

THE IMRALI POST

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

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Contents

Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan.....	3
Lawyers apply to visit Abdullah Öcalan and the other 3 prisoners in Imrali.....	3
Kurds in Avignon continue hunger strike to demand freedom for Abdullah Öcalan.....	4
Kurds from Salzgitter take over Freedom for Öcalan Vigil in Strasbourg.....	4
Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan Initiative collects nearly 3 million signatures in North-East Syria.....	5
Prisons.....	5
Political prisoner released after 30 years in jail.....	5
Selahattin Demirtaş protests against degrading treatment.....	6
OLG Hamburg: The court shows its face.....	6
Kurdish politician Mehmet Çakas: Kurdish is de facto banned in German prison.....	8
Demirtaş lawyers say body search practice ended after protests.....	9
Kurdish political prisoner Ghassemi enters ninth day of hunger strike in Urmia prison.....	9
Seriously ill prisoner dies shortly after been released.....	11
Military aggression and occupation.....	11
Turkey bombs village in Shehba, wounds two people.....	11
YBŞ commander killed in Turkish drone attack in Shengal.....	11
KCK condemns the Turkish massacre of civilians in Southern Kurdistan, vowing to avenge the martyrs.....	13
Turkish fighter jets attack a village in Amadiya.....	14
10th anniversary of the Qamishlo People's Municipality massacre by ISIS.....	15
KCK: Resistance against attacks of denial and extermination is also a form of worship for Muslims.....	18
Access ban to Mount Gabar in Şırnak extended for the sixth time.....	21
KCK: In memory of the victims of the Gazi and Qamishlo Massacres.....	21
Ten years ago, the Qamishlo Uprising.....	23
PUK: We will take back Hewlêr occupied by the KDP.....	24
Jabar Yawer: Turkish state aims to enter the vicinity of Qandil and Sulaymaniyah.....	24
Turkish operational plans in Southern Kurdistan are being fleshed out.....	25
Turkish officials hold talks in Baghdad amid reports of an imminent cross-border operation.....	25
KCK: The Turkish State is the biggest threat for Iraq.....	26
Tevgera Azadi calls on Iraq not to be a partner in Turkish crimes.....	28
Femicide.....	29
KJK: The only way to stop the modern age of barbarism is to organize the women's revolution.....	29
Four women activists taken into custody in Istanbul.....	30
TAJÊ: Against femicide, be the voice of self-defense.....	31
Three women killed while picking mushrooms in Deir ez-Zor.....	33
Newroz 2024.....	34
Newroz 2024 declaration published.....	34

Newroz celebrations begin in Rojhilat.....	35
DEM Party members detained for distributing Newroz leaflet in Istanbul.....	36
Newroz fire lit in Batman.....	36
KCDK-E calls for participation in Newroz rallies in Europe.....	37
Local Elections in Turkey.....	38
17 people in Suruç sent to prison.....	38
Hazir: This election is vital for Kurds to govern themselves.....	38
DEM party campaign vehicle attacked in Kayseri.....	39
19-year-old member of DEM Party Youth Council tortured by Turkish soldiers with pliers.....	39
Syriacs announce their support for DEM Party in March 31 elections.....	40
DTK Co-Chair Berdan Öztürk: The country I live in is Kurdistan.....	41
Feminists in solidarity with Gültan Kışanak running for mayor of Ankara.....	42
Human Rights Violations.....	43
Nine of the 17 people taken into custody in Ankara sent to prison.....	43
16 people abducted in Turkish-occupied Afrin in one week.....	43
ESP member Gökçe Otlı jailed in Ankara.....	44
Emine Şenyaşar to resume her Justice Vigil.....	44
Still no news of Rojnews editor Silêman Ehmed in KDP custody for 138 days.....	45
Access to Mezopotamya Agency blocked by court.....	46
Emine Şenyaşar protests once again in front of Ministry of Justice.....	47
Eğitim-Sen protests suggestions that school in Van could close for rally with Erdoğan.....	47
Teenager killed in Afrin.....	48
Eğitim-Sen: There is a policy aimed at dissolving the identity of the Kurdish people.....	48
Political genocide operation in Osmaniye: 7 detained.....	49
Interview.....	50
Karasu: Now is the time to destroy the gates of Imrali.....	50
Karasu: When conspiracy is defeated, the genocidal colonialist policy will collapse.....	53
Response to allegations made by US Secretary of State Blinken concerning the PKK.....	57
Karayılan: The freedom campaign will grow even more with the fire of Newroz.....	59
Opinion.....	65
Turkey's Kurdish policy and the future of the KDP.....	65



Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

Lawyers apply to visit Abdullah Öcalan and the other 3 prisoners in Imrali

ANF | ISTANBUL | 12 MARCH 2024

Lawyers of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan once again applied to the Bursa Chief Public Prosecutor's Office and the Imralı Penal Institution Directorate, requesting to visit their client.

The applications were made by Raziye Öztürk, Rezan Sarıca, Faik Özgür Erol and Mazlum Dinç, lawyers of Asrın Law Office.

The lawyers also applied to meet with their other clients Ömer Hayri Konar, Hamili Yıldırım and Veysi Aktaş in İmralı.

There has been no news from Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan since 25 March 2021.

The Istanbul-based Asrın Law Office, released a statement back in February harshly criticizing the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT), which did not visit İmralı during its latest visit to Turkey between 13 and 22 February.

The lawyers said that "the approach of the CPT is neither compatible with the prohibition of torture nor with its duty to prevent conditions of torture. While illegal disciplinary penalties and unlawful bans on lawyers imposed by execution judgeships are systematically imposed one after another, while the conditions of execution and 'judicial processes' are closed to the lawyer's review and supervision, while the right to defense has been completely suspended in İmralı, while all ties with the outside world, especially lawyer and family visits, have been severed for almost three years, while lawyers have no information about the conditions of detention and their health status, it is an unacceptable approach to raise the issue only in meetings with the authorities."

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Kurds in Avignon continue hunger strike to demand freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

ANF | AVIGNON | 12 MARCH 2024

A second group of activists took over the alternating hunger strike launched by the European Kurdish Women's Movement (TJK-E) in Avignon, on 8 March, International Working Women's Day, within the scope of the "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, Solution to the Kurdish Question" initiative.

The three Kurdish women who started the action, handed over the hunger strike to a new group and called on everyone to join the protest.

— ★ —

Kurds from Salzgitter take over Freedom for Öcalan Vigil in Strasbourg

ANF | STRASBOURG | 14 MARCH 2024

The Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan Initiative launched the Freedom for Öcalan Vigil in Strasbourg on 25 June 2012.

Every week, a group of Kurds from different European countries takes over the vigil.

In its 611th week, Ali Binici, Medine Çobanoğlu, Baran Esen and Nevzet Gökteş from the city of Salzgitter in Lower Saxony, took over the vigil.

Medine Çobanoğlu said: “Our leader has been isolated by the enemy for 25 years. We must protect our leader no matter what. The Kurdish people cannot be free unless our leader is free.”

Ali Binici said that they have been protesting in front of European institutions for the freedom of Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan for 12 years.

Binici also drew attention to the upcoming local elections in Turkey (on 31 March) and called on the Kurdish people to vote for the DEM Party.



Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan Initiative collects nearly 3 million signatures in North-East Syria

ANF | 15 MARCH 2024

The Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan Initiative in Syria launched a signature campaign in North and East Syria on 9 February to demand the physical freedom of Kurdish People’s Leader Abdullah Öcalan, who has been held in solitary confinement in the Imrali Island Prison in Turkey and has not been heard from for 36 months.

In a statement on Friday, the Initiative announced that 2,876,709 signatures have been collected in 35 days. According to the initiative, the target of the campaign is 3 million signatures and the activities will continue until this target is reached.

The signatures collected within the scope of the campaign will be sent to the Council of Europe on April 4, the birthday of the Kurdish leader.



Prisons

Political prisoner released after 30 years in jail

ANF | ANTEP | 9 MARCH 2024

Şeref Türk, who was imprisoned for 30 years for political reasons, was released from Antep H Type Closed Prison on Friday. After being detained in Muş in 1994, Türk was sentenced to life imprisonment at the State Security Court (DGM) on the charge of “disrupting the unity and integrity of the state”. Turk was released after completing his 30-year sentence, i.e. three-quarters of his original sentence.

Along with his family, Emine Kaya, co-chair of the Federation of Legal Solidarity Associations of Detainees and Convict Families (TUHAD-FED), Amed Branch of the Association for Assistance with Detainees' Families (TUAY-DER) and People's Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) Antep executives were waiting to welcome Türk in front of the prison.



Selahattin Demirtaş protests against degrading treatment

ANF | 13 MARCH 2024

According to lawyer Ramazan Demir, his client Selahattin Demirtaş is being subjected to degrading treatment in Turkish custody and no longer leaves his cell for visits. Former HDP leader Demirtaş was arrested in 2016 and is being held in a high-security prison in Edirne.

Lawyer Demir announced today via X that the Turkish Ministry of Justice has ordered a new search measure against Demirtaş shortly before the local elections. According to the order, the Kurdish politician is to take off his shoes in front of a camera every time he leaves and enters his cell. Demirtaş considers this measure to be degrading and unacceptable and has declared that he will no longer leave his cell for visits from family members, lawyers and MPs, according to Ramazan Demir.



OLG Hamburg: The court shows its face

ANF | HAMBURG | 14 MARCH 2024

Right at the beginning of the 21st day of the trial against Kenan Ayaz at the Hamburg Higher Regional Court on March 12, 2024, presiding judge Wende-Spohrs made it clear what she wanted to do with this trial: demonstrate her position of power - to Kenan Ayaz, his defense and the visitors.

As on many other days of the trial, a number of people showed their solidarity with Kenan Ayaz, exercising their right in this public trial. This seemed to provoke the presiding judge. She had reacted aggressively several times in the past when the audience was seemingly too noisy or if someone from the audience pointed out that they could not properly hear due to lack of volume. This was also the case on that day when the court's decision was read out that Kenan Ayaz was not allowed to finish his statement on the expert opinion of Dr. Günter Seufert.

It seems grotesque, almost like a real-life satire, if you can imagine what happened next: the judge reacted to the above-mentioned announcement by shouting that the person in the audience had to be quiet. After all, she had tested the acoustics of the room herself. She did not say under what circumstances she had tested it. In any case, she could not be heard that morning. This is most likely due to the fact that the technology is inadequate and the visitors have to sit behind a glass panel. The audience again pointed out the volume problem. The judge took this as an opportunity to threaten to fine them if they continued to speak. A member of the defense team then took the floor and was promptly interrupted loudly by Wende-Spohrs. She withdrew the lawyer's right to speak and said he was not allowed to interrupt her reading of the decision. Since the lawyer only tried to point out the audience could not hear properly the second defense lawyer criticized that he was not allowed to speak. Upon this, the judge loudly pointed out that she also did not have the floor at the moment and accused her of being hard of hearing. But that was not enough! After the lawyer again objected that her colleague was not allowed to speak, the judge shouted at her: "You shut up now!" The other attorney rightly took this as an insult, articulated it, and asked for a recess. Wende-Spohrs again shouted at the defense team that they did not have the floor.

Court revokes Kenan Ayaz's right to speak

The judge then read the court's order prohibiting Kenan Ayaz from reading the remaining pages of his statement dealing with the testimony of the expert witness, Dr. Seufert. This part of her reading was now easier to understand. Apparently, the audience's intervention had been heard and the judge made more effort to speak loudly and clearly. The day before the presiding judge had already threatened Kenan Ayaz that he would be deprived of his right to speak. The judge alleged that Kenan Ayaz expressed his own opinion in his statement and explained his own knowledge about the Kurdish-Turkish conflict instead of only dealing with the expert's statement. However, even the representative of the Office of the Federal Public Prosecutor argued that Kenan Ayaz should be allowed to continue his testimony. This was done by the prosecution in the hope that "further statements would make concrete reference to the expert opinion".

But once again, the stand of the court was harsher than that of the prosecution and would not allow Kenan to continue his testimony. He had only 10 pages left out of the 40 pages of testimony. The reason

given for the court order was that the statement “for the most part [did] not refer to the statements of the expert witness Dr. Seufert in a sufficiently concrete way, but [...] mainly consisted of a series of political statements, his own opinions and his own assessments of the Turkish-Kurdish conflict”. And it further alleged that the only aim of Kenan Ayaz was to give his own expert opinion “on the role of the PKK” and which was – in the opinion of the court - also expressed in Kenan Ayaz question to the judged: “Why don’t you want to hear something about the Kurds from a Kurd?” This decision and the reason given by court only illustrates the bias of the court on the one hand and the anti-Kurdish racism towards Kenan Ayaz on the other hand.

Motion to recuse the judges, the second

As expected, after what had happened the defense filed the second motion on behalf of Kenan Ayaz to dismiss the panel of three judges for showing bias against him. The defense lawyers claimed on behalf of Kenan Ayaz that he had “justified reasons to doubt the impartiality of the rejected judges”.

This was substantiated by the decision not to allow Kenan Ayaz to finish his statement on the testimony of the expert witness and by the behavior of the presiding judge, who shouted at the representatives of the public and the defense team and her language used towards the lawyers that was “completely inappropriate and ultimately insulting”. The defense further explained in detail why the decision to stop Kenan Ayaz from speaking was not only unlawful, but also showed the bias of the judges, as Kenan Ayaz had repeatedly taken great pains to explain to the court how his statement was related to the testimony of the expert witness. It seemed to the audience that the problem was not Kenan Ayaz’ testimony, but that the court had no knowledge about the history of the Kurdish struggle and the repression it suffered by the Turkish state and therefore could not understand the sometimes inexplicit ways in which Kenan Ayaz’ testimony dealt with the testimony of the expert witness. The defense also pointed out that Kenan Ayaz compared old public statements of the expert witness with his testimony in court. They said that Kenan Ayaz was only pointing out that these old statements and writings were a mostly accurate description of the conflict and that there was no apparent reason why the expert witness had changed his analyses when he came before the court. As Kenan Ayaz had pointed out the expert witness now described the conflict in line with the prosecution.

At the end of the trial day, the defense began to file an extensive motion attacking the political nature of the trial and the prosecution’s case. As this could not be completed, the trial will continue on March 20.

Kurdish politician Mehmet Çakas: Kurdish is de facto banned in German prison

ANF | 14 MARCH 2024

After seeing his asylum application rejected by Germany, Kurdish politician Mehmet Çakas applied for political asylum in Italy and was extradited to Germany in March 2023 at the request of the German state and imprisoned. The trial of Çakas, who is being tried under the 129b law, continues.

Kurdish politician Mehmet Çakas, who has been imprisoned in Germany for a year for his political activities, said, “Wherever there is a Kurd who defends his language, identity, honor and national values, he is declared a ‘terrorist’.”

Speaking to Yeni Özgür Politika newspaper, Çakas stated that he did not even throw garbage on the ground in Germany, where he has resided for six years, and said, “As a Kurdish individual who has been subjected to all forms of state terror for 40 years, I am accused of being a terrorist in a so-called democratic state of law where I have not violated any law. This is an admission of complicity in supporting the Turkish state, which turns the crime of genocide inside out with the manipulation of ‘anti-terrorism’.”

Stating that they are entitled to 4 hours of family visits per month, Çakas explained that speaking Kurdish is forbidden during these visits: “The meetings take place under the supervision of police and interpreters. Although the interpreters mostly speak Kurdish, speaking a third language other than German and Turkish is not allowed. So Kurdish is de facto forbidden.”

The Kurdish politician remarked that he was not really interested in the sentence, but focused on the state terror that Kurds were subjected to as a people throughout the trial. Çakas said, “During the trial, the issue I focused on the most was the label of ‘terror’ imposed on us Kurds. As I stated in court, as a Kurdish individual who did not even throw garbage on the ground in Germany, where I have resided for 6 years, being accused of being a ‘terrorist’ on trivial grounds is the reflection of a big game being played on us as a people. The insulting part is that the label of ‘terrorism’, which is determined according to economic-political interests and alliance relations, puts us Kurds, whose very existence is under threat, in the position of collective criminals. They claim that not all Kurds are labeled as terrorists, but wherever there is a Kurd who stands up for his/her language, identity, dignity and national values and opposes genocide, he/she is labeled a ‘terrorist’. As such, it becomes irrelevant whether they call me personally a ‘terrorist’ or not. We Kurds, the biggest victims of 100 years, are struggling to prove that we are not terrorists when we should be holding them to account.”

Demirtaş lawyers say body search practice ended after protests

ANF | 15 MARCH 2024

The imposition of the body search on Selahattin Demirtaş, the former co-chair of the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), initiated upon the directive of the Ministry of Justice, has come to an end.

During a scheduled visit on Wednesday, Demirtaş was required by the prison guards to remove his shoes.

In response to the imposition of such a requirement, Demirtaş announced that he would not meet with his family, members of parliament, or his lawyers.

Demirtaş's lawyers and the Democracy and Progress Party (DEM) held discussions with the Ministry of Justice.

Demirtaş's lawyer, Ramazan Demir, said on his social media account that the imposition of shoe removal had been abandoned following negotiations.

The statement, shared under the signature of the "Demirtaş Defense Team," said: "The unlawful imposition of removing shoes from our client, Mr. Selahattin Demirtaş, both before and after lawyer visits, has been abandoned as a result of the negotiations.

We thank everyone for their sensitivity and support, and convey the greetings of our client, Mr. Demirtaş."

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Kurdish political prisoner Ghassemi enters ninth day of hunger strike in Urmia prison

ANF | 15 MARCH 2024

The Kurdistan Human Rights Net (KHRN) said in a report that Kurdish political prisoner Kamran Ghassemi has entered the ninth day of his hunger strike in solitary confinement in Urmia (Orumiyeh) Central Prison, West Azerbaijan Province, in protest at the refusal of prison officials and the Ministry of Intelligence to grant him leave and conditional release.

The KHRN added that Ghassemi was transferred to solitary confinement after announcing his hunger strike on 5 March and has since been denied the right to contact and visit his family.

Despite having served more than half of his seven and a half year sentence, he remains denied the right to furlough and conditional release due to opposition from prison officials and the Ministry of Intelligence in Urmia.

The KHRN said that “according to the families of political prisoners, prison officials and the special office of the Ministry of Intelligence in Orumiyeh Central Prison have reportedly made their agreement to any request for medical leave, access to specialised medical services and conditional release dependent on the cooperation of prisoners and families with the security services.”

The KHRN said that “on 26 February, Kurdish political prisoner Shahin Gallehdar committed suicide in the high security ward for political and religious prisoners in Orumiyeh Central Prison after the security services refused his request for medical leave and conditional release.

Two days later, Kurdish prisoner Hassan Omarpour set himself on fire and suffered severe burns on his foot after prison guards raided the ward. Ashkan Osmannezhad, a co-defendant, also suffered burns while trying to extinguish the fire.”

Background

Ghassemi was arrested by security forces on 8 October 2019 along with four other civilians, Nayeb Hajizadeh, Omid Saeidi, Keyvan Rashozadeh and Abdolaziz Mohammadpour, and taken to the Ministry of Intelligence detention facility in Urmia.

After a month of interrogation, they were transferred to the youth section of Urmia Central Prison.

In December 2020, after a year of uncertainty, Branch Two of the Islamic Revolutionary Court of Urmia sentenced each of them to ten years and one day in prison on charges of “acting against national security” through “membership of the Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan”.

Ghassemi’s initial sentence was later reduced to seven years and six months.

In December 2020, Ghassemi, Saeidi and Rashozadeh went on a week-long hunger strike in the youth section of Urmia Central Prison in protest against the uncertainty surrounding their case, pressure from the Ministry of Intelligence’s Special Office and the authorities’ failure to adhere to the principle of separation of crimes.

On 26 June 2021, prison authorities insulted and disrespected Ghassemi’s family during a family meeting. This incident led to objections from the political prisoner, resulting in prison guards beating him in the presence of his family.

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Seriously ill prisoner dies shortly after been released

ANF | 15 MARCH 2024

Seriously ill prisoner Ismet Çardak, who was being treated for a muscle wasting disease called “genetic myopathy” in Elazığ R Type Closed Prison, was eventually released from jail on 28 February after a report

prepared by the Forensic Medicine Institute (ATK) said “he cannot survive on his own”. Çardak, who had difficulty walking, left the prison in a wheelchair.

Çardak died Thursday after suffering a heart attack at his home. He was buried in Yeniköy Cemetery by his family and loved ones.

İsmet Çardak was arrested in 1992 and sentenced to life imprisonment. He contracted a genetic muscle disease called “genetic myopathy” in prison. His disease progressed as a result of incorrect treatment.

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Military aggression and occupation

Turkey bombs village in Shehba, wounds two people

ANF | SHEHBA | 9 MARCH 2024

The Turkish state bombarded the village of Şêx Isa in the Shehba region with heavy weapons, wounding two people.

Mihemed Talib Hamadan (40) was injured in his abdomen and right thigh, while his son Talib Mihemed Hamadan (17) was injured on the left side of his abdomen.

It was stated that the injured were being treated at Avrin Hospital and their condition was serious.

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YBŞ commander killed in Turkish drone attack in Shengal

ANF | SHENGAL | 9 MARCH 2024

An attack by an unmanned combat aerial vehicle belonging to the occupying Turkish state on Friday evening claimed the life of one of the fighters of the Shengal Resistance Units (YBŞ) in the village of Rezka in the Yazidi town of Shengal (Sinjar) in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

In a statement on Saturday, YBŞ said the following:

The occupying Turkish state has once again brutally attacked Shengal. These invasion attacks against the Yazidi people are not the first and show that the Turkish state wants to continue the genocide of the Yazidi people. There are very serious attacks on the Yazidi community’s right to self-defense and self-government. Especially in recent years, the enemy has only one goal, and that is to realize their dream of occupation.

On this basis, it is putting all its power and dirty plans into action. The occupying Turkish state has never been satisfied with the defeat of ISIS in this area and the establishment of a Democratic Autonomous Administration and independent military force in Shengal, and has always wanted to eliminate these gains. The occupying Turkish state has many plans, especially recently, and we want it to be known that we are aware of these plans. To realize these plans, the Turkish state has increased pressure on the Iraqi government and other regional powers. The Nineveh governor's statement on the October 9 agreement has not been withheld. We also know that the Turkish state is trying to influence the results of the elections in the Nineveh region so that the KDP forces can dominate the field.

In this period when our people are returning to their lands, the enemy is trying to destabilize the region and intimidate our returning people. This is why they carried out the last attack on such an important day as March 8. Because fascism is not satisfied with the development of Yazidi women and does not want a woman-led system. With this brutal attack on such a day, it wanted to turn our day into a day of mourning. Of course, this situation also reveals the reality of the enemy.

Majdel Hesên joined the ranks of the YBŞ in 2016. Comrade Mecdel Hesên Xelef is from the Feqîran tribe, which has never bowed down to the enemies of Yazidis. He was a friend who voluntarily took on duties and responsibilities according to the spirit of the period and successfully fulfilled his duties. He took his place in the front lines and participated in the work. Comrade Mecdel assumed great responsibilities, most recently as Battalion Commander for the security and peace of Shengal.

The occupying Turkish state should know that it cannot make us back down through such dishonorable attacks. As the defenders of Shengal, we will continue our just struggle and hold those who collaborate with the enemy to account. We take this opportunity to express our condolences to the family of martyr Mecdel Hesên and the people of Shengal. Once again, we promise our community that we will fight until the autonomy of Shengal is guaranteed."

Background

The Yazidi settlement area Shengal in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq is the last contiguous settlement area of the Yazidi community. Thousands of Yazidis were murdered and thousands of women and children were taken prisoner in the 3 August 2014 onslaught on Shengal by ISIS militants. While ISIS gangs began murdering Yazidis in Shengal, the Peshmerga left, leaving the Yazidis behind, unprotected. The guerrillas of HPG (People's Defense Forces) and YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) and fighters of the YPG (People's Defense Units) and YPJ (Women's Defense Units) came to the Yazidi people's aid in the face of ISIS aggression. Thanks to a months-long selfless struggle, the city was liberated on 13 November 2015. After the liberation of the city, the HPG and YPG/YPJ subsequently withdrew in 2017. People who returned to their land after Shengal's independence reformed, established defensive units and built their institutions.

The Turkish state, which has been frustrated by the liberation of Shengal and the military and political organization of the Yazidi community after ISIS' genocidal attack in 2014, has been attacking Shengal for 6 years. Attacks by Turkey that violate international law have been routine in southern Kurdistan for years. The Turkish air force bombs the territory of the KRI and Iraq on an almost daily basis, especially where guerrillas are suspected. However, civilian settlement areas are also regularly attacked by the Turkish army, including the Yazidi settlement area of Shengal and the Maxmur refugee camp. With its aerial terror,

Ankara is pursuing a targeted policy of displacement - in particular by deliberately destroying civilian infrastructure.

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KCK condemns the Turkish massacre of civilians in Southern Kurdistan, vowing to avenge the martyrs

ANF | BEHDINAN | 10 MARCH 2024

Two citizens from the Şêladizê city of Southern Kurdistan, Seyid Mibarek Dêwikî and Azar Ferec Zêbarî, were killed in an attack carried out by the Turkish state on March 8, while another civilian sustained injuries. Similarly, a month ago, the Turkish state killed two more citizens, Arif Teha and Beşîr Umer Elî from Akrê. During the same time frame, the Turkish regime terrorized four citizens in the Behdînan region and more citizens in the Soran and Sulaymaniah regions.

The deadly attacks on the civilian population followed the Turkish regime leader's bold announcement that the PKK would be completely wiped out this summer. While the invading army has achieved little success against the guerrillas, it is taking the civilian population hostage and trying to drive them out with air strikes.

Since Recep Tayyip Erdoğan unilaterally broke off the dialog process between the Kurdish pioneer Abdullah Öcalan and the Turkish government in the summer of 2015, the Turkish army has carried out air and ground attacks in northern Iraq on a de facto daily basis under the pretext of “fighting the PKK”, targeting not only the PKK guerrillas but also the civilian population, and repeatedly claiming living.

In a statement condemning the increasingly ongoing deadly attacks by the Turkish state, the Foreign Relations Committee of the KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union) said the following:

“The Turkish state has unquestionably been waging a campaign of massacre against the Kurdish people for more than a century, with the ultimate goal of wiping out the Kurdish identity from the face of the planet. This has culminated in attacks, terror, and oppression. In order to achieve its own objectives, the Turkish state needs Kurds who sell themselves; Kurds who will show the Turkish army the way, who will propagate treason, and hide the crimes of the Turkish state.

Regretfully, the ‘Kurdistan Democratic Party’ (KDP) not only fails to condemn these massacres, but helps the fascist state by covering up and even endorsing the crimes of the Turkish state through the political discourse they steer and the media under their control, thus doing the fascist state a great service.

This at a time when the hands of Turkish rule are stained with the blood of the Kurds, and the Kurdish children, which they have killed. The rulers of the KDP are meeting with Erdoğan and Hakan Fidan, holding meetings where they shake hands. Undoubtedly, the massacre that took place in Şêladizê is the result of the meeting that the KDP, Erdoğan and Hakan Fidan attended in Antalya, where the KDP made its promise to continue the betrayal. If it were not for the consent, acceptance and collaboration of the

KDP and the Barzanî family, it would never be possible for the Turkish state to commit these crimes and attack the Kurdish people.

It has not only divided Kurdish politics, not only Kurdistan, but has also divided Kurdish society with its attitude and policies. It is necessary to show that the pain we are experiencing in Şêladizê, Akrê and Sulaymaniah is not a pain that divides us, rather one that is shared equally by all patriots, that we stand together against it. It is our responsibility, the responsibility of all social classes, women and youth, as well as all political forces in South Kurdistan and Iraq, to stand against the attacks of the Turkish state and the betrayal of the KDP. Especially in this phase, the attitude of intellectuals, artists, writers, civil society organizations and journalists is immensely important. It must be realized that every single stance taken can help protect the life of a fellow citizen, while silence opens the way to further terrorist attacks by the Turkish state and Erdoğan.

We strongly condemn the massacre in Şêladizê. At the same time, we promise that we will avenge the blood of the martyrs by continuing our struggle and resistance. We express our condolences to the entire Kurdish people, and in particular to the people of Şêladizê and especially to the families of the martyrs Seyid Mibarek Dêwikî and Azar Ferec Zêbarî. We share their pain. At the same time, we wish the wounded a speedy recovery.”

— ★ —

Turkish fighter jets attack a village in Amadiya

ANF | 10 MARCH 2024

Turkey's air war against southern Kurdistan continues. Fighter jets bombed the village of Sergelê in the district of Amadiya on Sunday. According to the RojNews agency, property damage was caused to an as yet unknown extent. However, it is unclear whether any people were injured. As the region continues to be overflowed by fighter jets, it has not yet been possible to inspect the area.

The village of Sergelê is located just under ten kilometers east of Amadiya and in the administrative area of the Duhok governorate. The village is frequently targeted by the Turkish state. At the end of January, fighter jets bombed a farm in Sergelê. The estate was evacuated in time. A few days before the attack, a guerrilla unit of the People's Defense Forces (HPG) was ambushed by KDP troops in the village and two guerrillas were injured.

Sergelê, like many other villages in the region, is of strategic value to the Turkish state as it borders on Gare. The massif is part of the Medya Defense Zones, which are controlled by Kurdish guerrillas and defended against Turkish occupation efforts. The shortest way to reach the mountains from the ground is through Amadiya. The Turkish state's constant air strikes serve to wear down the population and drive them out of their residential areas. These attacks often lead to fatalities.

On Friday night, two Kurdish civilians were killed in a Turkish air strike on a village on the slopes of the Gare massif. In an attack the Saturday before last, a farmer in a settlement near Amadiya was injured. The Yezidi settlement area of Shengal is also repeatedly attacked by Turkish fighter jets. On Friday, Mecdel Fe-

qîr, a battalion commander of the Şengal Resistance Units (YBŞ), was killed by a drone attack. The 32-year-old father of one son was a survivor of the ISIS genocide in 2014.



10th anniversary of the Qamishlo People's Municipality massacre by ISIS

NUJIYAN ADAR | QAMISHLO | 11 MARCH 2024

The mercenaries of the Islamic State attacked Qamishlo People's Municipality on 11 March 2014, leaving 10 people dead. That day, the Qamishlo People's Municipality was preparing to commemorate the martyrs of the Qamishlo Uprising that occurred in 2004.

As preparations for the commemoration were underway, ISIS mercenaries attacked the municipality building. As a result of the attack, 10 people (8 of them municipality workers) were killed. They were: Cihan Ferhan Murad, Aleaddin Ebid El İlah Osman, Emîne Mihemed Bîlal, Rewşen Mihemed Zekî İbrahim, Awaz Mehmud Mihemed, Fehed Ebdilezîz Osman, Helepçe Taha Xelîl, İbrahim Melîk Ezîz, Mûsa Azad Mûsa and Eli Xelef Silêman.

ISIS mercenaries claimed responsibility for that brutal attack.

Qamishlo People's Municipality, one of the important achievements of the Rojava Revolution that started on 19 July 2012, became operational in May 2013. On 21 January 2014, the people of Jazira Canton declared the Democratic Autonomous Administration. The 'Local Government and Municipalities Committee' within the Autonomous Governments became one of the pillars of this system.

Shortly after the declaration of the Autonomous Administration, Qamishlo People's Municipality was targeted by ISIS.

First experience in municipality

Sema Bektaş, then co-mayor and Democratic Union Party co-chair (PYD) spokesperson, was one of those injured in the massacre of the Qamishlo People's Municipality.

Sema Bektaş pays tribute to the martyrs and conveys the atmosphere in Rojava at that time. "People's municipalities, one of the first institutions of the Rojava Revolution, were actively providing services to the public even before the Autonomous Administration was declared. Municipalities were taking their place in every aspect of life, playing the role of a kind of Autonomous Administration. The first municipal institution to be organized was Qamishlo People's Municipality.

From 2012 to 2014, we were in dialogue with the municipalities in North Kurdistan. Delegations from Qamishlo People's Municipality attended the conferences held in Amed and Ankara to explain their municipality model, the co-chairmanship system in municipalities and their work in the Rojava Revolution.

Since it was an institution established before the declaration of the Autonomous Administration, it was effective among the public and attracted attention outside the region. It was the first institution targeted after the declaration of Autonomous Administration. In 2014, we had reached the stage of enacting municipal laws.”

ISIS attacked during preparations for the commemoration of Qamishlo uprising

Qamishlo People’s Municipality was crowded before ISIS’s attack, said Sema Bektaş, adding: “As a result of this attack, 10 people, 5 women and 5 men, were killed. 8 of them were Qamishlo People’s Municipality workers, one was Awaz, who applied to work in the municipality, and the other was a friend who came to visit.

Before the attack, we gathered for a discussion on how could the municipality prepare for the 12 March Qamishlo uprising? Many of the friends who were present at the discussion and were killed in that attack made suggestions about planting saplings in memory of the martyrs and making preparations suitable for the uprising (*serhildan*) atmosphere. At 10:45 we heard a big explosion. We hid in a room with 10 female friends to protect ourselves. We didn’t understand what happened. We could only hear explosions. We went out and encountered an attacker. He attacked us with a bomb, and we went back to where we came from. While Martyr Fehed was trying to catch the attacker, this member of ISIS blew himself up and this is how Fehed fell a martyr.

Many of our friends were injured in this attack. I was injured, and so were other friends, when we jumped from the balcony. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack. After the attack, we watched it on camera. There were 2 attackers and they were controlled by one person. Both ISIS members were between the ages of 15-16. Besides their bodies strapped with bombs, they were also armed. First of all, they killed the security forces of the municipality. They shot everyone they encountered on the stairs. Then they blew up the rooms. In the end, they blew themselves up. Martyr Halabja, Emine and Rewşen were in the Finance room together. The ISIS attacker went to their room and blew himself up, and three friends were martyred in this way.’

Qamishlo People’s Municipality is a model

Noting that the work of the Qamishlo People’s Municipality represented a model at that time and that was why ISIS carried out an attack, Sema Bektaş said: “After this attack, we were thinking about how to go to the municipality building. Our colleagues were killed in that building. But we put our feelings aside. Based on the idea that we should continue in the footsteps of our martyr comrades, we went to the building with the remaining municipal employees and resumed our activities.

Qamishlo People’s Municipality was our first municipality model that set an example for other cities in the region. Municipality employees were transferring their experiences to other cities. Until now, Qamishlo People’s Municipality has been serving its people uninterruptedly and keeping the memories of its martyrs alive.”

One of the pillars of people's democracy was hit

Qamishlo People's Municipality and Ecology Committee member Mesut Yusuf noted that Qamishlo People's Municipality was quickly organized with the beginning of the revolution and said: "With the war, municipalities continued their activities without any disruption in providing services to the public. It continued to work more actively with the declaration of Autonomous Administration in 2014. Seeing that municipal systems, which are the basic building blocks of democracy, were getting stronger, ISIS targeted the municipality. However, this attack could not break the will of our people. On the contrary, activities were intensified. With the elections held in 2017, Qamishlo People's Municipality continued to work in two centers, Xerbî and Şerqî. At the end of 2018, Qamishlo Canton was declared as the People's Municipality and Ecology Committee."

Stating that they are on an expedition to deliver water and electricity to the public in 2023, Mesut Yusuf said: "Hilêliyê, Uweca, Ceqceq and Sefan water stations, which are the water sources of Qamishlo, were repaired. Hilêliyê water tank of 3 thousand m³ was built. Uweca water station, which pumps 250 m³ of water per hour, was repaired. More than 1,200 meters of new water lines were created. The roads were asphalted in 19 neighborhoods, totaling 13 thousand 665 m³."

Union of municipalities council to be created

Noting that reconstruction will be carried out with the Social Contract approved in 2023, Mesut Yusuf concluded his speech by conveying the work they carried out after the Social Contract and their 2024 plans and projects: "By creating a draft municipality law, they moved towards the umbrella organization of the Union of Democratic Municipalities. In February, Jazira Canton Democratic Municipalities Union was declared. Our annual projects are planned in line with public demands and suggestions. After discussions in two sessions, annual plans and projects are determined according to the budget."

Did we achieve the result we wanted? It would be a dream to say that we achieved it 100 percent. However, despite thousands of attacks by the invading Turkish state, we still provide services to our people uninterrupted. The infrastructure of the region completely collapsed due to the attacks, but we repaired it and mobilized for the needs of the people. Public service has always been a principle for municipalities. Our people protect their municipalities with this sensitivity.

We must organize our municipalities with the understanding that attacks will continue in 2024. In particular, we have projects to completely eliminate the water and electricity problem. In addition, emphasis will be placed on the reorganization of municipalities through the Social Contract, strengthening institutionalization and thus the establishment of the Democratic Municipalities Union Assembly."

KCK: Resistance against attacks of denial and extermination is also a form of worship for Muslims

ANF | BEHDINAN | 11 MARCH 2024

The Committee for Peoples and Beliefs of the KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union) issued a statement to mark the start of the month of Ramadan.

The statement reads as follows: “The Muslim world is now entering the Islamic month of Ramadan; a time of worship that provides immense blessings and is the most important month of Islam. This year, Ramadan is being greeted by Muslims in the Middle East, among other places, in an atmosphere of war and widespread acts of genocide. Millions of Muslims will fast during this time of terrible suffering, loss by genocidal conflict, and agony. We hope that the month of Ramadan this year will serve as a time for reflecting on the problems and difficulties that the Muslim world faces and to focus on finding solutions. As a result, we call on the peoples of the world to unite and enhance their sense of unity and solidarity.

The massacres and tragedies caused by the Turkish state’s attacks in Kurdistan, as well as the Israeli state’s attacks on the Palestinian people- currently in their fifth month and are being carried out under the guise of Hamas attacks – are unrelated to Islam, Judaism, or the traditional cultures of the Middle East. Developing the democracy, freedom, equality and unity of all religions, beliefs, and peoples, as well as working toward the establishment of a democratic nation, will be our only line of defense as Middle Eastern civilizations against such violence.

In honor of the month of Ramadan, we urge people of all faiths, particularly Muslims, to rise up against the Pharaohs and Nimrod’s of our time who seek to incite hatred among communities and divide societies through religious discrimination. Even on holy days and months, the Turkish state continues to harbor hatred toward the Kurdish people, while the Israeli state knows no bounds in its animosity toward the Palestinian people. During these holy days, they slaughter women, young people, children, and the elderly. There exist, between these two states, several agreements and cooperation in the fields of military, intelligence, economics, and culture. Both regimes do not think twice to turn the oppression of the Palestinian and Kurdish peoples against one another when it serves their own interests. So, once more, we call upon the Muslims of Turkey and the mindful people of Israel to rise up against the mentality that uses the model of the nation-state to subjugate our just and moral religions, all through the month of Ramadan.

To the Muslim community,

According to the Qur’an, every act of resistance against those who abuse Islam to subjugate people, is regarded as a form of worship. It is stated that there is forgiveness and great reward for those who obey this directive. Because of this Islamic principle, all Muslim Kurds, particularly our people in Northern Kurdistan, are entering the holy month with great social responsibilities.

There are widespread acts of genocide against the Kurdish people. Their language is forbidden, and assimilation efforts are destroying their culture. The Kurdish youth are mercilessly being murdered each day with weapons prohibited by international law. Leader Apo, the leader of the Kurdish people, is being tor-

tured and kept under an aggravated regime of solitary confinement. Kurdish prisoners are participating in hunger strikes and waging a fierce resistance. There are acts of genocide being perpetrated in South Kurdistan, Rojava, Şengal, and other Kurdish-populated areas. From this standpoint, the rebellion and resistance of the Kurdish people against these assaults are just as rewarding as fasting. This Ramadan, we call on our people to intensify their struggle against the massacre, denial, torture, and tyranny committed by the Turkish state—as evident and obvious as the Islamic truths. Because resistance is also a form of worship for Muslims under the attack of denial and annihilation.

As the month of Ramadan approaches, our people in North Kurdistan enter an important phase of struggle that entails heavy obligations. We would like to remind our people in North Kurdistan that the Kurds and the Turkish people will play a significant part in the electoral process. We want them to oppose the false Islam which brings about social regression and serves the state's political objectives. Our people should support the groups that uphold and expand Islam's democratic essence, that is, democracy and freedom.

We believe that Kurdish scholars and seydas, like every Muslim with morals and conscience, will fight more vigorously against those who use the name of Islam and its holy book as a cover for their evil deeds, against those who use the holy books of Muslims to deceive and slaughter Muslims. We think that this will be the most correct and moral attitude during this holy month. We expect them to be particularly sensitive to terrorist forces such as the 'Free Cause Party' (Hüda Par), which maintain intensive relations with the colonialist state and address Kurds in Kurdish in order to dissuade them from their legitimate cause.

We want to express that our people should act with the knowledge that anything done by forces such as AKP, MHP, or Hüda-Par, the enemies of the peoples, is done with the intent of using Islam for their own interests. They are profaning Islam, especially in Kurdistan. Everything they distribute under the name of charity during Ramadan, is haram. Everything given to the people by these thieves, plunderers, and lying hypocrites is actually stolen from the people. Today, in the name of Islam, these thieves will distribute a portion of what they have stolen from the people back to them, in order to win elections.

In this sense, the most correct attitude for true Muslims would be not to approach the stalls set up by such forces and to not take what they distribute. Because what they will do under the name of distributing charity is in fact bribery, and bribery is the biggest sin and the biggest haram. In this sense, we believe that Muslims of Kurdistan will show a conscientious, moral attitude, living and protecting true Islam against terrorist forces such as AKP and Hüda Par, which are infested in haram.

We would also like to remind that the fitrah and zakat given to institutions and organizations in cooperation with Turkish colonialism have no good deeds according to Islam. Because what you give to these institutions and organizations will come back in the form of weapons, used as tools of genocide against the Kurdish people.

On the occasion of this Ramadan, we also call on our Muslim people in North Kurdistan and abroad not to go to the mosques that under the influence of the Turkish state. There is nothing but denial, lies, slander, sedition, mischief, calls for massacres and hypocrisy against the Kurdish people in these mosques being sponsored by the Turkish state. These mosques, where sermons are given every day, propagandize insults against national identity, against religious feelings, against conscientious values,

and deny the verses. We believe that it would be better to perform prayers at home, locally among neighborhoods, in modest masjids (mosques) that are prepared with one's own means, in appropriate places.

Our people of South Kurdistan are entering this month of Ramadan under the attacks of the colonialist, genocidal Turkish state. We would like to remind our people of South Kurdistan once again that the economic, military and intelligence support that the Turkish state sustains from South Kurdistan plays an important part in the genocidal policy and attacks in all four parts of Kurdistan, but especially in North Kurdistan. The enemy of the Kurds, the Turkish state, is attacking South Kurdistan and our people in the other parts of Kurdistan for the purpose of occupation, by taking advantage of the material values and labor of our people in South Kurdistan and stealing from them through collaborators. Patriotism, religion, faith, morality and conscience demand that one stand against this colonial aggression in a more organized and stronger way than ever. We believe our people will make this Ramadan an occasion to stand against the Turkish occupation with a great resistance and turn it into a determination to end the occupation.

Our people of East Kurdistan are welcoming Ramadan this year with the women's resistance "Jin Jîyan Azadi" which is in its second year. In this period of intense struggle against the Iranian regime's regime's oppression, we wish them to continue their resistance by increasing their sense of unity and solidarity, raising the belief in freedom and the women's struggle.

Likewise, our peoples of Rojava and North and East Syria are entering this Ramadan under the threat and attacks of the fascist genocidal Turkish Republic. We expect our peoples in the region to welcome this Ramadan with more sense of struggle than in previous years, responding to the genocidal attacks, by uniting around the struggle, by taking an active part in rebuilding their society, and by organizing themselves strongly on the basis of self-defense. We call on our Muslim peoples living in the region to intensify their efforts to raise the consciousness of the democratic nation and to develop their organizations and democratic systems.

The dear Muslims of Kurdistan,

We are looking forward that all Muslims, especially the Muslims of Kurdistan, who are fasting this Ramadan month, would work to build unity between the diverse peoples and beliefs. We call on them to strengthen the unity between peoples, to eliminate hatred and to increase solidarity. We hope that the Ramadan of all democratic Muslims, especially the Muslims of Kurdistan, will be a month of beneficence, and we wish that their fasts, prayers and intentions will be accepted."

Access ban to Mount Gabar in Şırnak extended for the sixth time

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 11 MARCH 2024

A ban on access to Mount Gabar in the province of Şırnak in northern Kurdistan, which has been in force for months, has been extended once again. The governor's office announced on Monday that the “measure” has been extended by fifteen days for the sixth time in a row.

The ban on access to Mount Gabar is related to operations by the Turkish army against the Kurdish guerrillas. After temporary interruptions, the mountain range between the district of Güçlükönak and the center of Şırnak was declared a so-called “special security zone” on December 26. According to the new order, the measure will remain in force until March 25 for the time being.

The creation of “special security zones” is part of a larger development in which restricted military areas are being established in various parts of northern Kurdistan. As a result, entire areas are cut off from the outside world and are subject to the control and arbitrariness of the military. These measures place a considerable burden on the Kurdish rural population and increase the pressure on residents to leave the affected areas.



KCK: In memory of the victims of the Gazi and Qamishlo Massacres

ANF | 12 MARCH 2024

The Co-Presidency of the KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union) Executive Council issued a statement to pay tribute to the victims of the Gazi and Qamishlo massacres.

The statement said: “12 March marks the anniversary of two massacres committed against the Kurdish people; one perpetrated by the Turkish state in Istanbul’s Gazi neighborhood (1995), and the other, by the Syrian regime, in 2004, in Qamişlo football stadium. We respectfully and gratefully remember those who lost their lives in both atrocities, denouncing both massacres once again. In their person, we honor all the martyrs who have sacrificed their lives for revolution and democracy.

The massacre committed at Gazi was an extension of the Turkish state’s policy of genocidal colonialism against socialists, Kurds, and Alevis. In Gazi, as in the numerous massacres carried out both before and after, the initial target was the peoples and their collective resistance.”

The statement continued: “The 1990s marks a period in which the Kurdish struggle and the socialist and democratic fight in Turkey began to unite. Since then, in particular, the Turkish state has carried out a se-

ries of massacres, brutally attacking society. First indirectly through the establishment of paramilitary organizations and later directly through the official police and gendarmerie forces, they spared no opportunity to shed blood. The government felt that the revolutionary atmosphere of the time was a danger to its colonialist, fascist practices. Still, this policy of the Turkish state has not changed, rather, it is being continued by the AKP-MHP.”

The statement added: “The AKP-MHP-led fascist government is still carrying out atrocities and attacks along with a special warfare scheme aiming to prevent the Kurdish people, along with all the peoples of Turkey, and women and the democratic forces in particular, from uniting. Today, as in the past, the best response to these ongoing massacres is to strengthen the democratic alliances and unity of the peoples.

Following a soccer match in Qamishlo, Kurds were brutally massacred by nationalist racist forces. They intended to ignite conflict and division between the peoples by using this to set people against one another. Given the state of affairs in Syria, it is clearer now what was intended back then. The Qamishlo massacre in 2004 was planned to be a trigger for the civil war that later broke out in 2011. However, the Kurdish movement and people’s correct approach and strategy at the time averted this. The Syrian civil war would have begun at that point if the Kurds had not followed the right course. Syria as a whole would have collapsed in a civil war that started with the destruction of Rojava. Only because of Rojava’s resistance has Syria managed to avoid falling into the hands of fascist, genocidal, reactionary, and violent forces after 2011.”

The statement said: “However, the Syrian state continued its policy of rapprochement with both the Tayyip Erdoğan administration and the homicidal colonialist Turkish state, failing to draw the necessary conclusions from the Qamişlo slaughter. This policy gave way to the current state of affairs in Syria, being at the brink of destruction. Syria is unable to escape its current predicament created by the Turkish government and Tayyip Erdoğan. This is the purpose of the Turkish state’s invasion attempts against Rojava and Syria, as with the ongoing assaults by ISIS and other gangs, among the many attacks and killings in Rojava.

Nevertheless, all attempts will be thwarted by the unified struggle and resistance of the Syrian peoples against the neo-ottomanist policies of the fascist Tayyip Erdoğan regime and the homicidal colonialist Turkish state. Additionally, the Turkish state’s expansionist and occupying activities will only be neutralized through the Syrian state’s proactive fight against it and its acceptance of a democratic solution with the Autonomous Administration of Northern and Eastern Syria. Syria can achieve democratization, dialogue, and negotiation in order to resolve all of its issues, including the Kurdish issue. We endorse and hold this to be true. Considering the Qamishlo massacre, it is evident that the best measure to be taken against massacres, passes through the democratization of the country so as to solve its issues while building a community based on equality and solidarity.

In Şeladizê, South Kurdistan, the murderous colonialist Turkish state carried out yet another massacre a few days ago. Two villagers, Seîd Mubarek and Aras Ferec, were killed in this attack. Regarding this massacre, statements were released by our foreign relations committee and the ‘People’s Defense Headquarter’ (HSM). We would like to emphasize, again, that the actual motive behind the Turkish state’s attacks on South Kurdistan is made clear with this massacre. The Turkish government seeks to occupy South Kurdistan and conduct the Kurdish genocide there, just as it is attempting to do in North Kurdistan. In the meantime, the Turkish government and the ‘Kurdistan Democratic Party’ (KDP) are working together to

carry out the genocide. These attacks are all being carried out with assistance and collaboration. The KDP is assisting and cooperating with the Turkish state in all of these attacks. As a result, both the Turkish government and the KDP share culpability for this murder.”

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Ten years ago, the Qamishlo Uprising

ANF | 12 MARCH 2024

On 12 March 2004, nine people were killed when clashes erupted at a football match in the Kurdish-majority city of Qamishlo between supporters of a local team and those of an Arab team based in Deir ez-Zor.

The following day, mourners at the funeral procession for the victims chanted anti-Bashar al-Assad slogans and raised Kurdish flags.

Syrian security forces opened fire, killing 23 people and sparking days of protests and rioting in northern Syria's Kurdish regions (Heseke, Kobane, Afrin) as well as Kurdish-majority neighborhoods of Aleppo and Damascus.

Kurds reacted from Afrin to Dêrik in protest at the attack against the uprising in Qamishlo and against the state repression.

The state was trying to create enmity among the peoples, seeking to create strife between the Kurdish and Arab people. Yet the Baath regime was not successful in this policy. The Qamishlo uprising sowed the seeds of a new era for the Kurds.

The Kurds established their unions and started to develop a new idea. It thus became clear that the Kurds needed a defense force, administration and organization. Contrary to what the state had planned to achieve with this massacre, hostility between the Kurdish and Arab peoples did not develop, nor did the chauvinistic feelings the state hoped to create.

It is often said that the Qamishlo uprising lit the first spark of the Rojava revolution. The "Serhildan of Qamishlo" is considered to be the first mass uprising in Rojava. The revolts were crushed by al-Assad forces but the Syrian regime was forced to recognize Kurds.

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PUK: We will take back Hewlêr occupied by the KDP

ANF | SULAYMANIYAH | 12 MARCH 2024

The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) made a statement and said that the KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party) occupied Hewlêr (Erbil) with the support of the Baath regime and Turkey.

The PUK statement on Tuesday said; “The KDP occupied Hewlêr with the Baath regime’s tanks and cannons and continued this occupation a year later with the participation of Turkish soldiers. All the people of Kurdistan know that the KDP has turned Hewlêr and Duhok into an open prison for those who demand freedom and plundered all the resources of Kurdistan.

We will take back Hewlêr, but not with the tanks and cannons of the occupiers, but with the will of the people of Hewlêr and the law.”



Jabar Yawer: Turkish state aims to enter the vicinity of Qandil and Sulaymaniyah

ANF | 13 MARCH 2024

Speaking to RojNews, Jabar Yawer reacted to the invasion attacks of the occupying Turkish state in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

Yawer stated that the Turkish state has so far ignored international laws and said, “The Turkish state is trying to enter the territory of the Kurdistan Region 40 kilometers deep on false grounds. It especially aims to enter the areas around Qandil and Sulaymaniyah. According to the map published by the Turkish Defense Ministry, there are 87 Turkish military bases in the Kurdistan Region.”

Yawer also criticized the Iraqi government, saying, “So far, the Iraqi government has not taken any stance on the airstrikes. The Turkish state sometimes enters Iraqi territory at a depth of 300 kilometers. The Iraqi government’s silence indicates that an agreement has been reached between the Turkish state and the Iraqi government. The security agreement between Baghdad and Ankara encourages the Turkish state.”



Turkish operational plans in Southern Kurdistan are being fleshed out

ARARAT ARAM | 13 MARCH 2024

As part of its new occupation plan for southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq), the Turkish state has enforced the deployment of troops from the Barzani clan in the guerrilla area as “Iraqi border guard units”. Talks have taken place in recent days between the Turkish military and the alleged Iraqi border guards. The Anadolu News Agency (AA) and other media reported on this latest development on behalf of the Turkish Ministry of Defense. The published photos show that the alleged border guards are the KDP’s Zerevani force and the Gulan units of Masrour Barzani. Following this development, the Turkish state is expected to meet with Baghdad officials in the coming days as part of its new occupation plan.

According to Turkish media reports, Lieutenant General Metin Tokel discussed various topics with Iraqi border guards. A photo published for this purpose was edited to conceal the true identity of the interlocutors. In this context, the Kurdistan Region badge on Salar Teymur’s uniform was censored. Teymur is one of the commanders of the Zerevani troops, which are a private army of the Barzani clan and not part of the regular Peshmerga. One of Zerevani’s tasks is to provide security for the Turkish army. Some of these troops have been specially trained to fight against the guerrillas. The KDP cadre Dilêr Ferzende, nephew of Hoşyar Zebari, can also be seen in the photo.

According to available information, a meeting between Turkish Defense Minister Yaşar Güler and his Iraqi counterpart Sabit al-Abbasi has been scheduled for Thursday. The main topic is said to be an operation against the Kurdish freedom movement. Extensive air strikes and a ground operation are being discussed.

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Turkish officials hold talks in Baghdad amid reports of an imminent cross-border operation

ANF | BAGHDAD | 14 MARCH 2024

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, Minister of National Defence Yaşar Güler and Undersecretary of National Intelligence Organisation (MİT) İbrahim Kalın arrived in Baghdad on Thursday to hold cooperation talks with Iraqi officials regarding the planned cross-border operation against Qandil.

Turkey, which is planning a new attack against the guerrilla-held Medya Defence Zones in northern Iraq, is in intense diplomatic traffic in order to implement this plan. For this purpose, Turkish political and military officials have held many meetings with the Iraqi central government officials, President of the Federal Kurdistan Region Nechirvan Barzani, Prime Minister Masrour Barzani and KDP President Massoud Barzani in the last three months.

For the same purpose, the authorities have repeatedly visited the USA in an effort to obtain permission for a cross-border operation.

The last step in the diplomatic traffic on this issue was the visit to Iraq. Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, Minister of National Defence Yaşar Güler and Undersecretary of National Intelligence Organisation (MİT) İbrahim Kalın went to Baghdad to hold cooperation talks with Iraqi officials regarding the planned cross-border operation against Qandil.

It was noteworthy that the three officials of the Turkish state, who had previously travelled to Baghdad separately, are visiting Baghdad together this time.

Media organs close to the AKP government reported that the security summit to be hosted by Iraqi Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein had the operation to be carried out against the Medya Defence Zones on its agenda.

According to media reports, energy issues will again be discussed in the talks in Baghdad. In this framework, the development of natural gas resources in Iraq and their transfer to international markets and the resumption of the Iraq-Turkey oil line will be evaluated. In addition, the plan to establish a commercial route from Iraq's Persian Gulf to Turkey will be on the agenda.

On the other hand, AKP President Tayyip Erdoğan is expected to visit Iraq in April.



KCK: The Turkish State is the biggest threat for Iraq

ANF | BEHDINAN | 15 MARCH 2024

The KCK Foreign Relations Committee issued a statement about the visit by three Turkish ministers to Iraq.

The statement said: “Three ministers of the occupying Turkish state will visit Baghdad to negotiate with officials of the Iraqi government. Based on statements made by Turkish officials, notably the fascist leader Erdoğan, who was responsible for the deaths of numerous Iraqi people only last month, it is apparent what the agenda of this meeting is, and what the subsequent steps will be.

The genocide against the Kurdish people serves as the foundation for both the Turkish regime’s internal and foreign policy; it disproves the existence of the Kurdish people within or outside its borders and engages in cultural genocide against them accordingly, breaking and disobeying the most fundamental moral and humanitarian laws on a national and worldwide scale. Additionally, it implements a policy of aggravated isolation against Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the Kurdish people.”

The statement continued: “The Turkish regime designs and implements its foreign policy to advance its domestic agenda of genocide. Wherever they conduct meetings and with whoever they do so, the aim of the fascist leader Erdoğan and his state officials is to attract international support for the genocidal warfare

they are waging against the Kurds. Erdoğan's primary goal at every UN gathering, NATO summit, Davos, Munich, Astana, and Sochi meeting is to gain support for this policy of genocide against the Kurdish people. Across the Middle East, Erdoğan and his regime attempt to seek the support of other nations and states in these heinous acts. To persuade Iraq to cooperate with their murderous initiatives, the Turkish state has been pressuring and manipulating the country in a variety of ways, particularly over recent months."

The statement added: "The Iraqi state has made significant progress toward resolving the Kurdish issue and has recognized the identity and rights of the Kurds in accordance with its constitution. The policies of previous administrations, which had been genocidal and denialist, have been abandoned by the current administration, in favor of democratic progress. The Iraqi state will emerge as an inspiration in the Middle East and earn the support of democratic circles and all Kurds if it takes further courageous steps towards democratization. Seeing this, the Turkish state is determined to divert Iraq from its political course, converting the country into a partner of its own policies of genocide and annihilation, digressing it to the customs of more than a century ago.

Above all, it is necessary to recognize that the biggest security threat to Iraq is the fascist regime of Turkey. Erdoğan, the leader of the fascist movement, has never denied his intentions to invade and occupy a certain part of Iraq, openly claiming ownership over Kirkuk and Mosul. It is Erdoğan who continually puts forward neo-Ottoman declarations and propagandizes about the Misak-ı Milli. The PKK and the Kurdish Freedom Movement, being portrayed as the threat against which Erdoğan will provide aid to the Iraqi government, have fought to defend the Iraqi people against ISIS's inhumane attacks. Thus, if a true security summit is to be held, it must be held against the Turkish state that is currently occupying the region, rather than the PKK. Because it is the Turkish state which has invaded and occupied Iraqi territory, constructed hundreds of temporary as well as permanent bases there, deploying tens of thousands of soldiers, and using fighter planes and drones to target a different part of Iraqi territory every day, from Shengal [Sinjar] to Kelar, Duhok, and Zakho. Thus far, these attacks have resulted in the martyrdom of 165 Iraqi citizens alongside hundreds of injuries. Still, these figures continue to rise. For hundreds of years, the people of the Middle East and Iraq have depended on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, sustaining their livelihoods from these waters. Turkey has cut off this water supply, utilizing it as a weapon of ecological and economic warfare against Iraq and other Middle Eastern nations."

The KCK continued: "The meeting between Iraqi officials and Turkey's senior military and intelligence personnel, including terrorists such as Hakan Fidan, is undeniably detrimental to the interests of the Iraqi people and government. How are agreements between the officials of an occupying power and those of the occupied state possible? This cannot be explained in the face of history and the people. While Hakan Fidan's hand is being shaken, the other is drenched in the blood of Iraqi citizens. It is vital to understand that Erdoğan and the fascism of the AKP-MHP today represent what Saddam and the Baath dictatorship represented to the peoples of Iraq and the Middle East in the past.

In terms of security, Turkey has nothing to offer Iraq. It offers occupation, horror, plunder, massacre, and sorrow, if anything. The Turkish government would not have trained and armed ISIS gangs within Turkish borders and deployed them to Mosul, Kirkuk, and Anbar if it was concerned about the security of Iraq. Had the Turkish government been worried about Iraq's security, it would have joined the war against terrorism by conducting drones and airstrikes against ISIS rather than the Kurds.

Once again, the occupying Turkish state is the one arming and training extremist organizations — utilizing ISIS as a threat against Iraq. The first and only nation to try to establish an embassy in the territory seized by ISIS, is Turkey. Meanwhile, the PKK and the Kurdish Freedom Movement fought ISIS on behalf of the peoples of Iraq and the Middle East, sacrificing their own lives in the process.

Our call to the Iraqi government is to stop the occupying Turkish state from hiding its war crimes behind the Iraqi flag, which protects the rights and existence of Kurds in accordance with its constitution. Turkey is committing genocide against the Kurdish people while disguising this act as a measure for border security.

We call on all political circles, patriots, writers and intellectuals, community leaders, and non-governmental organizations in South Kurdistan and Iraq: Speak out against the invasion and occupation threats made by the Turkish state, against the terror and violence that are raging in Iraq's cities and skies, and do not allow the future to be sacrificed over the narrow interests of a small group.”

— ★ —

Tevgera Azadi calls on Iraq not to be a partner in Turkish crimes

ANF | 15 MARCH 2024

The Turkish state, which is planning a new attack against the guerrilla-held Medya Defence Zones in northern Iraq, is in intense diplomatic traffic in order to implement this plan. For this purpose, Turkish political and military officials have held many meetings with the Iraqi central government officials, President of the Federal Kurdistan Region Nechirvan Barzani, Prime Minister Masrour Barzani and KDP President Massoud Barzani in the last three months. For the same purpose, the authorities have repeatedly visited the USA in an effort to obtain permission for a cross-border operation.

The last step in the diplomatic traffic on this issue was the visit to Iraq. Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, Minister of National Defence Yaşar Güler and Undersecretary of National Intelligence Organisation (MİT) İbrahim Kalın went to Baghdad on 14 March to hold cooperation talks with Iraqi officials regarding the planned cross-border operation against Qandil. The meeting was hosted by Iraqi Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein.

The Board of Directors of Tevgera Azadi (Freedom Movement) based in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) made a written statement regarding the meeting of the Turkish state delegation with Iraqi officials in Baghdad on Thursday.

“For years, the occupying Turkish state has developed all its policies inside and outside the country based on the destruction of the Kurdish people. What the Erdoğan regime wants to do now is not only to destroy the Kurds, but also to take the lands occupied during the Ottoman period back under their control. In front of the eyes of the world, they are manifesting their intention to occupy Hewlêr (Erbil), Mosul and Kirkuk,” said the statement.

Tevgera Azadî pointed out that the occupying Turkish army had been heavily defeated against the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrillas despite the unlimited support it received from NATO, and therefore embarked on new quests.

The statement pointed to the increasing visits of Turkish state officials to Iraq in such a process, adding: “During their last visit, they wanted to realize their invasion plans again.”

Tevgera Azadî remarked that the KDP has entered the service of the Turkish state and that the Kurdish people should meet on a common front against the occupying Turkish state everywhere. Appealing to the Iraqi state authorities, the statement said: “We expect the current Iraqi government not to be a partner in the crimes of the fascist Turkish state and to condemn the treacherous forces that support the Turkish state.”



Feminicide

KJK: The only way to stop the modern age of barbarism is to organize the women’s revolution

ANF | 11 MARCH 2024

The International Women’s Day of Struggle on March 8 was widely celebrated around the world. Around the globe, women and other oppressed groups took the day as an opportunity to focus on their concerns. The Coordination of the Kurdistan Women’s Community (KJK), the umbrella organization of the Kurdish women’s movement, released a statement saluting “all the struggling women who filled the squares of the world and Kurdistan with their voices, words, dances and trills, who resist despite all the barbaric practices of the male system and who hold the cruel patriarchal system accountable”. The movement also congratulated “all women who contributed to the successful celebration of International Women’s Day”.

The KJK statement on Monday said:

This year on March 8, women, who are subjected to deep crises, massacres and persecution 24 hours a day in the grip of sexism, once again bravely and decisively said ‘I exist’ and succeeded in weaving the reality of a relentless radical struggle. Women rebelled against the exploitation, genocide, harassment and rape policies imposed in every moment and space of life. In all actions and events, women voiced their objections loudly against the pro-power sexist mentality and structures that are guilty and responsible for these bloody, cruel and misogynist practices. In this sense, March 8, 2024 became the concrete expression of women’s awakening, consciousness, will and organization. Today, the women’s struggle has become the most radical struggle for democracy and human rights.

The gains of the women's struggle have reached a higher level with the Rojava women's revolution. We welcomed this year's March 8 with the determination to attribute the women's revolution to the women of the Middle East and the world. The wars produced by male-state fascism hit us women, children, peoples and nature the most. Therefore, against all the crises, wars, destructions, migrations, racist, nationalist and sexist practices created by the dominant tyrannical state fascism, as women, we must be in constant organization and struggle for democracy, freedom and an ecological life, not just on one day of the year but at every moment.

The year 2024, in which economic, political, cultural and military wars produce devastating consequences for women, peoples and nature, is also very important for the women's struggle. March 8 has been the culminating expression of these developments. At this critical moment in history, the only way to stop the modern age of barbarism is to organize the women's revolution in the philosophy of 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadi' (Woman, Life, Freedom). We must move forward by raising our consciousness and strength of struggle against the masculine system that slaughters life in the person of women, which produces and multiplies wars, exploitation, racism and sexism. Today, the women's struggle has reached a threshold from which it is difficult to turn back. Therefore, by organizing more and weaving a common line of struggle, we can overthrow this tyrannical system that is definitely outdated.

It is time to enlarge the struggle, to make the collectivity universal. It is time to build the women's revolution based on the philosophy of 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadi'. As KJK, we once again salute the women who make March 8 meaningful with the beauty and enthusiasm of the women's revolution.

We renew our promise to make every day March 8 for the victory of the struggle for rights, justice, equality, freedom and democracy.”

— ★ —

Four women activists taken into custody in Istanbul

ANF | ISTANBUL | 12 MARCH 2024

Free Women's Movement (TJA) activists Nurcan Tayboğa, Nesibe Akyol and Remziye Bozkurt and Ebru Karaaslan from Jineolojî Atölyesi were taken into custody in house raids carried out early on Tuesday morning in Istanbul.

The women are being held at the Provincial Police Department.

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TAJÊ: Against femicide, be the voice of self-defense

ANF | 13 MARCH 2024

The Yazidi women's liberation movement TAJÊ has launched an international campaign against femicide and for the self-defense of women worldwide.

This campaign, which kicked off on 8 March, aims to bring together voices of women and women's organizations until August 3, the tenth anniversary of the genocide and femicide in Şengal.

TAJÊ invites everyone to participate using a variety of methods, such as photos, videos, texts, songs, poems, rallies and demonstrations.

The manifesto for the campaign names five central demands of the Yazidi women's movement. TAJÊ demands that femicide be recognized as a war crime and that all perpetrators and supporters be convicted. Women's right to organized self-defense must find social and institutional acceptance. The massacre committed by ISIS in Şengal ten years ago must be officially classified as genocide at all levels and prosecuted accordingly. TAJÊ also calls for the recognition of the self-administration and security forces established in Şengal after 2014 as the legitimate representation and defense of the community. The cessation of all attacks on Yazidi society, especially the air raids by the Turkish state, is also called for as necessary for survival.

The manifesto reads as follows:

"To the women of the world,

As TAJÊ (Tevgera Azadiya Jinên Êzidî), the Freedom's Movement of Êzidî Women in Şengal, we send our warmest greetings and respect to all the fighting and resisting women in the world. To all those women standing up against the violence against our bodies and souls. To all those women organizing to make a better life possible. To all those women defending their lives, lands and cultures.

The times we live in are marked by brutal wars and inhuman violence. As women, we are beaten, raped, sold, killed and burned. Our lands are occupied and nature destroyed. However, with every new attack, our global resistance and struggle against war, violence and femicide is growing. This gives us hope and strength. Our pain and our resistance is one.

For us as Êzidî women, the year 2024 is a special year. It marks the 10th anniversary of the genocide and femicide committed by the so-called Islamic State (Daesh) in Şengal. On August 3rd, 2014, tens of thousands of Êzidî were murdered, abducted and taken as slaves. Children were forcibly recruited as child soldiers. On top of that, hundreds of thousands of inhabitants of Şengal were expelled from their homeland. Our holy places were blown up and tens of buildings were detonated. However, despite all the difficulties and dangers, hundreds of families remained on the soil of Şengal, took up weapons and resisted against Daesh. They participated in the offensive to liberate Şengal and created their own protection forces, called Yekîneyên Berxwedana Şengalê (YBŞ; Şengal Resistance Units) and Yekîniyên Jinên Şengalê (YJŞ; Şengal Women's Resistance Units).

In all massacres and genocides, women are the ones suffering most. The assimilation and killing of women are frequently adopted as a means to wipe out the identity, culture and belief of a society. When, in 2014, women fell into the hands of Daesh, they were raped, sold as slaves and/or forced into marriage with jihadist fighters. Until today, 2.941 persons, most of them women and children, still remain in the hands of Daesh. The genocidal and femicidal attacks against Şengal are a cruel wound in all our hearts. We assess these attacks as the brutal face of patriarchal violence and therefore as attacks against all women.

We do not accept that, so far, no state and institution has judged Daesh and its accomplices, such as the Turkish State or KDP, for the systematic attacks carried out against the people of Şengal. On August 3rd, 2014, Şengal's security was under the responsibility of the KRG (Kurdistan Regional Government) and its ruling party, KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party). However, when Daesh attacked the first villages, 12,000 PDK-peshmerga left Şengal without shooting a single bullet and delivered our people to Daesh. We demand that the responsibility of all forces will be proved and convicted.

The genocide and femicide of August 3rd, 2014 caused lots of pain, trauma and deep losses within our community. However, today this pain is the soil for our resistance. Many fighters have lost their lives for the sake of defending our land and people. We call them Şehîds. They are our light and hope.

After 2014, the people in Şengal organized in all fields of life based on the thoughts of Abdullah Öcalan. As Êzidî women we built the Freedom's Movement of Êzidî Women in Şengal called TAJÊ with the philosophy of JIN JIYAN AZADÎ. With proudness we can say that the mothers of Şengal are at the forefront of our resistance. We are organized in women's councils and work in the fields of culture, health, economy, press and diplomacy.

Our history is a history of struggle and resistance but also a history of 74 genocides. It taught us that we cannot trust in the protection of other forces. After the genocide of August 3rd, 2014, we therefore built our own protection forces, YBŞ, YJŞ and Asayîş Êzidxan (a security structure to meet the daily security needs of the population). YJŞ is a woman's-only military force and our greatest honor. Today, as Êzidî women, we know how to self-defend. This is our revenge against all the pain we suffered.

However, also ten years after the genocide and femicide, the attacks against our people continue. The Turkish state, with the support of the KDP, is continuously committing air strikes against members of our military forces as well as against civilians. Dozens of our brothers and sisters have been killed in these airstrikes since 2017. Furthermore, the Iraqi state as well as the KDP are trying to abolish our self-organization and self-administration in Şengal through diplomatic pressure and their agreement of October 9th, 2020.

We claim that all suppressed people, societies and beliefs have the right to defend themselves against the danger of genocide and femicide. We consider the self-defense of the people and women of Şengal – that in other ways would be eliminated – as the only legitimate one.

As the freedom movement of Êzidî women, TAJÊ, and the Şengal Women's Resistance Units, YJŞ, we carry out an active struggle against nationalism, religious fundamentalism and especially against sexism, so that in the future no women, people or community of belief will ever again have to face genocides and femicides. We believe that in the countries we live in, we will only reach democracy, freedom and peace if we as women lead the way on the basis of self-determination and free will.

The best response against the atrocities carried out against the Êzidî women is the solidarity and world-wide organization of women.

We therefore declare that the year 2024 will be marked by raising our voices against femicide and for self-defense.

We demand:

1. That femicide will be recognized as a war crime and that all perpetrators are convicted of committing or supporting the systematic killing of women.
2. That the right of women to organize for the defense of their lives, lands and culture will be accepted by all people and institutions.
3. That the genocide of August 3rd, 2014 in Şengal will be officially recognized as a genocide. This also indicates, that the responsibility of all perpetrators and supporters, including ISIS, KDP, Turkey and Iraq will be proved and convicted.
4. That our self-administration in Şengal as well as our protection forces YBŞ, YJŞ and Asayîş Êzidxan will be accepted as the legitimate representation and protection of our people.
5. That all attacks against our people in Şengal, especially the airstrikes committed by the Turkish state, stop.

From March 8th, International Women's Day, until August 3rd, the tenth anniversary of the genocide in Şengal, we will therefore collect the voices, signatures and participation of various women and women's organization to call on all women across the globe:

Let us unite our voices in the spirit of JIN JIYAN AZADÎ. Let us raise them against femicide and for self-defense.

Together we will demand accountability for the massacres of women in Şengal and every other place on earth."



Three women killed while picking mushrooms in Deir ez-Zor

ANF | 14 MARCH 2024

In the southern countryside of Deir ez-Zor, three women were killed and many others were wounded while picking desert mushrooms when unidentified assailants opened fire.

According to reports, the three slain women were from the Teb El Core neighborhood of Deir ez-Zor. Their bodies are still being held in the countryside of al-Basharî district in the southwest of the city.

According to a balance sheet compiled by the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), hundreds of people, mostly civilians, were killed in 2023 in attacks by ISIS gangs or mine explosions while collecting desert truffles, which sell for high prices.

According to SOHR, ISIS gangs often target residents who travel to remote areas to collect truffles.

Last February, 13 civilians, including women, were killed when an ISIS mine exploded in the Raqqa desert.



Newroz 2024

Newroz 2024 declaration published

ANF | AMED | 11 MARCH 2024

This year's Newroz declaration was announced by the Democratic Society Congress (DTK), Tevergera Jinên Azad (TJA), Democratic Regions Party (DBP) and People's Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) at the Dicle Culture and Art Association in Amed.

DTK co-chair Berdan Öztürk, DEM Party co-chair Tülay Hatimoğulları, DBP co-chair Çiğdem Kılıçgün Uçar, TJA activist Dilan Güvenç, as well as many people attended the statement.

DTK co-chair Berdan Öztürk read the Kurdish version of the declaration.

This year's Newroz declaration said: "Newroz, which marks the beginning of spring and the herald of innovation for the people of Mesopotamia, has turned into a fire of resistance that has lasted for centuries for the Kurdish people. The Kurdish people have fought great struggles and paid the price against the rulers, colonialists, invaders and genociders at every moment of history. Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan defined the fight of the Kurdish people with the words: 'Our fight has not been and cannot be against any race, religion, sect or group. Our fight has been against oppression, ignorance, injustice, backwardness, all kinds of oppression.' The fight of the Kurdish people is the fight of the people of the world, of all the oppressed."

The declaration added: "Newroz, which is the spark of a new birth, life and a free future for our people, is the day in which all the people of the world, especially the people of the Middle East, see themselves, embrace and celebrate themselves, and also represents the universal struggle against the monist, nationalist and sexist fascist state mentality."

The torch, which is the symbol of blacksmith Kawa's fight against the tyrant Dehak, burned in the hands of Mazlum Doğan in the Amed Prison, where there is pitch darkness, evil and torture, centuries later, and it continues to burn."

The declaration continued: "Newroz 2024 is of historical importance for those who are fighting for freedom in the grip of genocide. The oppression that caused Newroz to appear on the stage of history as a legacy of resistance continues today. Hostility towards the Kurdish people's identity, language, territory, nature, water, mountains and stones is increasing. The stance of the Kurdish people against all kinds of genocidal policies is turning into a magnificent resistance day by day. The Kurdish people, who turned the fields into a people's congress and declared their will, will turn this year's Newroz into the fire of the 'Physical freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, solution to the Kurdish question' campaign."

The declaration underlined that "the freedom of Mr. Abdullah Öcalan, whose democratic, ecological and free women's paradigm has spread and been accepted all over the world, is also the freedom of the Kurds and all peoples. Mr. Abdullah Öcalan, who showed the way to an honorable peace in every meeting held with him under the 25-year-old Imrali torture system and stated that he was ready to take any responsibility for this, is kept in severe isolation with absolute lack of communication, and his ties with the world are wanted to be cut off. For this very reason, with determination, will and insistence, the squares of Newroz will be the squares where the isolation will be shattered and the physical freedom of Mr. Abdullah Öcalan, the defender and resister of an honorable peace, will be ensured.

Newroz is unity and unity as much as it is resistance and freedom. The only demand and most precious dream of the Kurds in four parts of Kurdistan and all over the world is national unity. It is the responsibility of all of us to ensure this unity and to stand against betrayal and collaboration, in the conditions of the Third World War, which included risks and opportunities, in which the Middle East and even the world was redesigned, on the verge of genocide."

The first fire of Newroz this year will be lit on 15 March in Karakoçan. On the same day, fires will be lit at the walls of Amed and Izmir Kadifekale.

Newroz will then be celebrated in Van, Batman, Şırnak, Istanbul, Izmir and Mersin. In Amed the fire of Newroz will be lit on 21 March.



Newroz celebrations begin in Rojhilat

ANF | 12 MARCH 2024

Celebrations have been taking place in many centers of Rojhilat (Eastern Kurdistan, Iran) for the last week to welcome Newroz, the Kurdish New Year and resistance festival on 21 March. People light the Newroz fire accompanied by the slogan 'Jin Jiyan Azadî' (Woman, Life, Freedom).

Masses gather around the fire and celebrate Newroz with great enthusiasm.



DEM Party members detained for distributing Newroz leaflet in Istanbul

ANF | ISTANBUL | 12 MARCH 2024

Members of the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) Istanbul Provincial Organization, who meant to make a call for participation in the Newroz celebration in Kadıköy on 21 March, were prevented by the police.

The party members were set to distribute a leaflet highlighting the meaning and importance of Newroz for the peoples of the Middle East and Mesopotamia. The group who wanted to proceed while reading the leaflet was stopped by the police in front of Süreyya Opera House on the grounds that they were not allowed to read the text.

DEM Party members were blockaded by the police despite the fact that there was no ban on the leaflet.

While DEM Party members were kept under blockade, a detention vehicle was brought to the area. Many people taking part in the leaflet distribution action were taken into custody, including DEM Party Kadıköy co-mayoral candidates Nimet Çelebi and Veysel Eski.



Newroz fire lit in Batman

ANF | BATMAN | 13 MARCH 2024

The Newroz fire was lit in Batman (Êlih). The event saw the participation of Democratic Regions Party (DBP) co-chairs Çiğdem Kılıçgün Uçar and Keskin Bayındır.

Thousands of people gathered in the city's Korik District and marched chanting slogans such as "Bijê Serok Apo", "Bê Serok jiyan nabe", "Jin jiyan azadî".

The first Newroz fire of the year was lit in the neighborhood square, accompanied by the slogan "Bijê Serok Apo".

'Newroz to demand freedom for Abdullah Öcalan'

DBP co-chair Keskin Bayındır said: "We will celebrate the fire of Newroz 2024 in the land where Mazlum Doğan was born. We will celebrate Newroz 2024 for the freedom of Mr. Öcalan and the freedom of the Kurdish people. From Newroz to the 31 March elections, we say to the Kurdish people everywhere, stand

up, this is the day of the Kurds, the day is the day of freedom for the Kurds. Today is the day of success for the Kurds. Happy Newroz to all Kurdish people.”

Bayındır said: “We started with the fierce fire of Newroz in Batman, Kurdistan. This spark spread in all the streets and villages, and millions of Kurdish people fought hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder, around the Newroz fire. The fire they have lit for the existence of the Kurdish people and their city has continued to burn for nearly 50 years. This year, we will celebrate Newroz with great enthusiasm with our people.”



KCDK-E calls for participation in Newroz rallies in Europe

ANF | 14 MARCH 2024

The Kurdish European association KCDK-E called on Kurds in Europe to attend this year’s Newroz celebrations and has published a calendar of events.

The central Newroz celebration will take place on 23 March in Frankfurt am Main, but celebrations will actually begin this weekend. There will be dozens of other events in Germany, France, England, Austria, Italy, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, the Netherlands, Belgium and Cyprus, as well as announced in Canada and Australia.

Newroz is celebrated by various peoples in the Middle East on 21 March as the beginning of spring and the New Year. The KCDK-E underlined the importance to giving voice to the campaign “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question” at this year’s events and called on everyone to attend the demonstrations also to protest the war in Kurdistan.

The call said that the Turkish AKP-MHP government wants to crush the Kurdish people’s struggle for freedom with attacks on Rojava, Shengal and the Medya Defense Areas that violate international law and underlined the situation of total isolation in which Abdullah Öcalan has been kept for three years.

In addition, the statement underlined the importance of the local elections that will take place in Turkey on 31 March. Newroz, said the KCDK-E, is therefore “an important occasion to express the determination to resist and, as a Kurdish nation, to demand the release of Öcalan and a solution to the Kurdish question together with all people who stand for freedom and equality.”

The Newroz calendar published by KCDK-E is as follows: Munchen, Nurenberg, Berlin, Hamburg, Halle, Bochum, Bremen, Munster, Osnabruck, Mannheim, Oldenburg, Darmstadt, Frankfurt, Arnhem, Den Haag, Leuven, London 1, Exeter, Liverpool, London 2, Brighton, Sheffield, Edinburgh, South Cyprus, Stockholm, Örebro, Borlange, Helsinborg, Gothenborg, Karlstad, Copenhagen, Oslo, Helsinki, Rome, Villiers-Le-Bel, Rennes, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Montpellier, Draguignan/Frejus, Marseille, Vienna, Graz, Bregenz, Linz, Innsbruck



Local Elections in Turkey

17 people in Suruç sent to prison

ANF | URFA | 10 MARCH 2024

17 people who were detained in house raids carried out on 6 March Suruç (Pirsûs), in the province of Urfa (Riha) were sent to prison on Saturday. Among those arrested were the provincial co-chair of the People's Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) and municipal council member candidates. The 17 people taken into custody were sent to prison on the grounds of "being members of an illegal organization" on the basis of statements by a secret witness.

The names of those sent to prison are as follows: Nihat Demirbilekli, Adem Ateş, Ahmet Ceylaner, Baran Karak, Bülent Yaşar, Hatice Yılmaz, Hikmet Ceylan, Hüseyin Ateş, Mehmet Yüce, Mehmet Emin Ateş, Mehmet Bali, Müslüm Baran, Recep Bali, DEM Party Suruç provincial co-chair Nazlı Binici, and DEM Party municipal council member candidates Selami Kip, Serkan Bali and Zeliha Polat.

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Hazir: This election is vital for for Kurds to govern themselves

ANF | VAN | 11 MARCH 2024

DEM Party Bahçesaray (Muks) Municipal co-mayor candidate Ayvaz Hazir was born in 1989 in the city to a patriotic family. The family had to migrate to Van/Bostaniçi in 1999. He completed his secondary and high school education in Van. He has taken part in the Kurdish political movement since his youth. He graduated from civil engineering and worked as the Director of Technical Affairs in Bahçesaray Municipality. He resigned after the trustee was appointed.

In 2019-2020, he took part in the Association of Solidarity with the Relatives of the Missing People and worked with the HDP Rêya Armûşê District administration.

Bahçesaay lies in the triangle of Garzan, Botan and Serhat. Hazrat told ANF that the city's peculiar location was reflected in its language, culture and way of life. He said: "Hakkari (Colemêrg) was one of the four centers of Kurdistan, along with Cizre and Doğubeyazıt. They raised people who pioneered the Kurdish society in a literary sense. Bahçesaray is a hidden garden due to its location. The system has abused our district in terms of its culture, language and location. The arrow shooting policy that has been implemented in Kurdistan for the last 100 years has been experienced extensively in our district."

Hazrat saw the local elections as vital for the Kurds to govern themselves. Noting that these elections are a great chance for the Kurdish people, Hazir said: "Every vote our party receives will be an answer to this

system. The Kurdish people do not give up their struggle for existence. Our people have always responded to those who ignored their will. I invite all our people to unite around the DEM Party candidates once again.”

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DEM party campaign vehicle attacked in Kayseri

ANF | KAYSERİ | 14 MARCH 2024

The incitement against the democratic opposition by the AKP-MHP regime repeatedly led to armed attacks on the DEM party. In Kocasinan in the Turkish province of Kayseri, a DEM party campaign vehicle was shot at on Wednesday. Luckily, there were no injuries. The attacker apparently fired at the vehicle from close range in broad daylight. The attacker is said to have been arrested.

Such attacks on the DEM party or its predecessor parties are not uncommon, especially in Turkey. As recently as 5 March, a Turkish fascist attacked the DEM party's election office in Inegöl in Bursa province, smashing the windows and attacking a party member with an axe. At the same time, the Turkish state is making arrests and imprisonments against the democratic opposition, attempting to hinder the election campaign in the run-up to the local elections on March 31 and to render the DEM party unable to act.

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19-year-old member of DEM Party Youth Council tortured by Turkish soldiers with pliers

ANF | AĞRI | 14 MARCH 2024

Brindar Gezici, a member of the DEM Party's Youth Council, was detained on March 7 at his home in Doğubayazıt district of Ağrı and tortured for two days by military and village guards. On March 9, the 19-year-old teenager was arrested and transferred to Ağrı Closed Prison.

His sister Şerzan Gezici, who was able to visit him in prison on Tuesday, stated “My brother was detained in Doğubayazıt and tortured so badly on the way that he fell unconscious. At the police station, water was poured over his head and he regained consciousness. There he was beaten again with an iron bar by soldiers and village guards. Finally, his fingers were crushed with pliers. He was battered on his head, legs and nose several times with a rifle. When I visited him, he could barely stand on his feet.”

Gezici described the mistreatment of her brother as a concrete example of the Turkish state's treatment of Kurds: “What was done to my brother reflects the state's view of the Kurdish people. These photos show the hatred, racism and anger of the state. Both as a family and as Kurdish people, we do not accept this state of affairs. We denounce the state's torture system and will use all legal remedies.”



Syriacs announce their support for DEM Party in March 31 elections

ANF | 14 MARCH 2024

The European Syriac Union (ESU) made a written statement announcing their support for the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) for the upcoming local elections in Turkey and North Kurdistan on March 31.

ESU pointed out that the AKP-MHP government and other system parties are based on a racist, religious and statist policy rather than representing the peoples and workers and said, "Since the foundation of the Republic, peoples and progressive libertarian movements have been prevented from representing their will through heavy pressure. Conspiracy and discrimination are practiced in all areas of life and in all institutions of the state. There is no space to express one's own identity and values, and people and organizations of this nature have always been declared enemies. Election results have always been interfered with through fraud and dirty tricks, and the interests of the rulers have always been defended. Since political activities are not carried out freely and in a democratic environment, there has not been equal competition and a fair approach."

The statement pointed out that the AKP-MHP regime, using all the means of the state, directed the elections of May 14-28, 2023 as they wanted; and tried to criminalize freedom movements with terror, ugly and humiliating propaganda: "In the general and local elections held since 1999, the political activities of peoples have always been prevented. Many parties have been shut down, parliamentary proceedings have been prepared against MPs, trustees have been appointed to replace elected mayors, and the trustee system has been perpetuated since 2009 until today. As an institution of the Syriac people, we always support democratic developments and struggles. We take part in the united and common working platforms of the peoples inside and outside the country."

Pointing to the DEM Party's multi-voiced, multi-identity and democratic pluralist line, the statement emphasized that: "The struggle for the peoples to live in equality, freedom and peace gives hope and strength to our people and offers them the opportunity and ground to represent themselves. The struggle of the peoples of Mesopotamia and Anatolia for self-governance will surely succeed one day, and the mentality of war, occupation and oppression will end. Therefore, it is our common goal to put an end to the trustees through the struggle of the peoples and to ensure that cities and all settlements are governed by representatives elected by the people."

The European Syriac Union expressed their full support to the DEM Party, which, it said, leads the democratic opposition in the current process as in the past. The Union called on the Syriac people to support the DEM Party candidates in the local elections and to take part in the activities and events in the country and in the diaspora.



DTK Co-Chair Berdan Öztürk: The country I live in is Kurdistan

ANF | VAN | 14 MARCH 2024

The Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) organized public meetings in Gürpınar and Gevaş districts of Van within the scope of preparations for the March 31 local elections.

The meetings organized by the DEM Party and DBP Van Provincial Administration were well attended. DEM Party Youth Assembly members and Free Women's Movement (Tevgera Jinên Azad, TJA) activists as well as many people attended the meetings.

Citizens wearing traditional Kurdish costumes welcomed Öztürk and the delegation with enthusiasm.

During the speeches, Gürpınar Municipality Co-Mayor candidates Mukaddes Karakoç and Mehmet Tahir Ertaş and Van DEM Party Provincial Co-Chair Veysi Dilekçi also greeted the people and presented their projects.

In his speech, Bedran Öztürk stated that the AKP-MHP government is trying to destroy Kurdish culture and language as a dirty war has been waged on Kurds for 50 years and thousands of people have lost their lives in this process. Öztürk also reiterated the demand for an end to the isolation of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan and emphasized the people's desire for peace and freedom.

Öztürk said that the Kurdish people have demonstrated their will everywhere and that they will further strengthen this will at the ballot box on March 31st.

Underlining that Kurds will continue their struggle despite the difficulties they face, Öztürk emphasized that they will fight for freedom by saying "Dem dema azadiye ye" (Time for freedom). Öztürk said, "On March 31, our people will go to the polls. They will give a strong answer to these liars and plunderers. With this answer, the Kurdish people will say, 'We are here even if you usurp our will. The country I live in is Kurdistan, and you will accept it'."

After the speeches, the delegation moved on to Gevaş, where they were welcomed with great enthusiasm. Gevaş Municipality Co-Mayor candidates Kübra Aktı and Ruknettin Hakan spoke about their projects, while DEM Party Van Provincial Co-Chair Gülşen Kurt reacted against the isolation of Abdullah Öcalan and said, "The isolation is intended to deprive the society of breath." Pointing to the importance of local elections, Kurt emphasized that they will succeed.

Feminists in solidarity with Gültan Kışanak running for mayor of Ankara

ANF | ANKARA | 15 MARCH 2024

Hundreds of feminists from Turkey are supporting the candidacy of imprisoned Kurdish politician Gültan Kışanak in Ankara. Gültan Kışanak was arrested in 2016 as co-mayor of Amed (tr. Diyarbakir) and is running for mayor of Ankara for the DEM party in the local elections on 31 March. Because she is in prison, her election campaign is being run by other women. The DEM party's women's election office in Ankara today announced the support of 636 women from the feminist movement in the country.

“As feminists who have been leading a women's freedom struggle together with the Kurdish women's movement for years, we declare that Gültan Kışanak is also our candidate,” said Fatma Nevin Vargün at the press conference. During her time as a member of parliament, the Kurdish politician was the voice of the struggles for women's and labour rights, peace and democracy and, as mayor of Amed, she implemented a gender equality policy that enabled women to participate in decision-making processes, said Vargün and continued: “We know first-hand how she tried to change women's lives with women's counselling centres, women's shelters, gender-equitable employment policies and by developing means of participation in the city, contrary to the male-dominated mentality that sees local governments as a profitable area of infrastructure policy. As feminists who have fought for women's freedom together with the Kurdish women's movement, which includes Gültan Kışanak, we say: Gültan Kışanak is also our candidate.”

After the declaration of support, lawyer Ebru Günay from the campaign group “With Gültan to Ankara” read out a letter from Kışanak from Kandıra High Security Prison, which read: “Dear feminist companions, I have learned that you have organised a signature campaign in support of my candidacy for Ankara. Thank you very much and I am very happy to be one of your comrades-in-arms. I have always felt the power of the saying ‘solidarity keeps alive’ and the warmth of women's solidarity in my heart. I am glad that you exist and that we are fighting together for a free and equal future.”

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Human Rights Violations

Nine of the 17 people taken into custody in Ankara sent to prison

ANF | ANKARA | 9 MARCH 2024

As part of the investigation carried out by the Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, 4 of the 17 people who were detained on 5 March on charges of "membership of an illegal organization" were released after giving their statements to the prosecutor's office, while 13 people were referred to the Criminal Judgeship of Peace with a request for arrest.

Arrest order for 9 people

Busenur Öztürk, Muhammed Okay, Aynur Bildik and Dilan Yanık were released after their statements to the prosecutor's office. Among those who were referred to the Criminal Court of Peace with a request for arrest, Abdulkadir Barkın, Diyar Hatip Bilen, Lokman Sevkan Özğan, Hüseyin Savcı, Fatma Çubuk, Hakkı Zengin, Mustafa Yetkin, Şehmus Akgül and Zübeyde Kaya were sent to prison.

Nujin Çiftçi, Helin Kaya, Evindar Bakan and Ümit Bozan were released on condition of judicial control after their statements to the judge.

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16 people abducted in Turkish-occupied Afrin in one week

ANF | 10 MARCH 2024

The occupying Turkish state and its gangs continue to commit crimes against the people of Afrin.

The Crime Documentation Centre yesterday shared a detailed report on the crimes committed in Afrin in March. The report stated that 16 people were kidnapped in Afrin in the first week of March.

The following information was shared in the report:

1 March: Jaysh al-Weteni gangs (Civil Police) raided Bibaka village in Bilbil district and kidnapped Ziyad Sharaf (49), Abdurehman Sharaf (62) and Salan Dilo (58).

In addition, gangs of the same group kidnapped a citizen named Kamîran Dibo Seydo (44) in Hec Hesna village of Jindires.

2 March: Jaysh al-Weteni gangs (Military Police) attacked Emara village in Mabeta district and kidnapped 3 members of the same family, who were identified as Rozalin Kemal Murad, her husband Ebduhenan Mihemed (70) and their son Şerzad Fethi Mihemed.

The gangs of the same group also raided houses in Jindires district and kidnapped residents named Omer Reso (43), Nihad Hesên (37) and Ziyad Reshid Mihemed (48).

3 March: Jaysh al-Weteni gangs raided houses in Mabata district and abducted Farhad Henif Mihemed, Givara Ibrahim Mihemed, Mihemed Ali Hemke Hesên and Mihemed Ridvan Mistefa from Qenter village to an unknown destination.

7 March: Jaysh al-Weteni gangs (Military Police) abducted Ehmed Ibrahim Henan (48) from Badina village of Rajo district and Rizan Şêx Mihemed (36) from Yelanquze village and took them to an unknown place.

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ESP member Gökçe Otlı jailed in Ankara

ANF | ANKARA | 10 MARCH 2024

On March 8, Socialist Party of the Oppressed (ESP) members Kahraman Yılmaz, Ali Yıldız, Gökçe Otlı and Burcu Durak were detained in house raids as part of a political genocide operation in Ankara and taken to Ankara TEM (Anti-Terror) Branch Directorate.

Kahraman Yılmaz, who is to undergo brain surgery tomorrow, was released. Ali Yıldız, Gökçe Otlı and Burcu Durak were taken to the courthouse today.

While Ali Yıldız and Burcu Durak were released, Gökçe Otlı was arrested on charges of “membership in an illegal organization and making propaganda for an illegal organization”.

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Emine Şenyaşar to resume her Justice Vigil

ANF | ANKARA | 11 MARCH 2024

Emine Şenyaşar will resume her Justice Vigil for her murdered family members after the promises made by the Turkish Ministry of Justice to provide her with justice have not been kept. “The government only made its concessions after years of fighting for justice and against the suppression of our demands had already passed,” Şenyaşar’s son, DEM MP Ferit Şenyaşar, told the media representatives in parliament on Monday, meaning that unjust conditions and peaceful protests against them are not being heard.

Emine Şenyaşar is the widow of Hacı Esvet Şenyaşar and mother of their sons Celal and Adil. The three men were victims of lynching attacks carried out by armed bodyguards and relatives of AKP politician Ibrahim Halil Yıldız in the district of Suruç in Urfa a few days before the parliamentary and presidential elections in June 2018. The Turkish judicial authorities showed no interest in completely solving the murders. Yıldız and the majority of his mafia gang still enjoy a life of freedom today, and only one of two dozen attackers has been convicted so far. Albeit to a symbolic sentence of 18 years, only two thirds of which he has to serve.

In contrast, Fadıl Şenyaşar, a survivor, was sentenced to almost 38 years in prison for killing an attacker. This was despite the fact that it was proven relatively quickly that the man was killed by his own people. To demand the punishment of her family members' murderers and the release of her son, Emine Şenyaşar initiated a vigil in front of the Palace of Justice in Urfa in March 2021, which she ended on her 846th day - but only to move it to the Ministry of Justice in Ankara. 49 days later, government representatives agreed to meet with Şenyaşar and assured her that they would make amends for the injustice done to the family. "The Minister of Justice and his representatives said that they were aware that they had treated us unfairly. They told us that we had to be patient," said Ferit Şenyaşar. Now, after five months of waiting without any progress, his mother has decided to resume her action.

One of the reasons why the decision to resume the justice vigil has now been taken is that Fadıl Şenyaşar is being subjected to repression in prison. His right to telephone contact has been restricted by the prison authorities without any reason being given. Instead of once a week, he is only allowed to call his relatives every 14 days. "The justice that my mother is seeking with her action applies to us all. That's why she's fighting, and that's why we're fighting. To bring justice to all the people who need it." Emine Şenyaşar is set to start her protest today - by breaking the fast together with her son Ferit in front of the Ministry of Justice.



Still no news of Rojnews editor Silêman Ehmed in KDP custody for 138 days

ANF | 11 MARCH 2024

Silêman Ahmed, the editor of Rojnews Arabic Service, was abducted by KDP forces at the Semalka (Faysh Khabur, Kr: Pêşxabûr) crossing point on the Iraqi-Syrian border on 25 October while returning to South Kurdistan from Aleppo, where he had gone on 1 October to visit his family. No news has been received from the Kurdish journalist for 138 days now.

The KDP intelligence service accuses the journalist, who comes from Rojava (northern Syria), of having links to the PKK. His arrest at the Sêmalka-Pêşxabûr border crossing between the Autonomous Region of North and East Syria and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) after a visit to his family in Aleppo was only unofficially confirmed by the KDP-affiliated Asayish (Local Security) in Duhok six days after his disappearance in the wake of growing public reaction. RojNews describes the accusations against Silêman Ehmed as unsubstantiated allegations that have no connection to his five years of work as an editor. The

Duhok Asayish, despite accusing the journalist of “conducting intelligence activities”, then claimed that they did not have him in their custody.

The Duhok Judgeship, to which an application was made afterward, ruled that Ahmet’s lawyers could meet with him. With this decision, Ahmet’s detention was officially recognised. The lawyers who went to the Duhok Asayish with the decision in their hands were not allowed to meet with Ahmet and faced attacks and threats. The lawyers continued their investigations despite the attacks and threats and found out that Ahmet was being held in one of the unofficial detention centres of Parastin, the KDP’s intelligence agency.

Lawyers from the Silêman Ahmed Defence Group have submitted more than 10 official applications to date. However, they have not been allowed to meet with their client, nor have they been provided with any information about his condition.

The abduction of Silêman Ahmed was condemned by local and international journalist organisations, including the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and Reporters Without Borders.

The KDP administration, to which professional organisations as well as civil society organisations have appealed, has not made any statement regarding Silêman Ahmed.

Rojnews Agency condemns the unlawful abduction of Silêman Ahmed, who has been working as an editor at the Arabic service of the agency for 5 years, and demands his release and an explanation about his fate as soon as possible. The agency applied to the United Nations (UN) recently for support in finding out his whereabouts.

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Access to Mezopotamya Agency blocked by court

ANF | 13 MARCH 2024

According to Mezopotamya Agency (MA), the domain mezopotamyaaajansi35.com was blocked by the decision of Erzurum 1st Criminal Judgeship of Peace, on the grounds of “protection of national security and public order”.

The same domain name was previously blocked for the same reason by the decision of the Diyarbakır 3rd Criminal Court of Peace dated 21 May 2021.

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Emine Şenyaşar protests once again in front of Ministry of Justice

ANF | ANKARA | 13 MARCH 2024

Emine Şenyaşar, whose husband and two sons were murdered by the bodyguards and relatives of former AKP Urfa MP Ibrahim Halil Yıldız in Suruç (Pirsûs), on 14 June 2018, and Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) Urfa MP Ferit Şenyaşar (Emine's son), who survived the attack with injuries, resumed the Justice Vigil in front of the Turkish Ministry of Justice in Ankara.

The action is on its 52nd day.

Emine Şenyaşar, who came in a wheelchair with her son Ferit Şenyaşar from the Turkish Parliament to the Ministry of Justice, carrying a sign saying "Justice", sat in front of the Ministry.

Şenyaşar demanded the release of his son Fadıl Şenyaşar, who was unfairly imprisoned after the killings of his father and brothers.

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Eğitim-Sen protests suggestions that school in Van could close for rally with Erdoğan

ANF | VAN | 14 MARCH 2024

Eğitim-Sen Van Branch chair Murat Atabay said that they received complaints about AKP candidates making propaganda to children and teachers in many schools. Atabay pointed out that the schools actually wanted to be closed before the rally.

Atabay stated that the school principals in the district were called to a meeting, and it was reported that the buses used to bring kids to schools were to be used for the AKP election rally on Friday to transport people to the rally.

Atabay added that they were informed that IŞ-KUR personnel in schools would be required to attend the rally and that teachers who had classes on Friday afternoon would be considered on leave.

Atabay emphasized that this situation is actually not legal and added that it is unacceptable to put pressure on education workers, deprive children of their right to education and force education workers to participate in the rally.

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Teenager killed in Afrin

ANF | SHEHBA | 14 MARCH 2024

There is not a day that goes by without murder, kidnapping, torture and extortion in Afrin, which has been under the occupation of the Turkish state since 2018.

According to information provided by local sources, Yamen Ehmed El Ibrahim, registered to the Idlib population and residing in the Jindirê district of Afrin, murdered 15-year-old Ehmed Xalid and threw his body into a well on the Tel Salûr village road in Jindirê.

El-Ibrahim was a worker in the bakery belonging to the father of the child he murdered.

After the incident, Xalid's family came together in front of the building used by the Turkish state mercenaries for public order and said that they would not bury the body until the murderer was caught. Addressing the people of Afrin, Ehmed Xalid's family called for the oppression and violations of rights to end.

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Eğitim-Sen: There is a policy aimed at dissolving the identity of the Kurdish people

ANF | AMED | 15 MARCH 2024

Since the founding of Turkey, the country has been governed under a monist paradigm that only allows for a Turkish-Sunni identity. This form of rule was implemented during Ottoman times through the genocide of the Armenians, the murder and expulsion of the Greek population and finally through a massive anti-Kurdish policy of extermination and assimilation since the founding of the republic. Language bans, denial of education in the native language - i.e. cultural erasure - are the downside of systematic massacres like in Zilan, Dersim and Roboski. In recent years, Turkish language policy has steadily tightened and led to the exclusion of Kurdish-speaking people from many areas, including healthcare.

In an interview with ANF, the co-chair of the office of the education union Eğitim-Sen in Amed (Diyarbakır) described the current developments and their consequences.

Saliha Zorlu, referring to the history of the assimilation policy, said: "With the comprehensive implementation of the policy of denial and assimilation, the Kurdish question reached a level where it is no longer just a problem within Turkey, but has become a problem affecting everyone in various parts of the Middle East. In particular, after the military coup of 12 September 1980, when both the neoliberal policy was continued and a massive security policy was implemented, production in the Kurdish region, in Kurdistan, was completely paralyzed, and massive oppression was carried out against the Kurdish people. And today, despite all this repression, the Kurds are demanding a democratic solution based on dialogue. A dia-

logue in which all segments are represented, in which all problems are discussed, is essential and a process that must be accelerated.”

A policy of systematic identity destruction

Zorlu continued: “This is one of the most decisive and violent aspects of the special war policy: the ban on the native language in all areas, the denial of its use in public service. To disregard identity, the language, the culture means to completely disregard the existence of a people. A policy is being pursued with the aim of dissolving the identity of the people. Even if the language is already used in some areas, real legitimacy, so to speak, is when the language is made the language of education. The mother tongue must be included in the curriculum as a language of education. Not as an elective subject. We are talking about a language spoken by almost seven million people in the country. An attempt is being made to liquidate Kurdish, the oldest of the Indo-European languages. You try to get a people to forget their language. Some of its dialects in particular are in danger of extinction, and the Kurdish people are fighting to keep them alive.”

The government must take the necessary steps

Zorlu added: “In order for peoples to live with their own languages and identities, the Kurdish question must first be resolved. The conditions for education in the mother tongue must be created. For Eğitim-Sen, this is an indispensable line in our program, our statute and our struggle. Education, healthcare and public services in the native language are fundamental rights of a people. The necessary steps must be taken to resolve the Kurdish question. It is necessary to ensure a productive and lasting dialogue, pave the way for education in the mother tongue, grant all identity rights, eliminate the obstacles to production, guarantee democratic politics and build a peaceful life. The persons to refer to for this are clear. The government should take the necessary steps.”

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Political genocide operation in Osmaniye: 7 detained

ANF | OSMANIYE | 15 MARCH 2024

Osmaniye Chief Public Prosecutor’s Office launched an investigation against several people on the allegation of “making illegal organisation propaganda” through their social media accounts. Turkish police raided many houses early Friday morning. 7 young people, including a minor, were taken into custody and were referred to Osmaniye Courthouse.

Police officers brought 7 people to the courthouse in handcuffs behind their backs. Relatives of the detainees reacted against the police officers in the courthouse yard, saying “What have these young people done?”.

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Interview

Karasu: Now is the time to destroy the gates of İmralı

ANF | 9 MARCH 2024

KCK Executive Council Member Mustafa Karasu said that “it is possible to overthrow this İmralı system.”

Let's start with the leader of the Kurdish people, Abdullah Öcalan, and his situation in isolation. He has been in total isolation for over three years and there is no news about him. How do you evaluate this, especially with regard to the international institutions such as the 'European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment' (CPT), which were actually created to intervene in such situations?

Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] has been in isolation now for more than 25 years. His captivity has entered its 26th year. On the very first day, while evaluating the İmralı system, Rêber Apo said that the CPT was responsible for his captivity and that they had established the İmralı system together. As a matter of fact, they are in constant contact with Turkey. The CPT is not a body of law. It presents itself as such, but it definitely depends on political will. When they visit prisons, they cannot publish their reports without the permission of the Turkish government. The approach of the CPT is also the approach of Europe. It is part of Europe's Turkey policy. In fact, the CPT legitimizes the İmralı system with this attitude.

After all, they were the first ones there when Rêber Apo arrived in İmralı, because they were the founders of this system, as well as Europe, and the 'Council of Europe' (CoE). Now, with this attitude, they are maintaining the system that they legitimized, accepted and created together. If Turkey can carry this out, if it can maintain isolation in such a severe manner, it means that a country that wants to become a member of the European Union and is a member of the CoE has the approval of Europe, that they've legitimized and normalized it.

This is exactly how the CPT's approach should be seen, and this reality should be exposed. Because they deceive the world, they deceive the peoples. Here is the CPT, the body for the prevention of torture. It goes to prisons, checks, and says that it prevents torture, but there has been isolation on İmralı for 3 years. For 3 years, Rêber Apo has not been allowed to meet with his lawyers or his family. But the CPT seems to consider this normal. There is no reaction to this, no stance is taken by them. It is necessary to struggle against this situation. We cannot break this İmralı system without struggling, without exposing it. So, it is necessary to criticize and expose the CPT as an institution. Again, we should not expect too much; the CPT works under the CoE. It pretends to be a legal institution, but it is directly dependent on politics. It acts in line with the order of politics. That is why the CPT really needs to be exposed.

There are mechanisms like this in Europe and in many other parts of the world. They have established institutions that deceive peoples and societies. There are a lot of institutions that bare the label of 'acting under human rights'. They present themselves as institutions for freedom, for the defense of democracy, but

they have no real role. Their only role is to deceive society. They obscure and cover up society's demand for democracy, for freedom, for human rights. They become institutions to frustrate such demands, such aspirations. It is necessary to expose them. Because this is how these injustices are kept alive. They deceive societies by saying that they have democracy, human rights, and that they are against torture, and want freedom. This is a mask that needs to be torn off. Only in this way, only if it is forced, will these institutions confess the truth. They try to abide by some universal rules and principles. They do this in order to maintain their existence, to survive. But if they are not struggled against, they will certainly continue to deceive societies and peoples. The CPT continues to present itself as if it is an institution that visits European prisons and prevents torture; it really needs to be unmasked. There have been no meetings there for three years. Society does not know, his family doesn't know, is Rêber Apo alive or not? We don't know about his health. Doesn't his family have rights? But this is being kept silent. Rêber Apo can not even see his lawyers. This is a very serious legal problem.

The legitimacy of the Imrali system has been weakened more than ever before. It has really become unable to justify itself. If it is addressed, if a struggle is waged, it is possible to overthrow this Imrali system and ensure that Rêber Apo can meet with his family and lawyers and be free. The attitude of the CPT is a reason for us to raise our struggle. It is a reason to wage a struggle for the peoples. It is a reason to wage a struggle for all humanity.

To get away from international institutions, how do you evaluate the latest developments in the struggle against the Imrali system?

First and foremost, I congratulate the hundreds of thousands who participated in the rally in Europe and also those who marched from Wan and Serhed for the freedom of Rêber Apo in Kurdistan. They really put forward an important action, struggle and attitude. They clearly showed that the Kurdish people and all democrats are against the isolation of Rêber Apo, that they are against the international conspiracy and that they want the freedom of Rêber Apo.

The demand for Rêber Apo's freedom is no longer just one of the Kurdish people, it has become the demand of all humanity, democratic forces, freedom searching forces, socialist forces, women, ecologists. The ideas of Rêber Apo, the paradigm put forward by him, are an alternative to the system created through capitalist modernity which is strangling humanity and society and aggravating social problems. Rêber Apo shows the way out. Humanity sees this, especially women, democratic forces and laborers see this. The Kurdish people already see Rêber Apo's freedom as their own freedom. They are carrying out their own freedom struggle together with the freedom struggle of Rêber Apo.

In this respect, the attitude of our people was really important on February 15, as well as the attitude of their international friends is important. The attitude of our people in Europe is important. There is clearly an attitude and struggle against the conspiracy. The international conspiracy, in the face of humanity, has been strongly condemned. There is nothing left to defend it. It is the USA and Israel that carried out this conspiracy back then and Turkey was left with the result. Ecevit, the former Turkish prime minister, said, 'Why did they give Apo to us? We don't know. We don't understand why they gave him to us.'

In this respect, the stage the struggle has reached against the conspiracy is very important. There was a global campaign launched on October 10 and on December 10, there were entire days dedicated to reading the prison writings of Rêber Apo. Through these, Rêber Apo's freedom has become a universal de-

mand. This day has become a day that democratic forces and peoples all over the world embrace and struggle for. In this respect, the struggle for the freedom of Rêber Apo has become very strong. The struggle against the conspiracy has become very strong. Of course, let us emphasize this again. Let us always emphasize it. Our martyrs built defense walls around the leadership with their campaign and struggle; those comrades who sacrificed themselves for the freedom of their leader.

It is the 25-year struggle of our people that has brought the struggle against the conspiracy to the level it is at today. It is not in vain, no struggle is ever wasted. If this 25-year struggle had not been waged, if this sacrifice, this struggle for the freedom of Rêber Apo had not taken place for 25 years, the struggle against this international conspiracy would not have reached this level today. We need to see it like this. The situation that we have today is the result of great labor, is the result of great sacrifices. Now it is time to smash the doors of Imralı. They have no legitimacy. Something that has no legitimacy cannot stand. It is so in the political field, it is so in the social field, it is so in the cultural field. Everything without legitimacy is doomed to collapse and fall apart.

The conspiracy is an event which has no legitimacy. The Imralı system is being kept alive by force. It is condemned by the conscience of humanity. The Kurdish people do not accept it. The majority of the forces currently involved in the conspiracy are not on the side of the conspiratorial forces. They are in no position to defend this conspiracy. Right now, only Turkey is in a position to openly defend the conspiracy. There is also the 'Kurdistan Democratic Party' (KDP). This collaboration between the KDP and the Turkish state is, in a way, a policy, a relationship to continue the international conspiracy.

Now, in the second stage of the global campaign, it must definitely be socialized and popularized. The Kurdish people and society should embrace the campaign in the widest way and wage a struggle. They should carry this out in the political field, socially, and struggle for it on the legal level. They must also struggle for it in the field of diplomacy and this struggle must now be raised to a level that will liberate Rêber Apo. This is close. It is necessary to believe in this.

25 years ago, when the conspiracy took place, the international powers were saying "the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) is finished, Rêber Apo is finished". That is why they put him in prison. This is what they thought. But the result of the struggle is evident at the point we have reached today. Rêber Apo's influence has grown and the struggle against the conspiracy has also grown. The conspiracy has been exposed. The struggle against the conspiracy has ceased to be only a Kurdish struggle, it has become a struggle for humanity; the struggle against the conspiracy has become a struggle for the freedom of humanity. Humanity sees the struggle against the conspiracy as the struggle for the freedom of laborers and women, as the struggle for the liberation of humanity. They want to free the Leadership, the initiator of the projects that show the path of salvation to humanity. They don't think of the conspiracy as just a person being held in a prison; their struggle is not merely to get a person out of prison, out of isolation and torture. There is a struggle to liberate the leader, who has the ideology that will liberate people, laborers and women. When there is such a goal, when there is such a target, of course, acceptance of responsibility for this duty is growing like an avalanche, it has grown and will grow even more. In Europe, they have started the second phase. It was the international friends of the Kurdish people, intellectuals, academics, democrats and trade unionists who started the first phase. Now they have started the second phase. Our duty as Kurdish people is to transform the second phase into a more social movement and get Rêber Apo out of captivity.

Karasu: When conspiracy is defeated, the genocidal colonialist policy will collapse

ANF | 10 MARCH 2024

KCK Executive Council Member Mustafa Karasu spoke about the ongoing Turkish attacks against guerrillas and Rojava, as well as Israel's war on Gaza.

Lately, the guerrillas have been able to inflict severe blows on the Turkish army and the Turkish state's position in the war has seriously deteriorated. What can you tell us about the circumstances surrounding this?

Both the operations of the guerrilla in 2023 and the operations in January and February shook the Turkish army. It put the Turkish army in a stalemate in the Medya Defense Areas, they were stuck in a swamp. It can be described like this. These actions also show the level of the struggle against the conspiracy. They also express anger towards the conspiracy. In fact, the continuation of the conspiracy and the continuation of genocidal colonialism against the Kurdish people carry the same meaning. Defeating genocidal colonialism is only possible by defeating the conspiracy. When the conspiracy is defeated and the conspiracy falls, the genocidal colonialist policy will collapse. In this respect, the operation last February was a very important attitude against the conspiracy. It is an attitude against the genocide practiced on the Kurds.

Rêber Apo has declared February 15 as the 'Kurdish Genocide Day'. Because the Kurdish genocide started in 1924 after the Treaty of Lausanne. In fact, with the Treaty of Lausanne, international powers gave their approval to the Kurdish genocide. Turkey received approval for the Kurdish genocide in exchange for giving up Mosul and Kirkuk. The reaction of the Kurdish people emerged against this, as can be seen for example in Sheikh Said's resistance in 1925, which was a resistance against this policy of genocide. In this framework, after 1924, the attack against the Kurds was initiated. This is how the Kurdish genocide began. February 15th was the day the Sheikh Said resistance began. On February 15th, Rêber Apo was taken into captivity. Rêber Apo saw these as a conspiracy of genocide against the Kurdish people. He saw them as genocidal attacks.

The guerrilla took an attitude against this conspiracy, against this policy of genocide. This is not only the attitude of the guerrilla; it is the attitude of a people. It is the attitude of the Kurdish people against genocide. This is how the guerrilla's stance and attitude should be seen. It is clear that the guerrilla's level of sacrifice expresses the Kurdish people's passion for freedom. In these difficult conditions, in the most difficult conditions, the guerrilla's realization of these actions against all kinds of techniques revealed the energy, belief and determination of the Kurdish people's passion for freedom, and the level they have reached with their struggle, especially the Kurdish youth. The anger of the Kurdish people is being expressed. It is not just an action or a stance of the guerrillas. It is the anger of the Kurdish people, a blow of freedom against the enemy.

Indeed, without the support of the KDP, without international support, the Turkish army would not be able to stay there. For this reason, they had a very difficult time. They established relations with Iraq and established relations with the KDP. The Turkish state is now trying to get out of that difficult situation with its diplomatic activity. It is trying to bring Iraq there. It is deepening relations with the KDP. In this

respect, the guerrillas have really initiated a wave of shocking actions for them. There was a new wave of invasion attacks by the Turkish army launched on 21 October. Now, it was revealed how they were defeated.

The Turkish state will insist and will not give up this policy. The Turkish government ruled by the 'Justice and Development Party' (AKP) and the 'Nationalist Movement Party' (MHP) has associated power with war. Society has collapsed, the economy has collapsed, culture has collapsed, morality has collapsed. It's only means of survival is this genocidal war. It tries to survive through this, but no matter what it does, it is not possible to get the results they want. As a result of this struggle, the genocidal system will collapse.

There is a sharp struggle going on. The Turkish state is attacking using all its means. But against this, the people have a stance, the guerrillas have a stance. The Turkish state is exposed. It is a very exposed state. There is almost no one left to support it – to *openly* support it. Other support is political, ideological, and based on economic interests. In this respect, it has no political legitimacy, it has no moral legitimacy, and the whole world sees that the Turkish state's reality is fascist, genocidal and colonialist. This is the position of the Turkish state before the eyes of the world. But it is still trying to be saved by marketing and selling itself.

Of course, there will be more attacks by the Turkish state in the coming period. But we can say the following: This guerrilla resistance, this determination, this experience of the guerrilla and the support of the people... In Turkey, in North Kurdistan, the AKP-MHP fascist government is forcibly attacking the people, applying all kinds of oppression, but the people's support for the guerrilla continues. This is certain. They try to prevent this support by pressure and force. But it is clear that the hearts of the people are with the guerrilla. In fact, their struggle gives the people great confidence and morale. It enables the people to continue their struggle with this morale. This reality is obvious.

Attacks by the Turkish state in the Medya Defense Zones have continued unabated recently. Recently, civilians have also been killed again in Turkish attacks. One of the latest developments is that the KDP is gathering its peshmerga forces in the uniforms of Iraqi border troops in the guerrilla area. What do you think about these developments and the statements made recently?

We are following the developments regarding the amassing of KDP peshmerga. Certain statements have already been made by their administration. This is not new. They have amassed these supposed border troops in the Medya Defense Areas before. They were all from the KDP. But back then, they were limited, few numbers. Let's say some of them were even friendly to the movement because they understood the game the KDP was playing, they had relations. But that was how it was at that time. Now the KDP and Turkey want to play a new game. They want to pit Iraq against our movement. The Turkish state is stuck in a deadlock, the KDP is stuck in a deadlock as well, and it is being exposed. They are actually trying to get out of this situation. For this reason, they are amassing under the name of Iraqi border troops. Almost all of them are KDP members. How did this situation arise? This is forced by the KDP rather than Iraq. KDP is pushing Iraq. Turkey is pushing Iraq.

The KDP is imposing this situation on Iraq by using the Iraqi flag like this to save its own situation. It supposedly wants to pit Iraq against our movement. This is a game. We believe that Iraq will not play this game, neither side has any interest in it. It is clear where the eyes of the Turkish state are. Every day they talk about the *Misak-ı Milli*.

There is nothing to say about the KDP. It has been collaborating with the Turkish state until now. Now it is trying to take relations to a different level. We think that Iraq will not, and should not, play this game. Turkey and the KDP together are trying to put pressure on Iraq and drag it into the war that they are waging and in which they have reached an impasse.

How do you evaluate the attacks of the Turkish state against Rojava and North-East Syria?

More than 5 million people live in Rojava and North-East Syria. The population of Arabs and Kurds is almost equal. In other places, entire states have populations of only two or three million. Through these attacks, the Turkish state is trying to collapse the infrastructural system of a community of 5 million people. They are trying to poison the lives of the people. Power stations are being hit, hospitals are being hit, oil fields are being hit, publishing houses are being hit, roads are being hit. Rojava is under constant attack.

The latest attack targeted the Assyrian people. In a way, they are trying to make Rojava uninhabitable. It is a complete genocide policy. They try to dehumanize the place. They search to occupy it and settle gangs according to their plans. Can this not be called a plan of the United Nations? The map Erdoğan showed them marked exactly the areas where the Kurdish people settle. They want to erase the Kurds from here. Who will he bring here? Refugees. He says this openly, “let’s invade, let’s bring refugees there, let’s solve this problem”. He says to the Europeans, look, this is how we will solve your problem. He is blackmailing the Europeans in this regard. It is a really inhumane situation. No voice is raised against this. I guess Europe and the US would speak out immediately if there were such attacks elsewhere in the world. But they do not speak out against these attacks. First and foremost, Turkey is a member of NATO. It is bound by some laws of the European Union. It does not obey. It destroys public order. What is public order? Most essentially, it means providing security for society. That is what Turkey attacks. They try to make the region unreliable, uninhabitable, destabilized and, finally, to occupy it. It attacks 5 million people. Erdoğan is taking revenge on those who are fighting against ISIS. All those people who Erdoğan says he hit are the fighters and commanders who are fighting against ISIS. The attacks against Rojava are really intense. But they are not well exposed. It needs to be exposed well.

It is the same with Şengal [Sinjar] and Mexmûr. There, the KDP also legitimizes it. The KDP is also saying this: see how those Kurds could be shot if they don’t agree with us. Why are the Kurds in Rojava attached to Rêber Apo? Also, Mexmûr is loyal to Rêber Apo. In Şengal, they are loyal to the Leader. Of course, Şengal, will be loyal to the Leader. He warned us before the genocide, he ordered us to take care of it. Rêber Apo has always taken care of the Êzîdî people from the very beginning. Today, if they have an identity, if they can speak freely and express themselves, it is Rêber Apo who made this possible. Of course, they love Rêber Apo. The KDP is hostile to Kurds who love Rêber Apo, just like the Turkish state is. The Turkish state has no justification for striking. The only reason for the attack on Rojava is Kurdish enmity. The Kurds need to establish a democratic system for themselves there. The interests of the Turkish state in these attacks need to be exposed all over the world. Also, the role of Europe, the US, the Coalition Forces needs to be exposed.

While evaluating the war in the region, what is your perspective on the latest developments in the fighting between Israel and Hamas?

We have evaluated the state of war before. Of course, this war is going on and will continue. Israel will continue the war until it achieves its goals. They are already talking about a Gaza without Hamas. Europe

and the US agree to this. It is understood that the war will continue. But what is interesting here is the attitude of the Turkish state. We were listening to Erdoğan the other day. He was saying “we don’t want the war there to spread.” However, the state that wants the war to spread and wants it to continue, more than any other state, is the Turkish state. The Turkish state wanted the Israeli-Gaza war to spread to the region so that it could benefit from it. This was exposed before the eyes of the world. Everyone in the world is discussing it right now. We are not the only ones saying this. The US energy route was going to pass through there if their plan had succeeded. So, Turkey directed Hamas in order to sabotage it. It is the Turkish state that directed this massacre and killing of civilians.

The Turkish state does not want Israelis and Arabs to make peace. If Israel and the Arabs continue their fighting, Turkey’s importance in the Middle East will increase. Both against Israel and against the Arabs. It is said that Erdoğan embraced Hamas for the sabotage of the energy route developed by the US. These are being discussed and evaluated. Even the pro-AKP press were saying on TV, “Why doesn’t Iran wage war against Israel, why doesn’t Hezbollah wage war?” Finally, when the Houthis were attacked in the Red Sea, Erdoğan said, “Look, it’s good. The Houthis don’t listen to Iran, they are doing the right thing”. They were openly supporting the Houthis.

Now Erdoğan is shamelessly saying that “war has morals”. True, there is morality in war. Yes, Israel does not abide by the morality of war, but it is the Turkish state that does not abide by the morality of war the most. We are talking about the AKP-MHP government. Erdoğan, didn’t you say “we will do what is necessary, whether it is a woman or a child?” You killed women and children. No one in the world says this openly. They kill women and children, but they don’t say it. Erdoğan said it, bragging about it. How many Kurdish politicians are in your prisons at this moment? What have they done? You put them in prison just for defending the Kurdish identity. You hit them with guns, you hit them in Rojava, you hit civilians in Qendil. So many civilians were killed in Qendil. You struck in Kortek (central Qendil), in Şengal, in Sulaymaniyah. Erdoğan has become the mafia of the world. He gets a call in Turkey, then goes to Sulaymaniyah and shoots with weapons because he is in the Kurdish region. Why are you shooting people? Because they are not the Kurds do you prefer? The other day he shot a doctor.

Yes, war is a difficult situation. There is really great destruction in Palestine. This is clear. But there is also the reality of the Turkish state. Erdoğan gets up and says these things in Antalya. He says war has morals, while being the single most immoral person. What kind of personality is Erdoğan? He blames every evil in himself on others. He says he has good traits which he doesn’t have. Such a liar. Where did he learn it? Who taught him? I guess someone told him: ‘we should always blame our evil deeds on others. That way no one will see the bad things we do.’ I don’t know if this is Erdoğan’s personality or not. He really blames all the evil he does on someone else. If anyone is the most immoral in this war, it is Erdoğan, the AKP-MHP government. He also uses chemical weapons. He is killing civilians, driving people out of their motherland, occupying their lands. Didn’t he make a demographic change? Where are the Kurds now? Isn’t this genocide? Then he gets up and gives lectures to the people in Gaza and Palestine.

From this point of view, when evaluating the war, it is necessary to see the role of the Turkish state in this war. We want this war to end as soon as possible. We want the oppression of the Palestinians to end. Hamas’ attacks are also unacceptable. They massacred civilians. That is a different situation, but there is no justification for such cruelty against civilians.

Response to allegations made by US Secretary of State Blinken concerning the PKK

ANF | 11 MARCH 2024

Recently, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan in Washington DC as part of the series of US-Turkey discussions dubbed the “Strategic Mechanism”. During last week’s meeting, Blinken parroted the slanderous disinformation of Turkish President Erdoğan’s authoritarian regime, making no mention of Erdoğan’s comprehensive stifling of opposition or his regime’s title as the world’s leading jailer of journalists.

One particular passage in the joint statement released by the governments of the US and Turkey was particularly offensive: “The Secretary reiterated the United States’ condemnation of the PKK terrorist organization, DHKP-C, as well as ISIS/DAESH targeting Turkey and Turkish interests. The United States and Turkey reiterated their shared commitment to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS/DAESH in Syria and Iraq and discussed cooperation to counter the threat of ISIS/DAESH and al-Qa’ida affiliates present in Africa and Central Asia.”

In a statement responding to allegations by US Secretary of State Blinken, the Executive Council of the Kurdistan National Congress (KNK) said: “We cannot and do not accept these allegations concerning the PKK in any way or this fanciful account of the Turkish state fighting against the so-called Islamic State (ISIS) terrorist group, and while the US domestic press will likely let this disinformation go unchallenged, we cannot.”

The statement released by KNK on Monday included the following: “The reality, by many in the US government and military, is that, during the rise of ISIS, the Turkish state and their intelligence agency, the MIT, led at the time by Mr. Fidan himself, armed, assisted, and weaponized ISIS as their own proxy mercenaries against the Kurds in Rojava/North and East Syria and South Kurdistan (Iraq). Turkey coordinated with ISIS, supported the group, and facilitated its expansion from the very beginning in many ways, including buying their oil, treating their wounded in Turkish hospitals, and allowing the creation of a “jihadist highway” from the Istanbul airport to Gaziantep and into Syria, a path followed by many thousands of foreign fighters from tens of countries who traveled to Turkey to join ISIS.

Indeed, several statements from Bret McGurk, currently the National Security Council Coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa in US President Joe Biden’s Administration, shed light on the role played by Turkey in the rise of ISIS. Mr. McGurk, who served as the Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIS during much of the war against the group, stated in September 2019:

“40,000 foreign fighters, jihadis from 110 countries around the world, all came into Syria to fight in that war, and they all came through Turkey. The Caliphate was on the border of Turkey. We worked with Turkey, I was in Turkey more than any other country, to have them seal their border, and they would not do it. They said they couldn’t do it. But the minute the Kurds took parts of the border it’s totally sealed with a wall. So, let’s be honest about the record.”

In a subsequent interview, Mr. McGurk also told CNN reporter Christiane Amanpour:

“Most of the material coming to fuel the ISIS war machine, frankly, was coming across the border from Turkey into Syria... If you just look at the northern tier of Syria and just run across what is now the Turkey border, in Idlib province, that’s an area that we don’t operate in, it is really an area of influence for Turkey. It is really dominated now entirely by groups with ties to Al Qaeda. All the border crossings with Turkey are controlled by Al-Qaeda.”

We suggest that Mr. Blinken consult with Mr. McGurk, who played a major role in coordinating with members of the global coalition and forces on the ground in Iraq and Syria to defeat ISIS, before issuing baseless statements which ignore the sacrifices of over 11,000 Kurdish martyrs who heroically gave their lives to defeat the ISIS terrorists that Mr. Fidan’s state supported for years and now wishes to revive. Moreover, if the US wants to stop Al-Qaeda, then they should tell their NATO partner Turkey to end their co-operation with al-Qaida affiliate of Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), a rebranded branch of the group, in Idlib, Syria. At present, the Turkish military pays the salaries of ex-ISIS fighters and a branch of al-Qaida in northwest Syria, the same jihadists who Turkey has used to terrorize and ethnically cleanse the once peaceful region of Afrin over the last six years.

As for the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) themselves, Mr. Blinken should also be aware that they have never carried out an attack against the US, nor even made a single threat against US forces. They were only listed as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) by the Clinton Administration in 1997 as part of a weapons deal to sell helicopters to the Turkish military—which Ankara then used to help destroy over 4,000 Kurdish villages.

We wish to remind Mr. Blinken that the fighters of the PKK put their lives on the line to defeat ISIS and directly saved over a hundred thousand Yazidis on Mount Sinjar in August 2014. When coming to the rescue of the Yazidi people who had been abandoned by other security forces as ISIS approached, the PKK also opened a corridor allowing Yazidis to escape the genocidal ISIS forces which killed thousands and displaced the majority of Iraq’s Yazidi population. During this time, the PKK also battled ISIS in the regions of Kirkuk and Makhmour, preventing ISIS from advancing to the city of Hewlêr (Erbil). Through both satellite surveillance and firsthand accounts from those who were on the ground, including Americans, the Pentagon is well aware of these facts, and Mr. Blinken would benefit from a briefing by those who participated in this war and ultimately eliminated the ISIS caliphate.

We would like to emphasise that Turkey has openly violated international law and human rights conventions by invading and occupying areas in Iraq and Syria, committing war crimes, displacing hundreds of thousands of civilians, and forcibly changing the demographics of these areas in the process. It is unacceptable that, instead of criticising the crimes committed by the Turkish state and its military, Blinken choses to repeat the propaganda of the regime responsible for so much of the instability and bloodshed in the region.

Lastly, we sincerely hope that Mr. Blinken did not greenlight another Turkish invasion and expansion of brutal occupation of Kurdish regions in Syria or Iraq. Just days ago, Erdoğan—who has been relentlessly bombing the infrastructure in Rojava for months—announced he was planning additional unprovoked attacks against the Kurds in South Kurdistan (Kurdistan Region of Iraq) in the weeks to come. At this time, we wish to know if Mr. Blinken co-signed onto Turkey’s new proposed campaign of genocide against the

Kurds and if such libel against the PKK could be paving the way for a future justification for a Turkish ground invasion of other areas in Kurdistan.

We hope that Turkey will not choose to intensify its war against the Kurdish people, and we wish to remind the international community that the reality on the ground will not change. The PKK is a self-defense force of the Kurdish people and their best protection against future genocides by the Turkish state. The Kurdish people wish to live with dignity in their homeland, and will continue fighting for democracy, justice, peace, and the right to self-determination, trusting that the truth will set us free.”

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Karayılan: The freedom campaign will grow even more with the fire of Newroz

ANF | BEHDINAN | 15 MARCH 2024

The PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) Executive Committee Member Murat Karayılan spoke to ANF about the latest developments on the agenda.

Stating that the Kurdish people need national unity more than ever, Karayılan said, “In this historic period, the Kurdish people must have a common strategy and realize their national unity. Even if some do not participate, those who do so should come and establish their unity. This is very important. This Newroz could be the beginning of this.”

Karayılan also announced that they would announce good news in a written statement in the next few days.

Regarding the upcoming local elections on March 31, Karayılan said: “No one should vote for thieves, murderers and oppressors. I call on patriotic, conscientious and religious people to think and vote accordingly. A person's vote is his/her will; no one should sell their will. Nobody should go to the polls and vote for them for the sake of some tribes, family elders and relatives. This is not the way. People should vote for their people, for their nation, for justice. They should vote not for those who will make themselves, their families and relatives rich, but for those who will actually serve them.”

We publish the first part of the PKK Executive Committee Member Murat Karayılan's comments to ANF on the agenda.

“The isolation against Rêber Apo (Leader Abdullah Öcalan) has entered its 26th year. The İmralı system is not only isolation. It is a system of torture and surrender. For 26 years, this torture system has been going on. For the last 3 years, no one can get news from İmralı. In this age of telecommunication, no one has been able to get any news from Rêber Apo and our three friends there (Öcalan's fellow prisoners Hamili Yıldırım, Ömer Hayri Konar and Veysi Aktaş). There have been no phone calls, telegrams or letters. This is not a normal thing. The Turkish state is trampling on domestic and international law with these practices. There is no such thing in any law. This is not only an attitude against one person, but against the entire

people of Kurdistan. Rêber Apo represents the people of Kurdistan. He insists on the Kurdish people's identity rights, he is determined. He is insistent on the rights to freedom and democracy. That is why this psychological torture is being carried out, seeking to make him take a step back. Based on this, the Turkish state wants to carry out a policy of annihilation and genocide in Kurdistan. The content of the genocide policy is already implemented in the İmralı system. Therefore, it is not normal. It is persecution, an attack against the will of the people of Kurdistan, an attitude.

CPT tasked with normalizing torture

Of course, the Turkish state is currently implementing this, but the forces behind the International Conspiracy also play a role here. This is also where the attitude of the CPT, which has become a subject of debate from time to time, stems from. Isn't the task of the CPT to prevent torture? Torture already exists. It is established in all international human rights laws that isolation is torture. There is torture there. So where is the CPT? Does it prevent torture? No. On the contrary, it seems that the CPT has been given the task of normalizing, of turning a blind eye. This is the role the CPT plays. In other words, it is a partner in the torture system. Undoubtedly, Rêber Apo's 26-year stance and resistance against this is very meaningful. We cannot say enough about it. Resisting against psychological torture for 26 years with such steel will, great patience and extraordinary creativity is not something easy or ordinary.

As is known, the conspiratorial forces built the İmralı system to kill Rêber Apo alive. Rêber Apo exists with his ideology, consciousness and philosophy. They created such a system so that Rêber Apo could not carry out his ideological work there, and could not deepen in philosophy. Thus, they wanted to render him meaningless. The İmralı system was essentially built for this purpose. But Rêber Apo did not just put up a classic, ordinary resistance here. But he turned it into a school, a center of concentration and research, contrary to the enemy's ambitions. He created a paradigm based on the democratic, ecological and women's liberationist line. Rêber Apo's creation in İmralı is a historical and important issue in itself. He has created the democratic nation alternative as a perspective not only for the solution of the Kurdish question, but also for the solution of the problems in the Middle East and the whole world, and for the groups and forces struggling against capitalist modernity. His work here is very meaningful and historic. This is not something ordinary. We can only attribute this to Rêber Apo's characteristics of being an army on his own, his relentless will, and his ability to fight with great patience. In the face of this stance of Rêber Apo, our people, our friends, everyone who has heard of Rêber Apo's paradigm, all Kurdish women, now gradually the women of the world, all the youth of Kurdistan, the peoples of the neighboring regions are embracing Rêber Apo more and more every day, and fighting for Rêber Apo's freedom.

The struggle for freedom for Rêber Apo and Kurdistan must get stronger

As it is known, the simultaneous declaration of the "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, a Political Solution to the Kurdish Question" campaign by our internationalist friends in 74 centers on October 10 was very meaningful. From then until now, an important struggle has been waged both internationally and nationally within this framework. Libertarian and democratic sectors are mobilizing and struggling not only for their own people but also for the freedom of Rêber Apo, just as they struggled for the freedom of Mandela. What does all this mean? It shows that the İmralı walls and the İmralı system have become meaningless. With the stance of Rêber Apo, again with the stance of our friends, with the struggle of Kurdistan's fedayees and our people, the International Conspiracy was thwarted. Rêber Apo's struggle against the International Conspiracy made him an international leader and made him even greater. He was embraced by

the peoples. In this sense, yes, the conspiracy was foiled, but today the Leader is still physically in isolation and captivity. That is why we need to struggle more. We need to strengthen the campaign that was started on October 10, and in this way we can socialize the struggle. On this basis, let us succeed in the march for the freedom of Rêber Apo and the march for the freedom of Kurdistan, both of which are inseparable. The foundation laid and the struggle carried out show that we have reached this stage. On this basis, the struggle for the freedom of Rêber Apo and Kurdistan must become even stronger. It will definitely succeed.

March is the month of Newroz, but also massacres

March, as everyone knows, is the month of Newroz. The meaning of Newroz is known. It is a month of good news, a month of feast. It is also the month in which the enemies of Kurdistan constantly develop attacks against Kurdistan. Thus, it is also a month of massacres and attacks. On March 12, 2004, there was a provocation in Qamishlo. An attack was carried out against our people there and a massacre was committed. In the face of this massacre, our people started an uprising from Qamishlo to Dêrik, Kobanê and Afrin and many fell as martyrs. At the same time, on March 12, 1995, a massacre was carried out by the fascist Turkish state against the Kurdish people and the Alevi community in the Gazi neighborhood of Istanbul. There, too, the people of the Gazi Neighborhood resisted. There was a wave of resistance and martyrdom. Again, on March 16 (1988), a great genocide was committed in Kurdistan. The Halabja massacre took place. Thousands of our people there were massacred and martyred by the fascist Saddam regime using chemical weapons. I commemorate the martyrs of all three massacres with respect and honor, and I strongly condemn these massacres.

The uprising in Rojavayê (Western) Kurdistan on March 12 lasted for more than a week. It can be said that the foundation of the Rojava Revolution was actually laid at that time. On that foundation of resistance, the revolution took place. Martyrs played such a role.

Our Kurdish and Alevi people in Gazi Neighborhood have always resisted fascist attacks on the basis of the memory of the martyrs. They continue their resistance today.

The chemical weapons used by Saddam in Halabja are now being used by the Turkish state against the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrillas in Bashûr (Southern Kurdistan). The difference is that in Halabja it was genocide against the civilian population, but the Turkish state is using the same weapon against the guerrillas. From time to time, it also harms civilians, but basically the same mentality, the same weapon is being used in Kurdistan. The Turkish state not only uses chemical weapons as a continuation of Halabja, but as a bandit, a terrorist state, it also carries out assassinations and terrorist attacks against the people in Bakurê (Northern) Kurdistan, Bashûr (South), Rojava (West) and even Rojhilat (East) from time to time. The Turkish state continues its attacks against the Kurdish people today with the same fascist, racist mentality. However, in memory of the massacres and all the martyrs, we are resisting against the racism and genocide of the Turkish state. We will continue the struggle and we will not leave their blood unavenged. We will keep their memories alive by raising the Kurdistan Freedom Struggle.

On March 8, two of our patriots, Seîd Mubarek and Aras Ferec, were martyred in an enemy attack in Garê. I commemorate both of them with respect; I offer my condolences to their families, the Zêbarî tribe and the people of Southern Kurdistan. I wish a speedy recovery to those who were wounded. These patriots were murdered as a result of Turkish state fascism and genocide. They are martyrs of the cause of free-

dom. The Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla will fulfill its duty and will not leave the blood of these two martyrs unavenged.

March 12 was also the beginning of other things. For example, the United Revolutionary Movement of Peoples (HBDH) was declared on March 12. On this occasion, I respectfully commemorate our two heroes, Delal Amed and Ulaş Adalı, who took part in the declaration platform of the HBDH, made a speech and later fell as martyrs in the struggle, and I reiterate once again our promise to our heroic martyrs.

Again, the Democratic Self-Determination resistance that started in Bakurê Kurdistan in 2015 has an important place in our struggle. Starting from Sur, Cizre, Nusaybin, Silvan, Yüksekova, Şırnak, Silopi, Îdil, Dargeçit and Varto and spreading to many cities of Kurdistan, the resistance has a very important place in our history. One of the most notable among these resistances was the commander of the Sur resistance, comrade Çiyager, who was martyred on March 12, 2016, after 105 days of sacrificial fighting in the capital Amed. I also commemorate the precious sacrificial commander, Çiyager, with respect and reiterate our promise to them.

Rêber Apo started his historic march 51 years ago on Newroz day. On this basis, the fire of Newroz has become bigger and more meaningful day by day.

First of all, on behalf of all our friends and the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla, we congratulate Rêber Apo on Newroz and send our greetings. Again, I congratulate all the people of Kurdistan, the mothers of the martyrs, the peoples of the region, everyone who believes in the Newroz tradition, all comrades and revolutionaries. I wish everyone success in the New Year's struggle. On the occasion of this holy day, I respectfully commemorate all the Newroz martyrs in the person of Comrade Mazlum Doğan, the Contemporary Kawa. We reiterate our promise to them. The flag they raised, the fire they raised will be the fire of victory, the fire of freedom and the fire of keeping the memory of the martyrs alive. We will not spare anything we can to fulfill this promise, we will fulfill it.

Newroz has a meaningful place in the history of many peoples in the Middle East and the people of Kurdistan. In the history of our movement's struggle, it has even more meaning. As I have mentioned, when Rêber Apo was preparing to make a historic breakthrough, he was looking for traditional heritage. The one he saw best was Newroz. He took the resistance of Newroz as a basis, the resistance of Medya, which lasted for years against the Assyrian Empire and achieved victory. He saw this as a spirit and said, 'The spirit of Medya must be renewed, the Newroz fire must be rekindled. This is a day of resistance, a day of unity, a day to raise resistance'. He took the first step on Newroz day to develop Newroz in this way. And Newroz started to be celebrated differently day by day. Comrade Mazlum Doğan celebrated Newroz with his life as a Contemporary Kawa in the prison of Amed (Diyarbakır) and raised the fire of resistance. Again, Kurdish girls were experiencing the Newroz fire wholeheartedly. They turned their bodies into fire and celebrated Newroz. Zekiye Alkan, Rahşan Demirel, later Ronahî and Bêrîvan in Germany in the 90s did it this way. In the uprisings in Cizîra Botan and Nusaybin and in all Kurdistan cities, Newroz was celebrated with martyrdoms and resistance. This is how Newroz gained its meaning. It became a day of struggle and resistance with the participation of millions of people. Otherwise, it was already forgotten, most of them did not even know about it. But this changed as a result of Rêber Apo's efforts, his emphasis on it and the resistance raised on Newroz days. Again, many breakthroughs took place during Newroz. For example, the establishment of the ERNK (Kurdistan National Liberation Front) and the KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union) was announced on Newroz. Again, as a result of organizing Newroz as the beginning of the new

year, as new beginnings, our people became the people of Newroz. Newroz has such a role and mission in our history.

Newroz to raise the march for the freedom of Rêber Apo and Kurdistan

Especially this year's Newroz, the Newroz of 2024 is more meaningful. This year, declarations were issued by the institutions of our people and the supporters of democracy in Turkey. The 2024 Newroz was declared as an escalation of the struggle for the freedom of Rêber Apo. The campaign for Freedom for Rêber Apo and a Political Solution to the Kurdish Question will grow even more with the Newroz fire. Newroz is celebrated everywhere for the freedom of Rêber Apo. This is very important and very meaningful. Our people should participate more enthusiastically and massively in this Newroz. It should even be realized with the participation of millions of people in Kurdistan and abroad. Everyone should call for the freedom of Rêber Apo and Kurdistan. Everyone must hear it. Let Newroz in Kurdistan be based on raising freedom, raising the freedom of Rêber Apo. The campaign launched on October 10 has already resonated internationally. Many people, many politicians, trade unions, civil organizations, academics, scientists have made statements about Rêber Apo's freedom, they have embraced it and are fighting for it. Let everyone hear both the struggle being waged around the world today and the cry of our people that will grow on Newroz. Especially the unscrupulous, immoral, conspiratorial forces that darken the future of the peoples for their own interests. Let them hear what this people want, what they are calling for. Therefore, participation in this Newroz is very important. I call on all our people, all our patriots, supporters of democracy and friends of the Kurdish people to participate massively in the Newroz. Because this Newroz is the Newroz of freedom, the Newroz of raising the freedom march of Rêber Apo and Kurdistan. In this context, it is very meaningful.

We will give good news to our people in the coming days

Newroz is also a day of unity, struggle and resistance. On this occasion, I call on all forces in Kurdistan; parties, organizations, patriotic personalities to act for national unity. Today, more than ever, our people need national unity like water, like air. In this historic period, the Kurdish people must also have a common strategy and realize their national unity. Even if some do not participate, those who do so should come and establish their unity. This is very important. This Newroz could be the beginning of this.

As the leadership of our movement, we will give good news to our people this Newroz, in the next few days. We will announce our good news in a written statement. This good news will be a tool that will play an important role in raising our struggle. We will announce this good news in the coming days. In this context, I once again wholeheartedly congratulate the Newroz of all our people and the peoples of the region and I say 'Bijî Newroz' (Long Live Newroz).

Is it not a sin to vote for these murderers and oppressors?

We have entered an important year, an important spring. As the Kurdish people, we are going through a very important stage. At such a stage, local elections also play an important role.

As it is known, the AKP-MHP and Ergenekon regime has been carrying out reckless attacks against our people and our movement in every way for 9 years. Every day, their officials boast of killing young Kurdish men and women. Today, they say, we killed so many people. Where are they attacking? They are attacking

Rojava, they are attacking Bakur, Bashûr. All of our people see it; they are attacking the sources of life in Rojava. They attack hospitals, water and electricity stations, bread factories, flour factories. They are attacking every aspect of life. Today, millions of our people in Rojava are without electricity. They burn stoves with diesel oil. There is misery. Who is doing this oppression? It is this regime, the AKP. The AKP is like a demon for the Kurdish people today, it is a tyrant. If our people have built a life in Hesekê, they attack even there. Even though Shengal is so far away from Turkey's border, the moment our Yazidi people talk about freedom, it attacks there, too. So, it is a tyrant. Elections will take place at such a moment. Our patriotic, religious and conscientious people should not vote for these oppressors. They are against the Kurdish people. They talk about terror; but they are practicing terror. Every day they carry out assassinations, every day they commit murder, they target civilians, people in schools, everyone. Why? Because they are Kurdish. Why? Because they want their rights. There is such a situation. Despite this, what would happen if a Kurd with religion and faith went to the polls and voted for them?

We are in the holy month of Ramadan. If someone votes for these murderers, these oppressors this month, isn't that a sin? It is a sin. And some people use religion. They are a murderer. They killed so many people, but they also use religion. They want to use this holy religion for their own interests, to put it at their service. Our people should not give way to them anymore. In the past, maybe some people were ignorant, they couldn't recognize what they were and followed them, but now there is so much internet, media, digital media. Today, everyone is now conscious. Therefore, this kind of unconsciousness should not happen anymore. Thieves should not be voted for. They are thieves. No one should vote for thieves, murderers and oppressors. I call on patriotic, conscientious and religious people to think and vote accordingly. A person's vote is his/her will; no one should sell their will. Nobody should go to the polls and vote for them for the sake of some tribes, family elders and relatives. This is not the way. People should vote for their people, for their nation, for justice. They should vote not for those who will make themselves, their families and relatives rich, but for those who will actually serve them. If someone is already rich and is a thief, you vote for him so that he can steal more. And those who lean on oppressors... No one should do this anymore.

Trustees are the same as the isolation on Rêber Apo

For example, the trustees. They are appointing trustees to municipalities in Kurdistan. What is a trustee? It is a violation of the will of the Kurdish people. It is not recognizing the Kurds. Just as the isolation and psychological torture of Rêber Apo is not only directed against a person, but against a people, the Kurdish people, so are the trustees. For example, has Selçuk Mızraklı committed a crime? No. Why is he in prison now? Because he represents Amed. Or have Selahattin Demirtaş, Figen Yüksekdağ committed a crime? No. They are in prison for defending some rights, for defending the rights of the Kurdish people, for defending democracy. From now on, our people, the supporters of democracy, all those in favor of justice and freedom must take this into consideration. No one should take a casual approach. On the one hand, there is a racist, fascist, oppressive mentality, and on the other hand, there are those who struggle against it, those who resist, those who want freedom and democracy, those who want a life based on fair sharing, those who want justice. Is there anything better than this? One should take this as a basis. I believe that our people and all supporters of democracy will take these facts into consideration, participate in the elections on this basis, go to the polls and vote accordingly on the right basis. Our people say that they will vote for themselves. This is the right thing to do. Do vote for yourselves, vote for your children, vote for those elected by the people.

No one needs to tell a patriot to work for the elections

There are still two weeks to go. Most importantly, all employees should not rely only on rallies and visits of the co-mayor candidates alone. Go from house to house, from village to village, from door to door, ask for votes from everyone, invite them to conscience, talk, establish dialogue. In short, a good work must be carried out. This is necessary. Secondly, everyone who calls themselves a patriot and a democrat should see themselves as in charge. There is no need for anyone to tell them to go around and work for the elections. They should work themselves. Or everyone should focus on their own homes, relatives, friends, fellows and family. Every patriot must make himself responsible for everyone to act in the right way, to use their vote on the right basis, and act in this way.

We are going through such a process. The Turkish state wants to carry out attacks again this spring, like the saying 'the beaten wrestler is never satisfied with wrestling'. On this basis, a historic resistance will develop. Those who do not want bloodshed and massacres should not vote for those people. They should strengthen patriotic and revolutionary votes. Therefore, everyone should go to the polls and cast their vote. I believe that our people will act consciously and will give the necessary answer to this racist, fascist, murderous mentality that persecutes our people in every way in the election. On this basis, I salute all our patriotic people, and I hope they will get a good result."

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Opinion

Turkey's Kurdish policy and the future of the KDP

RAUF KARAKOCAN | ANF | 11 MARCH 2024

The PKK's freedom struggle against the Turkish state did not end with the captivity of Leader Apo (Abdullah Öcalan), but its intensity was reduced militarily. It has been 25 years since Leader Apo's captivity. The International Conspiracy led to developments in many areas. While the paradigmatic change brought about a reorganization due to the need for a change-transformation in the organization, on the other hand, the so-called 'solution process' came up. As a result of the ceasefires and aborted processes that were intended to contribute to the process and a democratic solution to the problem, the organization was forced to fight the most relentless war in its 50-year history of the struggle.

Leader Apo's captivity also paved the way for the collaborator leadership in Bashûr (Southern Kurdistan). The KDP is not an organization that came to power by its own means. Regarding the formation of the federal region in Bashûr, Erdoğan has repeatedly stated that it is a "faulty formation".

The Kurdish policy of the fascist AKP-MHP government in Turkey has been entirely oriented towards the extermination of the Kurds and the elimination of their gains. The problem has long gone beyond the liq-

liquidation of the PKK. The fascist-occupying Turkish Republic is intensifying its invasion attacks against the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, citing the PKK issue as an excuse. It carries out assassinations with UCAVs. It creates civil unrest and applies unimaginable special warfare methods to disperse the society. It continues with similar attacks in Shengal and Maxmur.

Unfortunately, this Kurdish hostility of the Turkish state is not sufficiently comprehended by the Federal Regional Government of Southern Kurdistan. The Turkish state's occupation of Bashûr is not an ordinary temporary occupation. The ground beneath the regional administration has shifted, but the failure to realize this is a blunder, if it is not intentional. KDP officials who make statements with cheap political calculations by saying that the reason for the Turkish state's attacks on Southern Kurdistan is the 'PKK' should once again think about what their own fate will be in the future. If only the KDP officials, who are dizzy with the current power opportunities in Bashûr, who reign in pleasure and enjoyment, could correctly read the political developments that concern them in recent times, they would be ashamed of the aggressive rhetoric they use against the PKK.

The Kurdish policy of the Turkish state is the product of a concept with international dimensions. Whatever the requirements of the Middle East project are, they will place the Kurds on the basis of the requirements of this project. As a matter of fact, the future of the KDP is only a part of the big picture.

In order to analyze the issue a little more, listing some topics may help us to read the sad end that awaits the KDP.

The decisions of the Iraqi federal court concerning Southern Kurdistan and especially the KDP are very important. It is not a spontaneous situation that the KDP's political powers, economic situation, electoral gains and even the federative status of the region are almost unrecognizable.

It is not spontaneous for the court to make decisions that undermine the KDP's political powers, its economic situation, electoral gains and even render the federative status of the region almost unrecognizable.

It is also quite meaningful that the US court decision concerning the Barzani family coincided with the decision of the Iraqi Federal Court, while some news reports accusing Masrour Barzani were circulating. Even the fact that the fascist government of Erdoğan, in which the Barzanis put a lot of trust, creates a ground for attacks by labeling the PKK, cannot save the Barzanis from a sad end.

Even the Barzanis' assets in Turkey are under threat. They have made themselves so dependent on Turkey that they are forced to act as spies, they have become weak-willed. The KDP's relations with Turkey are also noted by Arab countries. We think that they cannot be so politically blind that they do not know that being in a close embrace with a dictatorship that speaks in every direction will have a cost. Let us just emphasize that some Arab countries, Iran, Israel and sometimes even the US, do not approve of the relations between Turkey and the KDP.

Even in history, some Kurds who betrayed their people to curry favor with the Turkish state on a collaborative basis could not escape punishment. Now it is the turn of the KDP. The fate of the treasonous Kurds who were punished with the idea that "He who betrays his own people will betray me one day" has always been similar.

No matter how close the Barzanis get to Turkey, no matter how much they establish brotherhood and friendship with Erdoğan, no matter how hostile they are to the PKK, they should know that they will have difficulty finding a place for themselves in the political conjuncture of the future. They have fed on the collaborationist line as much as they could, but they have brought themselves to the brink of extinction. They must realize that their current power will not last.

For the KDP to draw conclusions on Dictator Erdoğan's Kurdish policy, we suggest that they examine Turkey's relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood. Erdoğan hosted the Muslim Brotherhood leadership in Turkey. He allocated them an office in Ankara. Just as he supported Hamas against Israel, he allowed them to open offices and political representation in Ankara. Fascist Erdoğan was one of the most ardent supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood coming to power in Egypt. He uttered unspeakable words against Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, who overthrew Morsi's government. He symbolized the Rabia sign and used it for his interests in domestic and foreign politics. A lot of water has flowed beneath the bridge. 'Murderer' Sisi became 'Brother' Sisi. Just as he expelled Hamas' representative Aruzi in exchange for improving relations with Israel, he first used and then discarded the Muslim Brotherhood in exchange for improving relations with Egypt. The reward for his visit to Egypt was the approval of the execution of 8 members of the Brotherhood.

Fascist Erdoğan does not even tolerate the existence of the PUK (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan) today. They are making threats to subjugate Bafil Talabani. Erdoğan, the fascist dictator, took the Barzanis under his sway, turned the KDP like a spinning top and made it a servant for his political interests. As if this was not enough, he is now trying to turn the PUK into a satellite political organization. They have become reckless enough to threaten it openly. In order to make the Kurds serve their own political interests, they immorally threaten, attack and, when necessary, slaughter them.

If Ankara's pro-extermination and pro-occupation Kurdish policy does not change, all the Kurds' vested rights, including the autonomous administration in Southern Kurdistan, are in danger. The political statuses in Bashûr and Rojava are also in danger. This is the purpose of Erdoğan's latest threat. He wants to annex the 30-40 kilometer borderline to his territory and take it under his political control. This includes Bashûr. Unfortunately, the KDP has become the biggest supporter of this danger.

With the idea that 'it is never too late to mend', we say that the collaborative line established and developed on the basis of PKK hostility will do them no good. History is full of examples of this.

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