations inside Syria. As long as the internal problems are not solved, Syria cannot do anything externally. If you can't please the people in your own country, you can't make progress. Various forces are taking advantage of the incompetence in Damascus. The Muslim Brotherhood didn't play a role before, but it has come to the fore in Syria in this turmoil. Syria has never been closer to a solution, but it is not too late, it can still be done. If all the Syrian people came together, discussed their own problems, and reached an agreement within themselves, then we would have nothing else to say. There is a massacre in Palestine today where civilians and children are being murdered. But how can I help him if I cannot achieve unity within myself? First of all, I will develop solutions and opportunities within myself so that I can help those outside of myself. But today the situation in Syria is not good. Today, there will be autonomous administration within Syria, there will be others. We need to find a solution together. The solution to the Palestinian problem is not possible with Hamas and Netanyahu. The solution is for the Jewish and Palestinian peoples, who are part of the Middle East, to come together and find a way to live together. They have to decide. If they want to remain two friendly states, they can do that. When one threatens the other with destruction, it is from a fascist and chauvinistic understanding of the nation-state. And this understanding is not suitable for the Middle East.

As long as the government in Damascus clings to power, it cannot bring about a solution because the people are not on their side and do not accept their position. The solution lies in the hands of the Syrian people. First of all, the Kurdish question must be solved. Without this, the problem in Syria cannot be solved.



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