

THE İMRALI POST

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

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Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

Another 6-months ban on lawyer visits imposed on Öcalan

ANF | ISTANBUL | 21 MAY 2024

Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan, who is kept under absolute isolation in İmralı F Type High Security Closed Prison, has not been heard from since his interrupted phone call with his brother Mehmet Öcalan on 25 March 2021.

According to Mezopotamya News Agency, Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan and his fellow prisoners in İmralı, Ömer Hayri Konar, Veyisi Aktaş and Hamili Yıldırım, were given a new 6-month ban on lawyer visits.

Lawyers of Asrin Law Office applied to Bursa 2nd Execution Judgeship with a request for a meeting. After the application, the lawyers found out that a new 6-month ban on their clients had been issued on 3 May. The lawyers were not informed about the reason for the ban.

The objections to the decision were rejected. The lawyers will apply to the Constitutional Court (AYM) against the ban.

Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan was last banned from seeing his lawyer for 6 months on 31 October 2023.



Application for release of Veysi Aktaş from Imralı rejected

ANF | ISTANBUL | 22 MAY 2024

There has been no news from Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan and prisoners Ömer Hayri Konar, Hamili Yıldırım and Veysi Aktaş, who have been in absolute isolation in Imralı F Type High Security Closed Prison, for 38 months. Lawyer and family visits are blocked on the grounds of "disciplinary penalties".

According to the news of Mezopotamya Agency, Veysi Aktaş has not been released even though he completed the execution of his 30-year sentence on 28 April. Aktaş's release was postponed for one year by the decision of the Administration and Observation Board. Lawyers of Asrın Law Office applied to the Bursa 3rd Execution Judgeship against the decision of the Imralı Disciplinary Board, which postponed Aktaş's right to conditional release for one year. The judgeship rejected the application on 2 May.

Finally, the lawyers applied to Bursa 1st High Criminal Court. The court rejected the lawyers' application and the decision became final on 10 May.

It was learned that the lawyers will apply to the Constitutional Court (AYM).



'Freedom for Öcalan: A Political Solution to the Kurdish Question' Campaign calls on the CPT to act

ANF | 24 MAY 2024

Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan, who is kept under absolute isolation in İmralı F Type High Security Closed Prison, has not been heard from since his interrupted phone call with his brother Mehmet Öcalan on 25 March 2021. Öcalan was last banned from seeing his lawyers for 6 months on 31 October 2023.

It came out that Abdullah Öcalan and his fellow prisoners in İmralı, Ömer Hayri Konar, Veysi Aktaş and Hamili Yıldırım, were given a new 6-month ban on lawyer visits. The lawyers learned about the ban after they filed an application to judicial authorities with a request for a meeting with their clients in İmralı.

The 'Freedom for Öcalan: A Political Solution to the Kurdish Question' Campaign released a statement calling on the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture or Degrading Treatment (CPT), a body of the Council of Europe (CoE), to fulfil its duty to uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The statement noted that Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan is a citizen of a Council of Europe member state who has been deprived of his human rights in a Turkish prison for 25 years, including, for the last three years, the right to see his lawyers and speak to his family.

On 3 May, Öcalan's lawyers received a further ban on access to their client, who is held on the Turkish maximum security prison island of İmralı, and for 38 months has been under conditions of absolute solitary confinement in violation of international humanitarian law. The repeated bans imposed by the Turkish prison administration are considered arbitrary and appeals are routinely rejected.

Öcalan has not been heard from since a brief telephone conversation with his brother on 25 March 2002. Despite ongoing concerns for his well-being, Öcalan and three other prisoners, Ömer Hayri Konar, Veysi Aktaş and Hamili Yıldırım, have been given a further six-month ban on lawyer visits.

Lawyers from Asrin Law Office submitted a request to the Bursa 2nd Execution Judge to facilitate meetings with their clients. They state, *"On May 3, we were informed of a new six-month ban on lawyer visits for our clients."* No reason was given for the decision.

Appeals have been rejected and the lawyers plan to take their case to Turkey's Constitutional Court. This latest ban is the 13th time in the past eight years that Öcalan has been denied access to his lawyers. Since February 2018, these bans have been renewed every six months. Similar restrictions also prevent family visits.

The Campaign for Öcalan's Freedom was launched in October 2023 in a global attempt to highlight the oppression faced by all four Kurdish regions, which are divided by the borders of Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran. The campaign aims to secure the rights of Öcalan, the leader of the Kurdish People, to meet with his lawyers and family, and to secure his release so that he can contribute to the search for a just and democratic political solution to the long-standing Turkish-Kurdish conflict, which has important implications for regional security.

The CPT is losing credibility

Pressure has been mounting on the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture to take concrete steps to end the inhumane isolation practices in Turkish prisons, particularly with regard to the treatment of Öcalan, who is considered by millions of Kurds to be their legitimate political leader and the key to restarting peace talks between the Turkish state and Kurdish forces.

The CPT has carried out inspections at İmralı but has failed to publish a report on the prison conditions and welfare of Öcalan or the three other inmates on the island. The secrecy surrounding conditions in İm-

ralı Prison contrasts sharply with the norms of transparency in other prisons. Although the CPT rules do not allow publication of a report without the permission of the state concerned (in this case Turkey), they do have the possibility of making a statement when their advice has not been taken.

Remarking that the CPT is widely accused of losing credibility because of this inaction, which appears to condone human rights violations in member states, the statement by the international campaign 'Freedom for Öcalan: A Political Solution to the Kurdish Question' said:

- We condemn the unjust and illegal restrictions on Öcalan's access to his lawyers and his right to communicate. The prolonged isolation and denial of basic human rights to Mr Öcalan is unacceptable and violates international humanitarian law.
- We call again on the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture or Degrading Treatment (CPT), a body of the Council of Europe (CoE), to fulfil its duty to uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms by sending a delegation to İmralı Island to meet with Öcalan and assess his health.
- We urge Turkey to allow his family and lawyers to visit him, as stipulated by the obligations of the Council of Europe (CoE) and the CPT.
- The arbitrary bans on visits by lawyers and communication with family members must be lifted to ensure that Öcalan's rights are respected.
- The CPT's silence in the face of this isolation effectively makes them an accomplice in Turkey's policy of isolation, torture, and mistreatment of Öcalan. A better alternative is to pressure Turkey to return to the negotiating table with the leader of the Kurdish people, Abdullah Öcalan, who mediated a dialogue process in 2013-2015, which was unilaterally ended by Erdogan. This process was welcomed internationally, and its revival would stabilise Turkey by resolving the Kurdish question.

— ★ —

Prisons

Release of Ramazan Karataş postponed for 6 months

ANF | 18 MAY 2024

Ramazan Karataş, who was arrested in 1993 and sentenced to life imprisonment, has been kept in a solitary cell in Ereğli High Security Closed Prison for the last 2 years after spending time in various prisons.

In the notification sent to Karataş, it was stated that his release was postponed for 6 months because he did not show "regret" and continued to show "loyalty to the organization".

Karataş's nephew, Bilal Karataş, said that this decision was a violation of the law and added: "I do not understand why someone who has completed his sentence is still kept in prison. The decision made is com-

pletely arbitrary. Not releasing a person who has been in prison for 30 years in such an unlawful way is a concrete example of the law being ignored. We call on the prison board to immediately give up this unlawful decision."

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Prisoner İlhan released from jail after 30 years

ANF | ŞİRNAK | 19 MAY 2024

Şehmuz İlhan was arrested in Silopi, in the province of Şırnak in 1994. He was released after the completion of his life imprisonment sentence on Saturday.

Sick prisoner İlhan was released from Van High Security Prison and returned to his hometown, Silopi.

Many people, including DEM Party Şırnak MP Mehmet Zeki Irmez, welcomed İlhan.

— ★ —

Release of ill prisoner postponed for 4th time

ANF | ŞİRNAK | 19 MAY 2024

Naif Işçi (28), who was arrested after being detained in the Cizre (Cizîr), in the province of Şırnak (Şirnex) in September 2010, was tried for "committing a crime on behalf of an illegal organization without being a member of it", "making propaganda for an illegal organisation", "violating the law on meetings, demonstrations and marches" and "unauthorized possession and transportation of dangerous substances". He was sentenced to 24 years in prison. The Supreme Court reduced the sentence to 16 years, taking into account his young age. However, although the man has completed his execution period, he cannot benefit from his right to conditional release. His release was in fact postponed for the fourth time on the grounds that he refused to show "remorse".

Işçi, who had a traffic accident shortly before his arrest and had a plate in his left leg, has been held in prison for 14 years. For this reason, his left leg became shorter, and he is now almost unable to walk.

'There is neither law nor justice'

Nebahat Işçi, Naif's mother, said that the obstacles put in front of the release of ill prisoners were due to injustice in the country and added: "My son has completed 14 years in prison. He was arrested at a young age. They stole my son's childhood and ruined his life. My son completed his sentence and was supposed to be released on 6 May. I started making preparations. However, his release was postponed for the fourth time for another 3 months. This state has no justice or law. Our children are not released even though their sentences are over. Isn't this unfair?"

'What did my son do that he should show remorse?'

Stating that her son was subjected to all kinds of injustice in prison, Işçi said: "He is disabled and has a plate in his left leg. As if keeping him in prison were not enough, they sent him to Bandırma T Type Closed Prison. Now, after 14 years, they have asked my son to show remorse. What has he done that he should show remorse? My son is sick and has caught many diseases in prison. We want justice to come to this country."

— ★ —

Release of Jinnews journalist Ren postponed for 3 months

ANF | 20 MAY 2024

Jinnews journalist Derya Ren was detained along with many journalists during home raids in Amed on 25 October 2022, within the scope of an Ankara-based investigation.

Şanlıurfa 6th High Criminal Court sentenced Derya Ren to 3 years, 13 months and 15 days in prison on the charge of "knowingly aiding an illegal organization", and this sentence was approved by the Supreme Court in 2022.

According to Jinnews, the release of journalist Derya Ren, who was brought to the Administration and Observation Board in recent weeks, was expected at the beginning of May, but was postponed by the decision of the board.

It was said that one of the reasons why journalist Derya Ren's release was postponed was that on the first day she was taken to prison, she refused to be strip-searched by the guards.

It was also stated that Derya Ren's release was decided to be postponed for 3 months on the grounds that she was "not ready to integrate into society".

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Ill prisoner Makbule Özertaken to Istanbul to get a new Forensic Medicine Institute report

ANF | ISTANBUL | 21 MAY 2024

About a month ago, 82-year-old Makbule Özer was given a report by the Forensic Medicine Institute (ATK) stating that she could stay in prison in Van. This time she was sent to Istanbul to allow the ATK to prepare a new report after the protests by public opinion.

Makbule Özer had her sentence postponed for one year after a first ATK report saying she "could not stay in prison". However, she was put in prison again after a second ATK report saying she "could stay in prison".

Now, a month after being put in jail, she has been sent to Istanbul for a new report.

— ★ —

Court rules for the release of three journalists jailed in April

ANF | 21 MAY 2024

On 23 April, Mezopotamya Agency (MA) reporters Esra Solin Dal and Mehmet Aslan, Yeni Yaşam Newspaper employee Enes Sezgin, Free Press employees Saliha Aras, Yeşim Alıcı, Beste Argat Balcı, Şirin Ermiş and Erdoğan Alayumat and former MA reporter Doğan Kaynak were detained in house raids within the scope of an Istanbul-based operation.

On 26 April, journalists Mehmet Aslan, Esra Solin Dal and Erdoğan Alayumat were taken before the Çağlayan Courthouse and remanded in custody on charges of "being a member of an illegal organisation", a systematic and arbitrary tool of repression.

The court dealing with the case ruled for the release of the three journalists on Tuesday.

— ★ —

Lawyers finally meet with journalist Silêman Ehmed after 211 days without news

ANF | 23 MAY 2024

After 211 days incommunicado, Rojnews' Arabic editor, Silêman Ehmed, was allowed to see his lawyer. The journalist was kidnapped by KDP-affiliated forces at the Sêmalka Border Gate while returning from Aleppo to South Kurdistan on 25 October 2023. Ehmed's lawyer managed to meet with him in Duhok public order offices. Ehmed also had a 2-minute phone call with his family in Northern and Eastern Syria.

Making a statement about the meeting, Beşdar Hasan, one of Silêman Ehmed's lawyers, said that they had a meeting with the Duhok Investigation Court and the Duhok Public Security Directorate, thanks to an appointment made by the President of the Human Rights Institution, Muna Yaqub, and the General Director of Human Relations of the Human Rights Institution, Silêman Muhsin.

'Public pressure must continue'

Hasan, together with the other lawyers, Rêvîng Yasin, Kameran Sarmemî and Rêbaz Wisû, of Silêman Ehmed Defense Group, said about the meeting they held with the relevant institutions: "Following the meeting, we were able to see Silêman Ehmed in a room. During the meeting, Ehmed conveyed his special greetings to everyone who made an effort for him, especially Rojnews journalists. Ehmed also expressed his gratitude to all organizations, journalists, unions and patriots who participated in the freedom campaign carried out for him. We were very happy to see that he was healthy. He stated that his only request was to continue public pressure until he was released."

'Not a single piece of evidence of crime'

Hasan said that the journalist was accused of "endangering national security", which is Article 1 of Law No. 21 enacted by the Kurdistan Region Parliament in 2003, and that the prosecutor continued to detain him for this reason. Hasan said: "However, not a single piece of evidence has been produced regarding this alleged crime for 7 months. We obtained the necessary power to represent him. Then, we met with the Duhok Public Order Review Court. They stated that their doors are open to us."

'The court day will be the day he will be released'

Lawyer Hasan said that they will continue their efforts to present the Silêman Ehmed file to the court in a very short time, and added: "To put it plainly, the day Silêman Ehmed will be brought to court will be the day he will be released. We want to give the good news of his release as soon as possible. Not a single piece of evidence has been produced regarding the alleged crime. During the interrogation process, it was revealed that he went to Rojava officially and returned to South Kurdistan. It has also been officially documented that he has a residence permit in the Kurdistan Region."

— ★ —

Prisoners' relatives: We will protest until our children's demands are met

ANF | ANKARA | 23 MAY 2024

Peace Mothers and prisoners' relatives, who came from Izmir to Ankara to meet with the Minister of Justice, Yılmaz Tunç, met with his private secretary. Relatives of the prisoners held a press conference at the Headquarters of the People's Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) regarding the meeting.

Peace Mother Hanife Gümüş said: "We were able to go to the private secretary of the minister. The Minister of Justice was afraid and did not want to appear in front of us. We explained our problem to the Minister's private secretary. We said that unless the minister ensures peace, our children will remain in prison."

We told the secretary that we would not leave the front of the Ministry of Justice and the streets unless our demands were met."

Peace Mother Peyruze Kurt said: "We came here from Izmir. We have a purpose and a goal. First of all, we never accept the cruelty in prisons and that of Mr. Abdullah Öcalan. The oppression implemented in the prisons is related to the oppression implemented in Imralı. As long as the oppression in Imralı continues, the oppression in other prisons will also continue. If the isolation is lifted, the doors of all prisons will be opened and the oppression there will end. We are Peace Mothers, not war mothers, we want peace, not war."



Another death in prison

ANF | 23 MAY 2024

Prisoner Ergün Akdoğan was in Tekirdağ No. 1 F Type Closed Prison. He underwent surgery on 14 May. He was pronounced dead on Wednesday. The Istanbul Branch of the Association of Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD) said on its social media accounts that Akdoğan passed away.

The ÖHD wrote: "Ergün Akdoğan, who was in prison for 27 years, was transferred from Tekirdağ No. 2 F Type High Security Closed Penal Institution to Başakşehir Çam Sakura City Hospital due to a brain haemorrhage. He died after a nine-day treatment period. During this period, many difficulties were caused by both the prison administration and the law enforcement forces, and the family was prevented from even seeing the prisoner in the hospital one last time. An attitude, that of the prison administration, is incompatible with human dignity. The prison administration, the General Directorate of Prisons and Detention Houses, and the Ministry of Justice are therefore responsible for this death. We call on the authorities to take measures to protect the health and life rights of prisoners and to fulfill their responsibilities in order to prevent deaths in prisons."



Journalist Ehmed's mother: Release my son

ANF | 24 MAY 2024

211 days after Rojnews' Arabic editor Silêman Ehmed was kidnapped by the KDP government, his lawyers were able to meet with him for the first time on Wednesday.

His brother Xalih Ehmed, who was in Germany, talked to him on the phone for 2 minutes.

Journalist Silêman Ehmed's mother, Sultane Ehmed, said: "Silêman talked to his brother and said he was fine." The woman thanked everyone who put pressure on the government of South Kurdistan about the visit of the lawyers and said: "All the accusations of the KDP are against the law and my son has nothing to do with these accusations."

The journalist's mother called on organizations and journalists to continue their pressure on the KDP to achieve her son's release. She said: "The KDP's accusations have no truth in them. There is no legitimacy for my son to remain in prison, and he should be released."

Sultane Ehmed added: "The KDP has kidnapped my son for 8 months. He is not guilty of anything. I did not hear his voice even once during this entire process."

— ★ —

Military aggression and occupation

Van under siege by the police and military

ANF | VAN | 18 MAY 2024

Public life in the province of Van has been paralysed by a large police force since the local elections on 31 March. The DEM Party won in all 14 constituencies in the province and the ruling AKP party was defeated. Immediately after the election, the victory of the newly elected co-mayor, Abdullah Zeydan of the DEM Party, was cancelled. The election committee declared that the second-placed AKP candidate Abdulahat Arvas should take office after a court had previously declared Zeydan's candidature invalid. The people opposed this and took to the streets. After days of protests, the decision was reversed, and Abdullah Zeydan was able to move into the town hall as co-mayor together with Neslihan Şedal.

A month and a half have passed since the popular uprising, but the police and military are still present in large numbers. The "security forces" are blocking traffic, hampering trade and paralysing public life. Emergency forces with water cannons are positioned on all major roads. Police helicopters are circling over the city day and night. The governor announced that identity checks would continue on the access roads and that the general ban on gatherings would be extended. Over a hundred people have been arrested in Turkey in connection with the protests.

DEM provincial association co-chair Veysi Dilekçi describes the state of siege as the state's reaction to the people's resistance to the cancellation of their vote. Remarking that the people had prevailed with a democratic stance, the politician told ANF: "The state of emergency declared in Turkey in 2016 was lifted in 2018, but it still applies in Van. The right of assembly enshrined in the constitution has been suspended, and everyday life is made more difficult by this state of siege. The situation has worsened since the elections. State measures are directed against the will of the people. The constitution is no longer valid in Van.

"There is a repressive atmosphere that we cannot accept. We call on the government to abandon this policy and allow normal life in Van."

Lawyer Mahmut Kaçan pointed out that the "security measures" have no legal basis: "It is being pretended that there are riots in Van every day. In my opinion, the measures are politically motivated because the government wants to punish the population for its democratic stance and take revenge for it."

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Turkish shelling injures four children in Shehba

ANF | SHEHBA | 18 MAY 2024

The occupying Turkish state and its gangs bombarded the villages of Semuqa, Til Mediq, Til Jijan and Um Hosh villages in Shehba and the Shahba Dam this morning.

Villagers grazing their animals were targeted in the bombardment and 4 children were injured. The injured children, who come from the Ewêce village in Aleppo, were identified as Duha Hesên (16), Xedîce Îsmelî (15), Meter Îbrahîm (14) and Faris Îbrahîm (13).

According to the information obtained from Avrin Hospital officials, Duha Hesên and Xedice Ismeli were discharged, while Meter Ibrahim, who was wounded in the foot, is under observation.

According to Meter Ibrahim, they were targeted by bombs while they were working in their fields. Stating that they had to work for their livelihood, Meter Ibrahim said that he and his brother were wounded.

It is learned that Faris Ibrahim, who was wounded in his left foot, is in serious condition and is being treated in the intensive care unit.

It is also reported that 13 small cattle belonging to a person named Xidir Sihod perished in the bombardment targeting Um Hoş village.

Hundreds of thousands of displaced people from Afrin live in the Shehba region north of Aleppo. With the new social contract of the autonomous region of North and East Syria, both regions were declared the canton of Afrin-Shehba. Afrin was previously considered the safest region in the civil war-torn country of Syria and has been occupied by Turkey since March 2018. Since then, human rights violations and war crimes have become part of everyday life. In addition to a classic colonial policy, Turkey is also practising a policy of ethnic cleansing. The demographic change in favour of Turkey and its Islamist invasion corps, crimes such as kidnappings, torture, extortion and murders as well as ongoing artillery attacks occur on a daily basis and with the de facto approval of the international community.

— ★ —

Three civilians, including a child, injured in Turkish bombardment in Manbij

ANF | MANBIJ | 18 MAY 2024

The occupying Turkish state and its gangs have been bombarding the villages of Toxar and Cat in Manbij since the morning hours. It was reported that three people, one of them a child, were injured in the attack.

The names of the wounded are as follows: Muhemed Fêsel El Salih (14), Remedan Ebed El Berkir (18) and Wesîm Ibrahim (21).

The wounded civilians are receiving treatment at Manbij Hospital.

Manbij is located 30 kilometres south of the Turkish border and occupies a key strategic position in Turkey's plans to expand its illegal occupation zone in Syria. The city, which is administered by the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (DAANES), is located on the important M4 highway, which runs through northern Syria like a lifeline and was a strategic supply route for the terrorist militia "Islamic State" (IS). Since Manbij was named by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan as the primary target for a new invasion of northern and eastern Syria in 2022, the war of attrition against the city has intensified. Attacks by the Turkish army and allied jihadist militias as well as infiltration attempts are occurring almost daily. Since the beginning of the season, farmland and forests in Manbij have also been burning almost every day.



PKK: KDP administration and Barzani family have taken betrayal to the next level

ANF | BEHDINAN | 19 MAY 2024

The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) Foreign Relations Committee released a statement warning against trivialising the cooperation of the Barzani family with the Turkish state and stating that the KDP has raised treason in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq to a new level.

The PKK statement released on Sunday includes the following:

"Great movements and great leaders take their place in history with their principles, their way of life and the struggles they waged, while small movements and small leaders take their place in history with their lack of principles and betrayal.

In the freedom war waged by the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla with superhuman sacrifice and heroism, the KDP administration is working together with the Turkish army and MIT (Turkish intelligence service) against the guerrilla. A joint coordination centre of the Turkish army and the Peshmerga was established in Hewlêr (Erbil), as well as an Intelligence Sharing Room of MIT and Parastin. Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan has repeatedly announced these partnerships in front of the press. On the websites of the Turkish General Staff and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, maps of the Turkish bases and outposts established together with the KDP are openly published.

The KDP and the Barzani family know very well that the co-operation they have entered into with the Turkish state, the Turkish army and the MIT is co-operation with the enemy, and that the definition of this among the people is treason. In order to overcome its loneliness in this cursed relationship, it is forcing the Baghdad government and the PUK (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan) administration to cooperate with the Turkish Republic, and for this purpose it is conducting joint diplomacy with the Erdoğan government. The visits of Hakan Fidan, İbrahim Kalın and Tayyip Erdoğan to Baghdad and Hewlêr are part of such an activity.

The KDP administration and the Barzani family, who do not react in the slightest and cannot utter a single sentence against the Turkish occupation and the ongoing attacks in South Kurdistan, have taken the betrayal that they have made a profession to the next level. Those who do not betray like themselves, who do not co-operate with the Turkish Republic, are being targeted by Turkey.

In its issue dated 14 May, the KDP's Xebat Newspaper said, "PKK has established an armed force in Sulaymaniyah. It sends these forces to Qandil and Rojava", making the city of Sulaymaniyah and its administration a target of the Turkish state. With such publications, the KDP encourages Turkey to attack Sulaymaniyah. The KDP, which previously entered Hewlêr with Saddam's tanks on 31 August 1996 with a betrayal it engaged in, now threatens the people and administration of Sulaymaniyah with the Turkish occupying state.

The KDP, the Barzani family and the Xebat newspaper know very well that the PKK has neither an organisation nor military forces in Sulaymaniyah. This is not just a simple lie, but a deliberate and intentional lie.

So what is the truth and reality?

The PKK and the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla are always and everywhere at the service of the people of Kurdistan and humanity to protect and defend Kurdistan in the face of enemy attacks.

Just like in 2014, when ISIS gangs attacked Hewlêr, Kirkuk, Maxmur and Shengal, they flowed from the mountains to the plains like a raging river upon Masoud Barzani's call for help.

History records all the events and betrayals. However, it should not be forgotten that there is no statute of limitations on betrayal. Betrayal is not forgotten and sooner or later held to account.

At such a time, when the Kurdish people are waging a struggle for freedom in four parts in the same mood and feelings, the KDP administration and the Barzani family, united with the enemies of the Kurdish people, persistently continue the betrayal that has become a profession to them. In the elections in North

Kurdistan, the Barzanis, who participated in AKP rallies in solidarity, supported the AKP-MHP-Hüda Par bloc, which is an accomplice in the Kurdish genocide. Instead of standing by the Autonomous Administration and defence forces in Rojava, it supports the Turkish state and ISIS gangs. Instead of opposing the Turkish occupation and daily attacks in South Kurdistan, it opposes the Kurdistan guerrillas who are fighting against these attacks.

This is the objective situation, political, military reality and truth. Therefore, this is the deadlock that must be solved first and foremost. Ignoring this threatening and destructive reality, trivialising the betrayal, pretending that cooperation with the enemy is not a serious obstacle is tantamount to supporting the betrayal of the KDP and Barzanis. Therefore, all patriotic Kurdistanis, parties, organisations, intellectuals, writers and artists must oppose the KDP's collaboration and betrayal with the Turkish Republic and react against the spread of treason."



PUK: KDP is preventing the elections but they will be held sooner or later!

ANF | 19 MAY 2024

In February 2024, the Iraqi Federal Court issued a new ruling declaring the quota number of seats in the Kurdistan Regional Parliament unconstitutional and ordered the division of the Kurdistan Region into four constituencies. With the new ruling, the number of seats in the regional parliament was reduced from 111 to 100. The court also stated that oil and all other revenues of the Kurdistan Region should be handed over to Baghdad.

In light of the decisions, the election date was set as 10 June.

Following the decisions taken by Baghdad for the Kurdistan region, which has not renewed its parliament for years and has not established a regular election system, the KDP announced that it would not participate in the elections.

The KDP Politburo stated, "We will not comply with the decisions of the Iraqi Federal Court. We will not participate in elections that are illegal, unconstitutional and overshadowed by an imposed system."

Although the Kurdistan Region Parliament and the government have been in office for nearly two years, the KDP was not in favor of the elections. The elections were repeatedly postponed on arbitrary grounds and various disagreements.

Some observers are skeptical about the KDP's decision and think that the KDP chose the "boycott" route as an escape since it will not be able to get the desired result from the elections.

Jumane Helay, the spokesperson of the Iraqi Independent Supreme Election Commission, stated on 8 May that the Commission temporarily halted the preparations for the Kurdistan Region Parliamentary Elections after the decision taken by the Iraqi Federal Court.

Jumane Helay announced that the preparations for the elections have been suspended until the complaints about the elections are finalised.

Masrour Barzani, the prime minister of the interim government of the Kurdistan Region, filed a complaint to the Iraqi Federal Court on 6 May and asked for the suspension of the preparations for the parliamentary elections for the 6th term in Kurdistan Region.

The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) Spokesperson Seedî Ahmed Pîre made a press statement on Sunday, providing information about the reasons why the Kurdistan Region Parliamentary elections were not held.

Underlining that the KDP does not allow the elections to be held even now, Saeed Ahmed Pîre said, "Sooner or later this election will be held. The sooner this is done, the better it will be for the region".

Speaking about the situation in Kirkuk, Pîre said, "All political parties in Kirkuk need to agree on a governor. It is unacceptable for a party that won fewer seats to prevent the appointment of a governor for Kirkuk."



One ISIS cell leader eliminated and two other members captured in Deir ez-Zor countryside

ANF | 19 MAY 2024

On May 16th and 17th, the SDF (Syrian Democratic Forces) counter-terrorism units (YAT), with support from the international coalition forces, conducted two successful security operations in the Deir ez-Zor countryside. These operations targeted a leader of ISIS cells and dismantled another ISIS cell.

First Operation:

Based on intelligence, YAT units targeted, on May 16th, an ISIS cell leader named Amjad Hassan (aka Abu Zainab) in the town of Al-Busaira, eastern countryside of Deir ez-Zor. The terrorist Amjad was responsible for the VBIED attack on a SDF military post in al-Shuhail on May 10th, which resulted in the martyrdom of three SDF fighters. The YAT units surrounded Amjad's place and called for his surrender, yet he refused and opened fire at SDF forces who dealt with the situation professionally and eliminated him.

Second Operation:

On May 17th, the YAT units conducted an operation in the al-Dashisha desert, the eastern countryside of Deir ez-Zor. This operation targeted an active ISIS terrorist cell with close ties to the terrorist Amjad. The cell was responsible for facilitating the movement of ISIS operatives between Syria and Iraq. The operation resulted in two terrorists linked to ISIS being captured, a hideout used by ISIS for movement being destroyed, and weapons and mobile phones being seized.

According to SDF Media Center, the following were confiscated during the operations:

- AK 47 /1/
- Pistol /1/
- Pistol magazines /2/
- Hand grenades /2/
- Night vision binoculars /1/
- Sniper binoculars /1/
- Wi-Fi Router /1/
- Mobile phones /5/
- A quantity of ammunition and explosive materials

“Our SDF forces reaffirm their commitment to pursuing ISIS cells throughout north and eastern Syria through successful operations aimed at preventing ISIS from threatening civilians and destabilizing the region’s security and stability,” the statement said.



Turkish army launches comprehensive attack in Lice countryside

ANF | AMED | 19 MAY 2024

The occupying Turkish state launched a comprehensive military operation from air and land in Şehîd Ferhad and Şehîd Serxwebûn areas of Şehîd Remzî region in Lice district of Amed (Diyarbakır) on Sunday.

According to the information obtained from local sources, violent explosions and gunshots were heard between the villages of Kurmîk (Yönlüce) and Dercimt (Yeşilburç) during the ongoing operation.

In Lice, military operations against the guerrilla organisations HPG and YJA Star are carried out frequently. In March, the Turkish military begins its traditional "spring operations". In previous years, the guerrillas' transition from winter to spring was more of a disadvantage. For some time now, however, the Turkish army has not achieved any significant results with its spring operations, as the guerrillas begin their phase of action in advance.



Turkey bombs petrol station in Tirbespiyê

ANF | 20 MAY 2024

According to the information received, the Turkish state bombed the Seida petrol station located in the north of the city of Tirpespiyê.

It was reported that a part of Seida, one of the largest stations in the canton, was destroyed.

The station was the target of the Turkish state dozens of times last year.

In recent days, the Turkish state's attacks on the region's basic livelihoods, including civilian infrastructure and agricultural land, have escalated. Last year, intense war crimes were committed against civilian infrastructures and vital livelihoods.



Military operation launched in Van countryside

ANF | VAN | 20 MAY 2024

According to the information reported by local sources, the Turkish army launched a large-scale invasion operation in Zilan Creek in Hamoiler region in the Erciş district of Van. Reports say that the operation continues with the participation of an intense military force.

The operation comes after the Turkish military launched a comprehensive military operation from air and land in Şehîd Ferhad and Şehîd Serxwebûn areas of Şehîd Remzî region in Lice district of Amed (Diyarbakır) on Sunday.

In the month of March, the Turkish military begins its traditional "spring operations". In previous years, the guerrillas' transition from winter to spring was more of a disadvantage. For some time now, however, the Turkish army has not achieved any significant results with its spring operations, as the guerrillas begin their phase of action in advance.



HPG warns village guards against participation in Turkey's invasion of guerrilla areas

ANF | BEHDINAN | 20 MAY 2024

The People's Defence Forces (HPG) warned the village guards [local Kurdish villagers who are used against the guerrillas either by force or for a lot of money in the service of the Turkish army] against participating in the Turkish occupation of the guerrilla-held the Medya Defence Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

The statement released by the HPG Press Office on Monday said the following:

“The invasion operations developed by the occupying Turkish army against the Medya Defence Zones in the last three years have been inconclusive in the face of the historic resistance of the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrillas. In particular, the Revolutionary Operations and effective actions developed by the guerrillas since autumn have dealt heavy and crushing blows to the occupying army, and the occupiers have become unable to hold on against the guerrillas. The occupying army, which wants to overcome this blockage, is again trying to resort to familiar methods, to involve the village guards in the occupation operation in the Medya Defence Zones and to use them by driving them to the front lines.

With this policy, the occupying Turkish state aims to create a counter-guerrilla army from the village guards. In recent days, the names of some of the village guards brought to the Medya Defence Zones have been reflected in the press. We are aware of the names of other village guards who have been and are being brought to the Medya Defence Zones. We warn all village guards who have been brought to the Medya Defence Zones and those who are trying to be brought there. No village guard should accept to be taken out of his own village, to be used in occupation attacks in different areas, like an orderly of the occupying army, should not participate in these operations developed for the occupation of Bashûrê (Southern) Kurdistan, should not come to the Medya Defence Zones and should not enter the positions of the occupying army, which are the target of the guerrilla. In history, no one who has knowingly and willingly used weapons against his own people and committed treason by playing a role in the occupation of his country could escape the accountability of the revolutionary forces. It should be known that the village guards who will play a sinister role in this way will also be judged one day and brought to account.”

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MAK says it carried out action against police headquarters in Nusaybin

ANF | MARDIN | 21 MAY 2024

The Kurdistan Freedom Militia (Milîsên Azadiya Kurdistan-MAK) said in a statement they carried out an action with handmade explosives against the district police headquarters in Nusaybin (Nisêbîn). The statement said: "Our militia carried out an action with hand-made explosives against the district police headquarters of the torturer police officers located on Cumhuriyet Street on May 11, in the Nisêbîn district of Mardin."

MAK said that the action was taken as a retaliation for the isolation and genocide system applied to Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan, as well as the military and political operations carried out in Kurdistan.



Tevgera Azadi: Turkish state is advancing deeper into Kurdistan Region in cooperation with the KDP

ANF | SULAYMANIYAH | 21 MAY 2024

The Kurdistan Freedom Movement (Tevgera Azadi ya Civaka Kurdistanê) based in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) held a press conference at its headquarters in Sulaymaniyah on the current situation in Kurdistan Region and Iraq.

The declaration announced at the meeting was read by Selam Abdullah, co-chair of Tevgera Azadi, who said the following:

"The Kurdistan Region is in a constitutional and legal vacuum due to the KDP's tyrannical policy. As a defacto political hegemony, the KDP continues its uncontrolled domination over the institutions. The KDP is the biggest obstacle to elections and change. It aims to prolong its life by selling the gains of the people and making concessions. It co-operates with the greatest enemy of the Kurdish people. The KDP has embarked on a very dangerous partnership. The Turkish state is advancing deeper and deeper into the territory of the Kurdistan Region in co-operation with the KDP.

Tevgera Azadi will be a strategic alternative to both systems of government from now on. However, in order to turn this historic process to the benefit of our people and to preserve the status of the Kurdistan Region in Kurdistan, we will use every opportunity to build a basis for dialogue, democracy and the solution of problems. We will help to hold free elections, to represent the people of the Kurdistan Region and to solve the issues of Article 140, salaries and income within the framework of the federal government and the constitution."



Name lists of the KDP's counter-guerrillas trained under the name of Iraqi Border Guard Units

ARARAT ARAM/KESER BULDAN | 22 MAY 2024

ANF reached the name list of the so-called Iraqi border guard units. This force is provided entirely by the KDP, the ruling party in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq), and is meant to act together with the Turkish army against the Kurdish freedom movement. Previously, footage of a military ceremony in Zakho, which is controlled by the KDP, was circulated on digital networks and interpreted as a counter-guerrilla operation. Apparently, the soldiers had completed a training course and were marching through the city in a show of force. It now came out that these soldiers are in fact so-called Iraqi border guard units, which are to be deployed to the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones to support the Turkish state. The troops that marched in Zakho chanting slogans were trained in the region. However, the march in the city was a first.

ANF now obtained the list of names of the members of the forces trained by the KDP against the guerrillas. The list contains the names of 360 people, the date they joined and the unit to which they belong. It is known that this force consists of special forces of the KDP as well as Gulan units directly affiliated with the Barzani clan and the Zerevani units of Masrour Barzanî. Recruitment for this force is ongoing. After their training, the units were transferred to areas around Duhok and Amadiya. This indicates a direct deployment against the Medya Defence Zones.

Southern Kurdistan is on the brink of the abyss

The KDP has failed with its clientelistic and nepotistic policies and is completely dependent on the Turkish state. It is jeopardising all the achievements of the Kurdistan Region in Iraq in order to maintain its power. In its party magazine Xebat, it has also implicitly threatened an invasion of the PUK-ruled governorate of Sulaymaniyah. People who stand for Kurdish freedom, democratisation and unity are in mortal danger from the KDP. The KDP's intelligence service, Parastin, acts as an extension of the Turkish secret service, MIT.

From Saddam to Erdoğan

While almost every part of South Kurdistan has been opened to bargaining under the name of balance politics, the KDP, which worked with the Ba'ath regime that slaughtered the Kurds when it was stuck against the PUK in 1996, today sides with the Erdoğan regime, which shapes its existence through the annexation and occupation of Kurdistan. It is reported that the KDP, which considers being involved in Turkey's new occupation plans as a salvation for its own power, accelerated its positioning against the guerrilla forces with the force it trained under the name of Iraqi Border Guard Units.

Military march in Zakho

The KDP is trying to achieve several goals by deploying counter-units labeled as Iraqi border guards against the Kurdish freedom movement. The Barzani clan has long wanted to get rid of any alternative to its rule by the grace of Turkey. Although the KDP has repeatedly taken military action against the PKK, it is thanks to the guerrillas' restraint that war has not yet broken out. With the label "Iraqi Border Guard", the KDP now also has the opportunity to directly involve the Iraqi central government in the event of a military conflict and thus have its own interests supported by both Baghdad and Ankara. As an ally of NATO and Turkey, the KDP is likely to receive extensive backing from the West in its actions as an errand boy for Turkish imperialism.



Turkish army attacked guerrilla areas 35 times with chemical weapons and banned explosives

ANF | BEHDINAN | 22 MAY 2024

The Press Centre of the People's Defence Forces (HPG) issued a statement providing information about the Turkish state's war in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

According to the statement, the Turkish army continues to use chemical weapons against the guerrillas. Details of the latest attacks by the Turkish military are as follows:

"Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region;

At 12:10 on 20 May, the invaders trying to get stationed in the Girê Cûdî Resistance Area were struck by the guerrillas with medium automatic weapons and the mobility of the invaders was stopped.

Attacks carried out by the occupying Turkish army with banned explosives;

On 20 May, the guerrillas' tunnels in the Girê FM Resistance Area in Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region were bombed 32 times with toxic chemical gases and 1 time with banned explosives. Some of the chemical gases used in combination with pepper gas were found to be orange in colour.

On 20 and 21 May, the guerrillas' tunnels in Girê Amediyê Resistance Area were bombed 2 times with banned explosives.

On 20 and 21 May, the guerrillas' tunnels in Girê Cûdî Resistance Area in Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region were bombed 14 times with drones loaded with explosives.

Attacks carried out by the occupying Turkish army;

On 20 and 21 May, Turkish fighter jets carried out 17 attacks on guerrilla areas, targeting the areas of Sinînê, Lolan, Girê Şehîd Şerîf, Kelaşîn in Xakurkê region, the areas of Dîmartê, Deşta Kafya in Garê region, the areas of Dergelê and Bêşîlî in Metîna region, the areas of Girê Cûdî, Girê Bahar in Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region.

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Occupation forces set fire to crops in Zîrgan

ANF | HESEKE | 24 MAY 2024

The Turkish army and its jihadist mercenary troops have once again resorted to setting fire to grain fields in the autonomous region of North and East Syria through targeted shelling, thereby destroying the harvest. The Turkish state has been using this method systematically since the occupation of Afrin in March 2018 and the occupation of Serêkaniyê (Ras al-Ain) and Girê Spî (Tal Abyad) in October 2019 in order to starve and drive out the population.

200 hectares of agricultural land and 3 thousand olive trees have burnt down in the Manbij region alone as a result of the latest attacks against the region.

The occupying Turkish forces and affiliated gangs positioned on the borderline west of the city of Zîrgan set fire to the crops that have not yet been harvested.

Self-Defence Forces, people, fire brigades in the city and surrounding villages mobilised to prevent the fire from spreading to other areas.

Emergency teams are having difficulty intervening in the fire due to the ongoing aggression of the invasion forces.

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HPG: Guerrillas continue to resist Turkish attacks in South Kurdistan

ANF | BEHDINAN | 24 MAY 2024

The press center of the People's Defense Forces (HPG) said in a statement about the war in South Kurdistan that the guerrilla resistance to the Turkish invasion of the Medya Defense Areas continues, as do the attacks by the Turkish army.

Guerrilla actions in Zap and Metina

According to the information, on 20 May, the guerrillas attacked and destroyed a Turkish army container in the Kurojahro resistance area in the Zap region with heavy weapons. It was not possible to determine how many soldiers were in the container and were killed or injured. On Wednesday, soldiers were attacked with a heavy weapon in the Golka area of Metina. On the western front in the Zap region, guerrillas intervened yesterday with semi-automatic weapons against soldiers who were searching the terrain in the Girê Cûdî resistance area with a detector. The squad then withdrew.

Attacks by the Turkish army

Regarding the attacks by the Turkish army on 22 May, the HPG reported that poisonous gas was used three times and banned explosives once against a tunnel in the Girê FM resistance area. The gas used in combination with tear gas was orange in color. The guerrilla tunnel on the western front of the Zap has been attacked with chemical weapons since 10 May. Improvised explosives were used in a tunnel in the Girê Amêdî area, and two attacks were carried out by drones loaded with explosives, also on a tunnel in the Girê Cûdî area.

In addition, the HPG reports seven air strikes by fighter jets. The areas bombed on Wednesday were Sinînê, Lolan and Girê Şehîd Şerîf in Xakurke, Dergelê in Metîna and Girê Amêdî in the west of the Zap region.

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Feminicide

Kongra Star: The AKP-MHP mentality is a danger to the whole world

ANF | 18 MAY 2024

The verdict was announced on May 16 in the Kobanê Conspiracy Case, which was opened 7 years after the protests against ISIS attacks on Kobanê on 6-8 October 2014 and continued for 4 years. The Ankara 22nd High Criminal Court ruled for the release of 5 people and acquitted 15 people in the case where 108 people, 18 of whom are imprisoned, are on trial. While 13 of them are to remain in prison, former HDP Co-Chairs Selahattin Demirtaş and Figen Yüksekdağ were sentenced to 42 and 30 years and 4 months in prison respectively. The court did not find 36 defendants, including Demirtaş, responsible for the loss of life during the protests in various cities and acquitted them.

Kongra Star, the umbrella organisation of women in North-East Syria made a statement on the verdict in the Kobanê Case and said the verdict once again reveals that the foundations of the fascist Turkish state are built on lies.

"The AKP-MHP fascist mentality poses a great danger not only to the Turkish and Kurdish peoples but also to the whole world," the statement emphasised, adding, "With the verdict of the Kobanê Case, it was once again revealed with all its naked truth that Erdoğan and Bahçeli are ISIS mentality, that they lead gangs, that they have an extreme understanding of political Islam, and that they are murderers of women and children."

The statement continued: "The verdicts given in the trial are definitely political, not legal, and are for the protection and revitalisation of ISIS. Dozens of ISIS members responsible for the murder of women and children are travelling freely in Turkey today, protected by Erdoğan. However, intellectuals and democrats who serve the society wholeheartedly are kept in prisons. The AKP, which has no tolerance for freedom, multiculturalism and women's freedom, resorts to all kinds of dirty ways and methods that resemble Hitler's fascist method to destroy the wealth of the Middle East and Mesopotamia under the leadership of ISIS. Women who shape the society in Turkey, who struggle against the male state mentality, are wanted to be rendered dysfunctional by being thrown into prisons. As Kongra Star, we do not accept the conspiracy decision and strongly condemn it. We declare once again that we are determined in the line of free women and democratic politics for women to lead the society more strongly."

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Emine Şenyaşar protests new case filed against her for allegedly 'insulting a public official'

ANF | ANKARA | 21 MAY 2024

The Justice Vigil, carried from Urfa to Ankara by 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, continues on its 107th day.

Emine Şenyaşar wanted to enter the ministry together with her son Ferit Şenyaşar, who survived the massacre and is also the People's Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) Urfa MP, with the Turkish Ministry of Justice on the 107th day, but the door remained closed as always.

Emine Şenyaşar returned from Urfa, where she went because of the case filed against her for allegedly "insulting a public official". Şenyaşar said: "Those who commit crimes continue to walk freely outside, but they bring me to court. Why don't they arrest them? While they walk free, my son is in prison. I want justice, they are locking the doors of the ministry. I will never leave here until my son is released."

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KJK: May is the month of martyrs

ANF | 22 MAY 2024

May is celebrated in the Kurdish freedom movement as the month of martyrs. The Kurdistan Women's Community (KJK) issued a statement pointing out the origin and meaning of this month and the remembering the fallen. The statement said that although the liberation movement “writes with heroism every month, every day and every hour,” May was declared the Month of the Martyrs and Heroes following the death of PKK cadre Haki Karer.

The statement said: “The martyrs fought and lived using their lives, their dreams, their hopes, their will and their desires. They owed that to their people. All of them set out on this path to live a free and honorable life. With their struggles and their lives, they have become this path themselves. These heroic comrades gave us the strength and will for our struggle, which has been growing for fifty years. As Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] said, our struggle is, in a sense, about doing justice to the fallen.”

In the statement, the KJK addressed the martyrs of May of the past fifty years and named, among others, Deniz Gezmiş, Yusuf Aslan and Hüseyin İnan, who were executed in Ankara on 6 May 1972 as important representatives of the Turkish student and youth movement until the very end, committed to the brotherhood of the Kurdish and Turkish people.

Haki Karer

Haki Karer came from Ordu in Turkey and was the first martyr cadre of Abdullah Öcalan's group, which was formed before the PKK was founded. He was murdered on 18 May 1977 in Antep (Dilok) as a result of a plot by the rival group “Stêrka Sor” (Red Star). Abdullah Öcalan described Haki Karer as a soul mate (“my secret soul”) and decided after his assassination that only the founding of a party could do justice to his memory. At the founding party conference of the PKK on 27 November 1978 in Fîs in the province of Amed, May was proclaimed the Month of the Fallen and Heroes and 18 May the Day of the Fallen.

Ferhat Kurtay, Eşref Anyık, Mahmut Zengin and Necmi Öner

Ferhat Kurtay, Eşref Anyık, Mahmut Zengin and Necmi Öner died by self-immolation in Amed prison on 17 May 1982, sending an anti-fascist message against the Turkish military junta. The KJK said about the four revolutionaries that they resisted attempts to extinguish the fire with great determination and shouted: “Let the fire burn!”

Massacre in Hewlêr

On 16 May 1997, 83 members of the PKK were killed by the KDP in a massacre in Hewlêr (Erbil). Heavily armed militiamen attacked a hospital for war wounded, a women's office, newspaper offices, a cultural institution and other institutions associated with the PKK. In the hospital alone, the KDP murdered 62 war-wounded and ill guerrillas. The song Hewlêr by Hozan Serhat is dedicated to the victims of the massacre.

The KJK in its statement remembered the dead and said that the KDP continues to betray today.

Kasim Engin, Hozan Mizgîn and Leyla Qasim

The KJK also remembered Kasim Engin, Hozan Mizgîn and Leyla Qasim. Qasim was executed by the Iraqi Baath regime in Baghdad on 12 May 1974 at the age of 22. Her last words in court were: "You can kill me, but you must know that after my death, thousands of Kurds will awaken from their deep sleep. I am happy to die proudly for an independent Kurdistan!"

Shirin Alamhouli

On 9 May 2010, Kurdish revolutionary Shirin Alamhouli was executed along with Farzad Kamangar, Ali Heidarian and Farhad Vakili in Tehran's notorious Evin Prison. Alamhouli was an activist in the Kurdish women's movement, Kamangar and his two colleagues worked as teachers. They were convicted of "endangering national security" and "enmity against God" in connection with the Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan (PJAK). "Our comrade Shirin Elomholi was captured by the enemy while she was sowing the seeds of freedom in the hearts of women against the reactionary Iranian regime," said the KJK.



Saturday Mothers issue a call for the 1000th week of their action

ANF | ISTANBUL | 24 MAY 2024

Saturday Mothers/People have been gathering at Galatasaray Square since 1995 to ask the fate of their relatives who were disappeared and murdered in state custody and to demand the prosecution of the perpetrators.

Relatives of the disappeared will gather for the 1000th time on 25 May and a series of events will be held during the week.

Saturday Mothers launched an online application on their virtual media account with the title "In our 1000th week, leave a carnation at Galatasaray Square from wherever you are".

Maside Oca, a relative of the disappeared, stated that anyone can leave a carnation at Galatasaray Square online for the 1000th week.

Maside Oca made the following call: "We are entering our 1000th week. These 1000 weeks are not just a number for us, the relatives of the disappeared. We know that there are people all over the world who want to do something for the disappeared. We have an online carnation leaving application to support the demands of the Saturday Mothers from anywhere. Everyone can go to the website 'cumartesianneler-i.org.tr' and leave a carnation at Galatasaray Square from wherever they are."

Saturday Mothers

Since 1995, the Istanbul Saturday Mothers, like the Argentinian "Madres de la Plaza de Mayo", have held weekly sit-ins in Istanbul with pictures of their relatives to protest against their "disappearance" in state custody and to demand information about their whereabouts. Between 1999 and 2009, the Saturday Mothers had to suspend their weekly sit-ins as police regularly broke up the gatherings. On 25 August 2018, the initiative gathered for the 700th time at their ancestral place in front of the Galatasaray High School on Istanbul's Istiklal Avenue to remember their missing relatives with a peaceful vigil. However, on the orders of Turkish Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu, police deployed water cannons and attacked the crowd with tear gas and rubber bullets. The violent action was justified because the Saturday Mothers were being instrumentalised by terrorist organisations, Soylu had said. Since then, Galatasaray Square has been a no-go area for the Saturday Mothers, who first moved to the building of the Human Rights Association (IHD) and, in the wake of the Corona pandemic, finally presented their demands online.

On the occasion of the 900th rally on 25 June 2022, the Saturday Mothers were again attacked by the police and detained several people, including the co-chairs of the IHD.

17,000 Disappeared in Turkey

In Turkey, since the 1980s, about 17,000 people, mostly Kurds, politically active and committed people, journalists and legal practitioners and ordinary people have been considered "disappeared". The country became acquainted with this practice after the military coup of September 1980. In the mid-1990s, when the Turkish state's dirty war against the PKK was particularly bloody, this method reached its peak.

The bodies of the abducted were buried in mass graves, caves or in disused industrial plants, thrown onto rubbish dumps, sunk into well pits and acid pits or, as in Argentina, disposed of by being dropped from military helicopters. Often the victims were picked up at home by the police or the army, or were ordered to the local police station for a "statement", or detained at a military road check. This is often the last their relatives know of the whereabouts of those disappeared. Most of the "murders by unknown perpetrators" are the work of the religious extremist terrorist organisation Hezbollah as well as JITEM. This is the name of the informal secret service of the Turkish military police, which is responsible for at least four fifths of the unsolved murders in Northern Kurdistan and whose existence was denied by the state for years.

Human Rights Violations

18 people sent to prison in Istanbul, Manisa and Izmir

ANF | 18 MAY 2024

16 people who were taken into custody in house raids carried out on 15 May in Izmir were referred to the courthouse on Friday after being questioned by police. 16 people, including members of the Social Freedom Party (TÖP), Workers' Party of Turkey (TİP), Socialist Struggle Initiative, New Democrat Youth and People's Houses, were remanded in custody charged with "Opposition to the Law on Demonstrations and Marches" and "resisting to prevent the task from being carried out" for their participation in the protests against the usurpation of will in Van.

The prosecutor requested the release of Erkan Gökber on the condition of judicial control and referred 15 people to the court with a request for arrest. Arda Duvarcı, Azat Kunur, Nazif Çakır, Nilüfer Yıldız, Samet Sağnıç, Serdar Aktürk, Selman Yağmağan, Sezgin Zevkibol and Serhat Çukurçam were sent to prison. Tuğçe Kızıldemir, Elif Yerlikaya, Berfin Büyükertaş, Mehmet Kasar, Sedanur Parmaksız and Sude Timagur were released on condition of judicial control.

Manisa

The 8 people taken into custody in teh Turgutlu district of Manisa on 16 May were referred to the courthouse on Friday after giving their statements to the police. The 8 were accused of "making propaganda for a terrorist organization" because they played the Kurdish song "Beritan" from the election vehicle during the local election period. The 8 were all referred to the court with a request for arrest. The Criminal Judgeship of Peace issued an arrest warrant for Hayri Söylemez, Işık Söylemez and Ahmet Akan, while 5 people were released on condition of judicial control.

Istanbul

In the house raids carried out in Istanbul on 15 May, 20 people, including Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) central council member Ünal Yusufoglu, Marmara Detainees and Convict Families and Solidarity Association (MATUHAYDER) executives and many party members, were accused of "being part of the political sphere of an illegal organization". 10 out of the 20 people taken into custody were released on condition of judicial control after interrogations by the prosecutor's office.

10 people were referred to the Criminal Court of Peace with a request for arrest. 6 of them were sent to prison, while 4 people were released on "judicial control". Those arrested: Alamettin Demir, Çetin Demir, Fikri Baş, Filiz Aydın, İbrahim Elban, Yaşar Gökdemir.

In Turkey-occupied Afrin 10,332 people have been kidnapped since 2018

ANF | SHEHBA | 19 MAY 2024

In the Kurdish canton of Afrin occupied by Turkey in 2018, 10,332 people were kidnapped, 463 others killed, while at least 142 people were raped. The majority of victims (803 cases), killed, kidnapped or raped, were women and girls under 18.

The Afrin Human Rights Organization said in its latest report that murders, kidnappings and rapes are increasing day by day in Afrin, occupied by the Turkish state and its mercenaries since March 2018.

Since the beginning of the occupation of Afrin in 2018 until today, 463 people have been killed, 10,332 people have been kidnapped, and 142 people have been raped.

The Afrin Human Rights Organization said that the record of crimes and violations committed by the Turkish occupiers and their mercenaries in light of global neglect and turning a blind eye to them, as contained in the reports filed each year, is as follows:

2018-2019

Kidnapping: 7,213 people, including 270 women.

Killed: 230 people, including 59 women.

Rape: 60 women.

Driven to suicide: 5 women

2020

Kidnapping: 1,079 people, including 92 women.

Killed: 67 people, including 9 women.

Rape: 76 women.

Marriage of girls under 18: 5.

2021

Kidnapping: 838 people, including 82 women (including 25 minor girls) and 13 children.

Killed: 65 people, including 14 women.

2022

Kidnapping: 629 people, including 49 women and a child.

Killed: 62 people, including 20 women (7 women were killed following the bombing).

2023

Kidnapping: 376 people, including 35 women and 6 children.

Killed: 20 people, including 4 women.

Rape: one woman.

Driven to suicide: 2 women.

The first 4 months of this year (2024):

Kidnapping: 197 people, including 25 women.

Killed: 19 people, including 2 women.

Rape: 5 girls.

Reports went unanswered

The Afrin Human Rights Organization sent its reports to Amnesty International and other international human rights organizations but has not yet received a response.

The co-president of the Afrin and Shahba Canton Lawyers' Union, Rusheen Haddo, told ANHA news agency that there is a constant violation of rights in occupied Afrin since the beginning of the Turkish occupation, and added: "Girls under 18, in particular, have been forced into marriage under threat and handed over to mercenary groups. Girls are also kidnapped and a financial ransom is demanded from their families for their release. Hundreds of Kurdish women were kidnapped in front of their families and children."

Haddo underlined that the Turkish occupation state seeks to break the will of women in the region through policies of murder, kidnapping, rape and other violations and added: "All crimes and violations are aimed at eliminating the free will of women. Turkey wants revenge on ISIS and breaks the will of women."

Haddo called on international organizations to go to Afrin and investigate crimes committed there.

At least 15 people taken into custody in Istanbul

ANF | İSTANBUL | 21 MAY 2024

Many houses were raided in Istanbul on Tuesday morning. At least 15 people were detained, including members of the Workers' Party of Turkey (TİP), Revolutionary Youth, Federation of Socialist Assemblies, Social Freedom Party (TÖP), Labor Movement Party (EHP), Socialist Laborers Party (SEP) and Socialist Assemblies Initiative (SMI).

Those detained were taken to the Istanbul Police Department in Fatih.

It was noted that the reason for the detentions was the alleged resistance to the police barricades on the way from Saraçhane to Taksim on 1 May.

Sources said that the number of detainees may increase.



Sendika.org office in Istanbul raided by the police

ANF | İSTANBUL | 21 MAY 2024

Turkish police raided and searched the Istanbul office of the online portal Sendika.org on Tuesday morning. The door was broken open and no one was present during the search. According to the online newspaper, the door lock was replaced by the police after the raid, during which bookshelves and cupboards were ransacked and some photos were confiscated.

Sendika.org has been reporting on the struggles of left-wing movements in Turkey since 2001 and is used as a news source by tens of thousands of people every day. The website is frequently blocked by the Turkish authorities. Parallel to the search of the office, several flats in Istanbul were raided by the police and at least 27 people were taken into custody in connection with the demonstrations on 1 May.

On 1 May, more than 200 people were detained in Istanbul who wanted to take part in a demonstration in Taksim Square. At least 60 further detentions were made in the wake of two large-scale raids. The Turkish authorities had declared shortly before May Day that Taksim was not to be used for the annual demonstrations. Left-wing organisations, trade union associations and political parties nevertheless called for the demonstration, also referring to a ruling by the Constitutional Court. The police used rubber bullets, water cannons and tear gas against the participants. Numerous demonstrators, as well as members of the media, were injured. At least 49 people have been remanded in custody in connection with the May Day demonstrations.



DEM Party Kızıltepe district co-chair remanded in custody

ANF | MARDİN | 22 MAY 2024

People's Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) Kızıltepe (Qoser) district co-chair Abdülkerim Erdem was remanded in custody.

Erdem was sentenced to 7 years and 11 months in prison on the charge of "being a member of a terrorist organization" in the case filed against him when he was the co-mayor of Dêrik municipality.

Erdem was sent to Diyarbakır High Security Prison No. 2 after the sentence was approved by the Supreme Court.

Erdem, who was arrested in 2016 and kept in prison for 2 years and 6 months within the scope of the case filed against him, was released in 2019.



Five young people detained in Urfa

ANF | URFA | 22 MAY 2024

Abdullah Sarısu, Veysel Say, Mizgin Çiftçi, Azad Koç and Abdülsemih Güç were detained in Urfa earlier today on the allegation of "making propaganda for an illegal organisation". The detainees were taken to the Provincial Security Directorate.

It is reported that Mizgin Çiftçi's brother was subjected to police violence during the detention.

The Turkish state has detained hundreds of people in recent weeks. On 21 May, around 30 people were detained in Istanbul on the grounds of participation in May Day demonstrations.

In the first 18 days of May, at least 372 people were detained, at least 108 people were imprisoned and 2 people were placed under house arrest.



HDP Manisa former provincial co-chair jailed

ANF | MÜS | 22 MAY 2024

Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) Manisa former provincial co-chair Kerem Taylan was detained in the Bulanık district of Muş province on 21 May.

Taylan, who was detained on the grounds of an investigation conducted by Manisa Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, was remanded in custody by a court in Muş on the grounds of his speeches during the local elections in Turgutlu district of Manisa.

The Turkish judiciary has arbitrarily and systematically charged Taylan's speeches as "propaganda for an organisation".

Taylan was taken to Ağrı Patnos L Type Closed Prison after his arrest.



Protest demo in Amed against verdict in Kobanê Case: We will not take a step back

ANF | AMED | 22 MAY 2024

The verdict was announced on May 16 in the Kobanê Conspiracy Case, which was opened 7 years after the protests against ISIS attacks on Kobanê on 6-8 October 2014 and continued for 4 years. The Ankara 22nd High Criminal Court ruled for the release of 5 people and acquitted 15 people in the case where 108 people, 18 of whom are imprisoned, are on trial. While 13 of them are to remain in prison, former HDP Co-Chairs Selahattin Demirtaş and Figen Yüksekdağ were sentenced to 42 and 30 years and 4 months in prison respectively. The court did not find 36 defendants, including Demirtaş, responsible for the loss of life during the protests in various cities and acquitted them.

The Democratic Regions Party (DBP), Free Women's Movement (TJA) and Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) organised a "Freedom and Justice Gathering" to protest the sentences handed down in the Kobanê Case.

Hundreds of people, including DBP co-chairs Çiğdem Kılıçgün Uçar and Keskin Bayındır and DEM Party co-chair Tülay Hatimoğulları came together in front of DBP Provincial Organisation building. People frequently chanted "Bijî berxwedana zindanan" [Long live the prison resistance] and carried the banner "ISIS lost, those who embrace it will also lose", as well as the photographs of imprisoned politicians.

Speaking here, DEM Party Co-Chair Tülay Hatimoğulları stated the following:

"Our friends did not defend themselves against a crime during their defence in prison. They defended democracy, human rights, the right to life, the rights of the Kurdish people, the rights of Alevi and different peoples living in our geography against the current fascist and authoritarian regime. They defended the rights and lives of women. They defended nature. They defended the rights of the workers, labourers and the poor who were left in need of bread. Our friends made a defence that will be taught in law faculties 100 years from now. The message our friends sent after their sentences was this: 'We are resisting firmly, and you should also resist firmly against fascism. As long as you support the struggle, the Kurdish people, the oppressed and the exploited, you are with us, you support us.'

'This is a case of taking revenge'

Now we have started a campaign. This is not a legal decision, but a political one. The Kobanî Conspiracy Case is a case prepared by Erdoğan and his partner in the palace with the statements they made from Ankara and the indictments they wrote in their headquarters. They say this case is not political. As we have said everywhere, we repeat it once again. This is a case of taking revenge on the oppressed, the exploited, the Kurdish people. This is a fake conspiracy case. The AKP and its partners, who cannot bend our wrists politically, think they can bring us to our knees with this case. But the HDP and its friends, the forces of democracy in Turkey have never kneeled.

'We will not take a step back'

A very important feature of this case is the following. While Kurdish politicians were targeted on the one hand, the left and socialists of Turkey who were in solidarity with them were also targeted. As well as Kurdish politicians, Turkey's revolutionaries and socialists have also been subjected to heavy sentences. But we, as the socialists, revolutionaries, democrats and intellectuals of Turkey; as those who want to carry this country to a bright future, we promise once again in the centre of Amed: We will not take a step back from the struggle we are waging. We will not take a step back from solidarity with the Kurdish people, from shouldering their struggle.

Why are we in this area today? This area has left deep traces on us. When the HDP rally was organised in this area in 2015, ISIS paved the way, and bombs were detonated in this area. Those who paved the way for ISIS to come all the way to Amed and bomb our rally and those who did not put the attackers on trial are judging us. We bear the honour of our struggle against ISIS. From here, from the İstasyon Square where our lives were lost, we say that we did not let ISIS pass during the Kobanê resistance and we will never let them pass. Those who paved the way for ISIS want to take revenge on us because the line of ISIS could not prevail in Turkey, Syria and Iraq.

'They paved the way for ISIS to enter the city centres and massacre civilians'

The whole of Turkey and the world public knows very well that during that period our rally was bombed here, and 33 Dream Travellers were massacred in Suruç. Again, they paved the way for the wedding massacre in Antep. While we were marching here to make our press statement today, we encountered police interventions dozens of times. The MIT (intelligence service), the police and the political will in charge of them, who say they will not let a bird fly in Turkey, almost watched and paved the way for ISIS to enter the city centres and massacre civilians.

'Peace rally also covered in blood'

A similar massacre took place in Reyhanlı. At the time of the massacre, Erdoğan targeted the Alevis living there, in Hatay and Antakya, saying '53 of our Sunni citizens were massacred'. After it was revealed that ISIS had claimed responsibility for the attack, Erdoğan stepped back from these remarks. We lost dozens of lives there. People did not even have bodily integrity. Turkey's revolutionaries, democrats, labour and professional organisations, political parties, human rights defenders, women's and ecology movements organised a big peace rally in front of Ankara Station. That peace rally was also covered in blood. In the Ankara Train Station Massacre, they once again bloodied peace.

Dear peoples of Turkey, we are starting this campaign from the place where the massacre took place in Amed. We will realise our commemoration by going to the places where all these massacres took place. This is what we want to tell. They staged the Kobanê Trial because we resisted those who carried out these massacres.

The Kobanê Trial is null and void for us. We do not recognise it.

We will carry the flag we took over from our friends with honour and pride.

Our campaign and work will continue until our friends are freed."

— ★ —

27 people sent to prison after 1 May

ANF | ISTANBUL | 24 MAY 2024

During house raids carried out in Istanbul on 21 May, 27 people were taken into custody on the grounds that they resisted police attempts to stop them going from Sarayane Park to Taksim on 1 May.

Among those detained were members of the Workers' Party of Turkey (TIP), Revolutionary Youth, Socialist Assemblies Federation (SMF), Social Freedom Party (TÖP), Labor Movement Party (EHP), Socialist Workers' Party (SEP), Socialist Assemblies Initiative (SMI) and journalist Ali Kadir Güler from the paper Patika.

27 people, whose procedures at the prosecutor's office were completed, were referred to the Istanbul Courthouse Criminal Court of Peace in Çağlayan with a request for arrest on Thursday. The judgeship sent the 27 people to prison on charges of "resisting the police" and "violating the law on meetings and demonstrations".

— ★ —

Autonomous Administration: International institutions should act to end Turkish rights violations

ANF | 24 MAY 2024

The self-governing regions in Northern and Eastern Syria are under constant fire from the Turkish state. On Thursday, a woman was killed and five other civilians were injured in the latest attacks. A rocket hit Fateem Al-Dandan's house in Umm Alsateh. The 55-year-old woman died instantly and her 57-year-old husband was seriously injured.

Turkey and its mercenaries fired artillery at eleven villages near Manbij on Thursday and used around 200 projectiles. At least five other people were injured, including two 17-year-old twin siblings. Attacks like these represent a blatant violation of international law of war.

The Democratic Autonomous Administration of Northern and Eastern Syria (DAANES) said in a statement: "The AKP regime is continuing its war against our regions with the intention of preventing peace being achieved in the region. The Turkish state is interested in provoking conflicts and thus escaping its internal crisis."

The regime in Ankara is trying by all means to revive war and terror

The statement added: "Continuing their genocidal war of aggression, the Turkish occupying state and its mercenaries attacked the Canton of Manbij and, before that, the Canton of Shehba. As a result of these attacks, one of our citizens was killed. Many others, including children, were wounded. These attacks are also directed against efforts in the fight against terror.

As the Democratic Autonomous Administration of Northern and Eastern Syria, we condemn these attacks and underline that we will never give in defense of our achievements. We call on the forces striving for de-escalation and relaxation to take action and live up to their responsibilities. Because the silence of these forces means direct support for the Turkish occupying state. This situation not only creates suffering and problems in itself, but will also worsen the economic situation of migrants in our region. The attacks are causing chaos throughout the region, especially where the camps housing relatives of IS criminals are located."

The Autonomous Administration also "called on the relevant institutions of international law to put a stop to violations of the rights of the civilian population and in particular to the attacks on the right to life of the civilian population.

We express our condolences to the families of those killed and wish those injured a speedy recovery."

Interview

Kalkan: The guerrillas are ready to respond to any Turkish attack

ANF | BEHDINAN | 18 MAY 2024

In the second part of this long interview, Duran Kalkan, member of the Executive Council of the KCK, talked about the month of May, the month of martyrs for the Kurdish Liberation movement. He also talked about a new possible Turkish military attack in South Kurdistan.

We are in the month of May, which is an important month for your movement, as for you, it marks the 'Month of the Martyrs'. How do you evaluate the importance of this month?

First of all, on the forty-seventh anniversary of his martyrdom, I commemorate the great revolutionary comrade Haki Karer and all our martyrs of the freedom struggle with respect, love and gratitude. As we enter the forty-eighth year of his martyrdom, I reiterate once again my promise to achieve the goals of all martyrs and to keep their memories alive. Again, I would also like to commemorate Ibrahim Kaypakkaya, one of the leaders of the Turkish revolution, and all the martyrs of the Turkish revolution with respect, love and gratitude. Ibrahim Kaypakkaya was also murdered through torture on May 18, 1973. Comrade Haki Karer was also murdered by the same forces in Antep on May 18, 1977. May is also a month of martyrs for the revolutionaries of Turkey.

On May 6, Deniz, Yusuf, and Huseyin were executed. On May 9, comrade Ulas Bayraktaroglu was martyred. The end of May marks the anniversary of the martyrdom of Sinan Cemgil and his friends. Arab revolutionaries also consider May 16 as the day of martyrs. On May 16, 1916, Arab intellectuals were massacred by the Ittihat & Terakki. I commemorate with respect and gratitude all those who were martyred resisting against the occupation and colonialism. We will keep these martyrs alive and walk in their footsteps through the struggle we are developing for a united revolution in Turkey and Kurdistan. We are keeping the memories of these martyrs alive with the democratic struggle we are developing on the basis of the Kurdish-Arab alliance in the Middle East. As a movement, we will keep them alive even more.

Rêber Apo has always expressed that the resistance against the fascist coup on 12 March 1971 shaped him. He said that the great resistance led to revolutionary organization and action, on the basis of preserving the memories of the martyrs. In other words, he entered this struggle in order to hold up the memories of the martyrs correctly. To hold up the memories of those who walked with Deniz, Ibrahim, and Mahir. He then said that "the PKK is the practical and organizational memory of Haki Karer." He stated that it is the martyrs that form the PKK and described Haki Karer as his own, hidden soul. The PKK declared May 18 as Kurdistan Martyrs' Day a few years later. Indeed, if we look at the PKK and the history of its struggle, every step of development was made through the sacrifice of martyrs. It was developed and achieved on the basis of upholding the memories of the martyrs. The Hilvan resistance was a struggle developed in

memory of Halil Cavgun. Halil Cavgun was martyred by the fascist, colonialist, genocidal enemy while he was commemorating Haki Karer on the anniversary of his martyrdom. The historical Hilvan resistance developed on the basis of the correct preserving of the memory of our martyrs.

The prison resistance is another example. The resistance of the four, the resistance of Mazlum Dogan, the resistance of July 14th, are what caused the historical prison resistance to become so effective. What inspired Ferhat Kurtay and his friends was the anniversary of Haki Karer's martyrdom. The action of the four is a result of the strength they gained from the martyrs. What gave them direction was their effort to claim the memory of comrade Haki Karer correctly. On the basis of the Hilvan resistance, the prison resistance, and then the August 15 breakthrough, May became a month of action. Dozens of actions and dozens of martyrs every day, have brought us to where we are today. A great army of martyrs had emerged.

The martyrs command this struggle, they educate the people and unite them. Our martyrs are the most righteous participants of our party. Understanding the reality of Rêber Apo correctly and acting accordingly successfully requires, first of all, understanding the reality of the martyrs correctly and walking in their footsteps correctly. These are so intertwined. In this respect, May 18 was defined as Martyrs' Day.

May became the month of martyrs, when almost dozens of people were martyred every day. This was a reality which developed in life. The memory of Haki Karer created an organized struggle, step by step. And an army of martyrs became the vanguard of this struggle. And it was them who led the struggle. Therefore, just as our movement and our people defined May 18 as Martyrs' Day, they also defined May as the month of Martyrs. We commemorate on this basis, evaluate the month of May on this basis, and embrace our martyrs on this basis.

Undoubtedly, there are two main dimensions of embracing martyrs correctly. One is to understand and participate correctly, in the reality of martyrs and therefore the reality of Rêber Apo. To see and eliminate mistakes and deficiencies. To renew oneself in the line of martyrs through critical, self-critical questioning. This is something that all revolutionaries and patriots must do. This is what we are all doing this May, as the movement and the people, as revolutionaries and patriots. This is what we must do. If we are to understand the martyrs correctly, then we will have to renew, change, and correct ourselves in the reality of the martyrs. If there are aspects of our feelings, thoughts, mentality and behavior that keep us away from this reality, we will discard them. We will fill ourselves with the measures, spirit, emotion and thought of the martyrs. We will be closer to the life of the martyrs. We will not distance ourselves. We will always live close to our martyrs. We will live and work in the line of the martyrs. We will struggle.

The second is struggle, of course. It is the struggle to claim their memories correctly, to struggle to achieve their goals. Those martyrs are martyrs of this freedom struggle. They believed in the freedom of Kurdistan, the freedom of the people, women's freedom, social freedom with all their being, and they carried out such a struggle that they sacrificed their entire being for it. They were so passionate about freedom. They adopted the line of freedom defined by Rêber Apo at this level. This is how they participated sincerely and marched without hesitation. The reality of martyrs expresses this. It is a reality of struggle. Then we will struggle. We will develop the struggle more. We will develop and advance the struggle for freedom wherever we are on the basis of maximizing opportunities and possibilities. Otherwise, martyrs cannot be embraced correctly; the month and day of martyrs cannot be understood and lived correctly. If we are to live right, this is definitely the right life. The right life is the life of the martyrs. Therefore, if we are to live cor-

rectly, we will understand the reality of martyrs correctly and try to achieve them in principle. That is our goal. We will live and struggle on that basis. There is no other way.

In this respect, I especially greet the relatives of martyrs, the families of martyrs, the mothers of martyrs. They know this reality better; they represent it better. They organize and struggle more to achieve the goals of the martyrs. They will make more effort to educate and organize society in the line of the martyrs, on the basis of the reality of Rêber Apo. We need to do this as a whole party. But the relatives of martyrs also have a duty and responsibility. It is the martyrs that educate us, keep us together, make us organized. They are our main source of strength anytime, anywhere. We find the solution in the line of the martyrs. We reveal the will, consciousness and assertion on the basis of understanding the reality of martyrs correctly. This is a clear fact. We have no other source of power.

The reality of Rêber is the sum of the reality of the martyrs. Rêber Apo said, "I am in a position to strive to carry out the line of the martyrs correctly, to ensure that it is understood and embraced correctly." A martyr is a witness, a witness that the cause for which one has given their lives is right and will triumph. Now we have more than fifty thousand martyrs. The idea of Rêber Apo, the paradigm, the line of victory of the PKK and PAJK has been verified by so many witnesses. There can be no hesitation or doubt. There can be no weak approaches. With these facts, we cannot live in any other way. We cannot set other measures and goals before us. This is how to understand May correctly.

Finally, let me express the following. May 16th is also the anniversary of the Hewler (Erbil) Massacre. I commemorate the martyrs of the massacre with respect and gratitude in the persons of comrades Salih, Helin and Ozan.

Let us understand correctly what betrayal and collaborationism are. How did the Hewler Massacre happen? What has collaborationism done, and what is betrayal doing today? it is important to see this correctly. The reality of the martyrs shows us this. The struggle against colonialism, genocide and fascism is inseparable from the struggle against collaborationism and betrayal. We need to see this fact and understand it correctly.

Based on this, I once again respectfully remember Comrade Haki Karer and all of our May martyrs, including Mehmet Karasungur and Kasim Engin, as well as all of our martyrs of the freedom struggle, and I declare that we will strengthen our struggle for our freedom while honoring their memory.

There has been some news that a new military operation was initiated by the Turkish state in the region of Metina in the Medya Defense Zones. What can you say about this operation?

The history of the ongoing war is known, there is no need to repeat this. Actually, there may be a need for more discussion and better understanding. But if we talk about the new situation, our Central Headquarters institutions have already disclosed the information. Since 16 April, there has been an occupation attack against Metina. In fact, there had been occupation attacks in and around Metina before. There is a partial occupation attack aimed at occupying Metina as a whole. The HPG-BIM has explained this many times. Journalists and members of the press who receive information have explained in detail how these attacks are being conducted. Our Central Headquarters also outlined the characteristics of the attack. "It is a piecemeal attack," they said. In other words, step by step, they want to take various places and combine them to reach a general occupation. By occupying Metina, they want to besiege Zap, that great stronghold

of resistance. It is said that the Iraqi state has given 20 kilometers of the border to Turkey under the name of a buffer zone. In fact, they want to occupy those 20 kilometers completely now. The guerrilla has been resisting to prevent this occupation for years, giving so many martyrs.

Now there are important resistances against the development of this occupation. There were actions against this occupation operation in Metina. From Seladize to other areas, blows were struck to the Turkish army. As the hordes of the fascist AKP-MHP take steps towards occupation, the guerrilla seizes the opportunity and strikes. There is an intense conflict situation.

The balance sheets of HPG-BIM give broad information on the losses of the Turkish army. They also announce our martyrs. There is nothing that the HPG is hiding or keeping secret from the public on this issue. The guerrilla is cautious, and it takes action. It is no longer just resisting only when it is attacked. It plans and carries out actions itself. In other words, it is in a tactical attack position. Therefore, of course the losses are low. Our martyrs are few. I salute the HPG and YJA Star forces who are carrying out this resistance. I commemorate the martyrs of the resistance with respect, love and gratitude.

Maybe not with the intensity of some periods of the past years, but there is an attack with such a purpose and framework. There are also some other things. As the HPG has explained, the Turkish army uses forbidden weapons when it fails, when it is forced. The HPG also announced, that the Turkish army is using chemical weapons. It uses tactical nuclear bombs. It is concentrating on such weapons. There has also been an increase in aerial bombardment recently. It seems that the negotiations with the US on the basis of Sweden's entry into NATO have yielded certain results in their perspective. They have bought new warplanes. They are carrying out more attacks from the air.

In the same way that they ensure the isolation on Imrali through legal pretexts, they carry out the attack against the guerrillas at the same level and they receive support. The Turkish state doesn't have the power to attack on its own. They cannot do one step if they do not have backing. Just as there is a unity in the system of isolation, torture and genocide in Imrali – on the basis of the states of the UN, NATO and the Turkish Republic as the implementing power – the same situation exists in the attack against the guerrillas. They are pursuing the same objective of elimination by assaulting both Rêber Apo and the guerrilla at the same level.

In fact, what is being attempted in Imrali is extermination. They wanted to exterminate Rêber Apo on 9 October 1998, but they failed. They envisioned extermination by execution on February 15, they failed. They said they would destroy us ideologically, politically and organizationally with the policy of the Imrali system, they failed again. As if they were taking revenge for this, they are attacking to destroy the guerrilla, and on the other hand they are attacking Rêber Apo by violating and ignoring all kinds of law, by disguising lawlessness. They could not win in the Imrali struggle, they were defeated. They want to take revenge in this way. They see these attacks as an opportunity to disguise their losses. A very important thing here is the goal of crushing the guerrilla; the same forces who are implementing the system of Imrali are working together on the attacks against the guerrilla.

Of course, we are focusing on the war. The war needs to be evaluated well. Its consequences in Turkey have not been discussed enough. It is discussed very little. However, we need to make a good analysis of Turkey. The economic crisis, the political crisis, the social crisis, the cultural crisis, all kinds of corruption, the drug policy, the destruction of all kinds of sociality are all for the war. The resources exploited are al-

ways invested in the war. This is being done so that no one raises a voice against the war. Tayyip Erdogan has brought his own end, in fact he has finished Turkey, he has finished society. After the election, he said "this is not the end". But it was an end. He finished Turkey and he finished himself. Now, he is still searching for a new way. He begged and pleaded so much that he would take power from NATO and the US. It didn't work; he wanted to get power from Iran, Iraq, KDP and PUK. These were evaluated. He was invited by the US administration to meet with Biden. The AKP press propagandized this for weeks. Suddenly, when a US official said we don't have such a program, the lies deflated like a balloon. In order to camouflage this, Erdogan tried to show off by hanging Turkish flags everywhere. He even went to Barzani's feet. 30 years ago, when there was no PKK, they wouldn't even send a sergeant to meet the Barzani's. Now they are bragging. The Barzani's are also very eager to turn South Kurdistan into a province of Turkey, a province of AKP-MHP fascism. That is how they behave. But the situation Tayyip Erdogan is in, is obvious.

Various agreements have been made. It is said that a new invasion will be developed based on this. Everyone is waiting, wondering what this attack will be. I mean, it could happen. Everyone should be prepared. That's how we approach it. We shouldn't take it lightly. We shouldn't take anything for granted. Because life is not simple. We should always be prepared. But it is not that easy for them right now. They are not in a position to do whatever they want. If they were, they would do it. So what is happening? They tried to do things with some agreements. It seems that they could not create the joint force they had planned. This was not possible anyway. Neither Iran nor Iraq wants it. No one has the power or the need for it. Why should they serve as a soldier for Turkey? Has everyone become KDP? Are they Barzani? I mean they are not. They are struggling against them. Everyone has their own interests.

But we need to understand this so-called Development Road project correctly. There is no such road. There is no trade. If there really was such a project, everyone from America to Israel would oppose it. They are actually deceiving Iraq. Some of our friends also discussed this. They want to enter Iraq under the pretext of a trade route. They want to go deeper into Iraq. They envision that they will send troops to build the roads, then they will send soldiers, police, intelligence. Erdogan said he would encircle from Sulaymaniyah to Zaxo with a joint force. He failed in the Medya Defense Zones. In this way, he is attempting to encircle all of Southern Kurdistan from the south. This Battle Road project has such a military purpose. According to his plans, Erdogan's forces will enter Iraq turn it into a battlefield. Probably Iran, Iraq and everyone sees this. Of course, this would be a disaster for Iraq. No one will accept it. Of course, we will fight against such a thing. The entry of so many Turkish forces into Iraq is an occupation, it should not be underestimated. How did mercenary territories come to be? Disguising them as Turkmens, Erdogan will create territories for his mercenaries in Iraq. They did this in Cyprus and is doing this in many other places.

Our leadership has warned the KDP regarding military movement in guerrilla areas. I have nothing more to say in this regard. The KDP has commanded that its war forces get ready. This would be a disaster for the KDP. If they take one step further and go directly to war on the side of the Turkish Republic, they will bring their own end. I can say this much. We will surround them everywhere. The PKK and the guerrilla are everywhere. Everyone should know this. Everyone sees what the guerrilla is and how it fights. Therefore, we are watching and observing.

We are continuing our struggle. We will continue our global freedom campaign on the military front as well. The campaign is spreading, so is the guerrilla. There are also actions in the cities. We believe that this

will develop much more in the coming period. In general terms, those who develop this war and insist on it will drown in the blood they shed.

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Kalkan: The health of a society is linked to the situation of women

ANF | BEHDINAN | 19 MAY 2024

In the third part of this long interview, Duran Kalkan, member of the Executive Council of the KCK, talked about the statement by the KJK and PAJK on self-defense. He also talked about the fight against fascism.

The first part of this interview can be read [here](#) and the second part [here](#)

The leadership and coordination of both PAJK and KJK have jointly shared a self-defense declaration for women. As the PKK, what can you say in regard to this declaration?

The joint self-defense declaration of the PAJK and KJK was important and meaningful. It also sparked a certain debate due to its timing. As the PKK, we fully agree with this declaration. We need to do everything to develop awareness about self-defense, to organize it and to take accordingly actions. We definitely need to overcome our shortcomings in this regard.

The declaration was for women. Undoubtedly, women are under the heaviest oppression, persecution, rape and massacre. They experienced the heaviest slavery. Therefore, self-defense is more important and necessary for women than bread and water. But the stance of general society is not very different from that of women. It is said that the level of freedom of a society is determined by the level of freedom of women. We can also read this the other way around. Then the state of a society, the state of slavery, is linked to the state of women. If women need so much self-defense, if they are in such a situation, if there is so much pressure and oppression on them, it is the same for the whole of society.

So yes, it is very important for women, because they are the pioneers. We should definitely not challenge this. But we must spread this consciousness, organization and action throughout the whole of society. Society must be conscious, organized and active in defending itself against this fascist, colonialist, genocidal, special war mentality, system, and attacks. This must be the case from the age of seven to seventy. Women, men, young and old, everyone should be like this. Self-defense means security. Security is one of the three basic conditions of existence, along with nutrition and reproduction. It is inextricably linked to existence, that is, to life, and also to freedom. Therefore, those without self-defense have no security. And those who have no security have no freedom. Those who have no security are under the heaviest slavery because they become the slave of whoever has taken away their security.

These nation states have built armies. Armies signify power, and by depriving society of power, they have concentrated all power in their own hands and the hands of the state. They have dragged society and

women to such a position of slavery, deprived of freedom, under oppression and persecution. Therefore, against this, everyone must have the awareness, attitude and will to ensure their own security. Security cannot be entrusted to someone else. Security cannot be given to someone else. You cannot rely on a security force. No one can be anyone else's security force.

If everyone is to live free, they can only be free to the extent that they ensure their own security. Therefore, if a woman is to be free, this freedom is only achieved to the extent that she ensures her security. If society is to be free, they are free to the extent that they have ensured their own security, if the individual is to be free, they are free to the extent that they have ensured their own security. We need to develop such a consciousness, organization and action in society and make society educate itself, organize itself and take action on this basis. States are doing the opposite. Especially fascist, colonialist, genocidal dictatorships bring people to the state of genocide, the slaughter of society. This is how they weaken societies and take all the power in their own hands. On the contrary, we must give power back to the individual and society, to women. This should definitely be the goal and effort of the revolutionary struggle, the struggle for freedom and equality. Some misunderstandings should not arise in this regard. I mean, self-defense is the most legitimate right; how much more can people trust the UN, how much can anyone trust the law and legitimacy of states? Is there such a legitimacy left? There is none. Therefore, no one should say that "we have rights and laws". You have the right to live and be free as long as you make yourself conscious, organized and active. There is no other, no one will grant you such rights. This must be the attitude, consciousness and stance.

However, self-defense shouldn't be limited to being a concept, a state of mind, or a topic of conversation. Furthermore, it shouldn't be viewed as just an organization or an action. It must be viewed holistically, in terms of consciousness, that is, in terms of the integrity of education and the informed planning and execution of actions. Unconscious planning and behavior, for instance, may result in situations where it is uncertain who this behavior will damage and what outcomes it will bring about. This is what creates gangs. If one only has consciousness, and no organization or action; this would become nothing but an empty, beautiful dream and nothing more. It will not have any practice, sanction or effect. For this reason, we ought to approach it holistically rather than breaking it up this way. There appear to be broken approaches. More people talk about self-defense as an idea, treating it like a subject which is only discussed; they refer to it as 'self-defense consciousness and struggle'. However, some approaches do not focus on how it is organized and how it functions, nor do they link it with it. These are incorrect. I am able to say this clearly. It doesn't grow or produce many effects in this way. This eventually makes it harder to fight back against fascist, imperialist, genocidal, and special war attacks of all types.

Some weeks have passed since the municipal elections in Turkey and Northern Kurdistan took place. Is there anything you would like to add to the evaluations made in relation to these elections?

Currently, in Northern Kurdistan and in Turkey, there is a very extreme legalism. Therefore, methods of action are not being enriched. Fascism is oppressing and attacking; in the face of this, there is no organization, no power and no line of action that is capable of frustrating these attacks. The actions are insufficient. There are some actions against these attacks, but these are very reformist, they are not radical. But if we insist on radical democracy, then the language of democracy is action, the line of action has to be radical.

If it is too legalized, too legalistic, it cannot be radical because the current legality and legalism is based on fascism. Can fascism be destroyed only by reformist methods of struggle, only by legal work? It is not possible. The legal system is already taking measures against this. Therefore, it is necessary to overcome being confined only to legalism and legality. If that is overcome, all actions will make sense. But without that, you can't take many actions, and when you do, they won't have any effect. As a matter of fact, this is what is seen in practice.

In this sense, I would like to draw the attention of the youth, especially the youth of Turkey and Kurdistan. The youth is the most dynamic force in this matter, a force that understands it best and has the ability to develop all kinds of methods of struggle and ways. Therefore, the youth must understand this correctly.

If the youth legalizes itself too much, if it drowns itself in legalism, it will really cease to be revolutionary. If it legalizes itself, it cannot wage a radical struggle. The passive, reformist struggles will not be very effective too then. They would be meaningless. If there was a revolutionary, radical struggle, they would gain meaning along with that struggle. But in this case, they don't.

In this respect, our young comrades must understand the situation correctly. They should know how to fight against fascism, how to organize. They should look at their history, study the 'Kurdistan Youth Union' (YCK), study the 'The Movement of Patriotic Democratic Youth' (YDGH). These names are not even being mentioned. However, this youth has a history, it has a line. It is definitely in a position to meet its own requirements. In this respect, we should be able to better develop the consciousness, organization and action that will overthrow fascism. In other words, we should not imprison ourselves in these laws. We must be able to develop all kinds of work, organization and action in our own legitimacy. We must be radical fighters. We must organize and wage antifascist war against fascism. Self-defense is a work of war. We must develop the self-defense war. We must not soften or eliminate the characteristic of war by calling it a 'struggle'. Only when combined with war, can struggling make sense. Only then can other actions make sense. But without war, nothing will come out of such a struggle. In this respect, it is very important to approach and think correctly. This is my advice to young comrades. This is my call. They should think well. They should study history well.

With what kind of organization and action will the youth ensure that they really become a revolutionary youth? How will they reveal the unique, special organization and will of the youth? They should think about that. They should remember the 'Revolutionary Youth' (Dev-Genç). Is there anyone, today, who corresponds to the Dev-Genç? No. There was the YCK, there were other youth organizations, there was a will. They were leading society, developing a line of action. They were adding the will, emotion and action of the youth. Now there are weaknesses in these matters. On this occasion, I call on all young comrades to understand the fascist, genocidal system more accurately, to understand the questions of how to wage a correct and adequate struggle against it, how to develop organization and action, and to become successful in implementing them, and I wish them success.

We had evaluated the need for democratic forces and the strive for freedom, as well as the need to develop radical democracy in a stronger and more effective way. We also had some evaluations and recommendations for the CHP. We are observing the situation and actions of Ozgur Ozel's administration. It is too early to say anything, but I think it is necessary to say the following at this point: he is not using the credit given by society and the people correctly and well. If this happens, Ozel will not be able to overcome the Kilicdaroglu administration. If they try to lure everyone to compromise, fascism will succeed. That was the

line of the Kilicdaroglu administration, and we can see what it did to the CHP and to Turkey. We also saw how Kilicdaroglu handed everything over to the AKP-MHP. What steps will be taken towards a minimum democratization, to democratize the Republic, to make the second century a century of democratization? We haven't seen anything serious, but we won't go on at length. Their credit has finished; it would be useful for them to be informed.

We have come to the end of our interview. Is there anything else you would like to add?

There were some valuable personalities who lost their lives and I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to İlhamî Aras and Celal Baslangic. İlhamî Aras made many contributions to the revolutionary struggle in Turkey. He was a good friend and companion of Rêber Apo. I wanted to convey this to his relatives, on this occasion.

Celal Baslangic was a democrat who stood upright and insisted on what he knew was right. He did journalism justice. As he saw the practices in Kurdistan, he grew closer to the Kurdish people. He fought and exposed that which was being inflicted on the Kurds in the most difficult environments and without any hesitation. He played an important role in shedding light on these special war practices, attacks, conspiracies and massacres. In this sense, he contributed to the Kurdish struggle for freedom and the struggle for democratization in Turkey. He will be remembered for these contributions. This is how those who knew him, our friends, and everyone defined him. On this basis, I once again commemorate them both with respect and gratitude.

In the villages of Colemerg, the people developed an attitude against the plundering of nature. The people showed their attitude against capitalist modernity, against the private war attacks that plunder nature under the name of coal-mines. It was quite meaningful. The villagers of Marinos, for example, took a good stance. The statements they made were also good. I really salute their stance and resistance; it was meaningful and exemplary. We should all be like that everywhere against the understanding and attitudes that plunder and pillage all our nature. All villagers must be like that, all urbanites must be like that. Women, men, old, young, the whole of society must be like that. Because without nature, what can we do, how can we exist? Existence happened on this earth, with this nature. Whoever destroys this is destroying society, destroying existence. It is such a brutal attack. In this respect, this consciousness and action is very important.

On this basis, meetings are being held in Amed under the name of Ecology Union, it was reflected in the press. Various organizations are participating. In other words, we find all ecological work meaningful and important. We wish them success in these efforts.

Our criticism in this regard is only this. That is, not to tie the ecological struggle to the state, not to sacrifice ecology to politics. In other words, not to entrust the lamb to the wolf. They must not hand the green struggle to those who create the ecological problem. This is an important line. Why am I saying this? Some green movements have become statized, they gained power and later really harmed the ecological struggle. They need to be evaluated and criticized. In other words, they set the movement back. This should be the basic measure. In this sense, I salute any struggle for ecology and the protection of nature. I wish them success.

Finally, Amedspor has achieved an important success. I congratulate its success and wish it greater success. I also salute the fans of Amedspor. They really took good care of their team. But I would like to say this. They would do the right thing if they embraced their Kurdish identity and the struggle for freedom at the same rate. I also call on them to adopt such an attitude of embracement.

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Kalkan: Societies unable to defend themselves will not be able to avoid extinction

ANF | BEHDINAN | 20 MAY 2024

In a new comprehensive interview, Duran Kalkan, member of the KCK Executive Council, spoke about the broad topic of self-defense within society.

Kalkan analyzed the necessity of organizing self-defense of society on all its levels, in order to form a free life according to Democratic Modernity as an alternative to the current system of Capitalist Modernity. In particular, he examined the situation of Kurdish society and the currently prevailing inadequacies, also on the part of the Kurdish freedom movement.

Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan once stated that "societies that are unable to defend themselves will not be able to avoid extinction". What does this statement mean for Kurdish society today?

This statement of Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] expresses that for Kurdish society today, self-defense is more important and urgent than anything else. It is more important than bread and water, since the prevailing genocidal mentality and politics are trying to destroy Kurds. If we cast an eye back into history, we see that many societies that were unable to defend themselves were destroyed and erased from history. In the first quarter of the 20th century, the genocidal mentality and system aimed to destroy the self-defense mechanisms of Kurdish society and raise awareness about them. In the ongoing 100-year genocidal attack, awareness about self-defense and its practice in Kurdish society has been eradicated to a great extent. It is known that the Kurds were brought to the brink of extinction in the mid-1970s. The emergence of Rêber Apo and the struggle of the PKK are essentially an attempt and effort to stop this process and instead create a free existence. After fifty consecutive years of struggle, these genocidal attacks have been broken and weakened considerably. Though the genocidal mentality and politics have not yet been completely defeated, they are carrying out all kinds of attacks on the basis of the international conspiracy to achieve their goals. Of course, first and foremost, it aims to completely destroy Kurdish awareness about self-defense and its organization, and therefore it is particularly attacking Rêber Apo and the guerrillas. They are their primary target in order to achieve their goals. In this respect, the reality and existence of Rêber Apo and the guerrillas represent the national existence of Kurdish society. They symbolize self-defense consciousness, organization, and action. In this sense, the PKK can be called the self-defense movement of Kurdish society. In order for Kurdish society to continue its existence and live free, it is necessary for Kurdish society to understand the reality of Rêber Apo and the guerrillas correctly and embrace it strongly. In practical terms, all Kurds who take up arms must educate, organize, and mobilize themselves with the con-

sciousness of self-defense. Society needs to bring itself to a level that can resist, break, and defeat any genocidal attack.

Kurdish society, youth, women, children, the elderly, the general politics, cultural-social institutions, in short, every part of society is under attack by the occupying Turkish state. The state and its institutions have become the biggest security threat to Kurdish society. How will the people protect themselves against these attacks, what kind of self-defense should they develop, what should they do?

In fact, the reality of all nation states is the destruction of society. In other words, nation states aim at the destruction of sociality and the stateization of the individual. Therefore, nation states and their institutions have become the biggest security threat to societies. In Kurdistan, this social extermination is practiced at the level of genocide. The states and institutions that rule over Kurdistan mainly want to destroy Kurdish society. This extermination mainly takes the form of cultural genocide, i.e. assimilation at all levels, but it is also accompanied by physical massacres, displacement from Kurdistan (deportation) and changing the demography of Kurdistan. An all-out genocidal attack is being waged against Kurdish society. How can Kurdish society protect itself in this situation?

First, it has to realize that it has a serious security problem and that it faces genocide.

Secondly, it has to realize that it is the state and its institutions that aim to destroy it. In other words, it will have to reach a correct understanding of the state and enemy so that they will not call state forces and institutions 'security forces' anymore.

Thirdly, it has to realize that only it can ensure its own security and feel responsibility on this basis.

Finally, it has to form self-defense consciousness, organization, and action to ensure its own security. In other words, it will have to educate and organize itself on the basis of self-defense and defend itself in the face of attacks. There is no other way or method.

Kurdish society cannot simply speak of 'self-defense' in a subordinate clause and thereby close the topic. It cannot afford to approach the issue of self-defense incorrectly and inadequately and place self-defense or its own security in the hands of others. Today, some people think that if they say 'self-defense', their security will be ensured. This is wrong. Another wrong approach to self-defense is not recognizing the reality of the state and the enemy correctly and looking at them as 'security forces'. To fragment the content of self-defense and to see it only as a matter of consciousness or only as a matter of organization and action is also another inadequate approach. Some people define self-defense only as a state of consciousness. This is undoubtedly insufficient. Again, some see self-defense only in practical terms, that is, as organization and action. Undoubtedly, this is also insufficient. Self-defense includes all of these together. It includes the integrity of consciousness, organization, and action. Seeing self-defense only as consciousness and not transforming it into organization and action is just saying nice things. On the contrary, seeing self-defense only as practice and not seeing its consciousness dimension leads to all kinds of mistakes and wrong practices. It is absolutely necessary not to fall for such mistakes and not to define self-defense according to one's own whims. It is a topic that needs to be approached correctly and applied successfully.

The answer to the question of what to do in this regard also emerges. First of all, Kurdish society will have to understand the concept of self-defense correctly, adequately, and successfully fulfill its requirements in

practice. For this, it will have to see itself as responsible for its own security and not leave its security to others. They will have to acquire the correct self-defense consciousness and educate themselves correctly. Education should not only be at the level of knowledge but should also become the basis for organizing and equipping oneself in every aspect. These are very essential; if they are not present, and if one does not act and live accordingly, then one cannot do anything in the face of attacks. The rest is to act carefully and cautiously and to show the courage and sacrifice to form a defense against any kind of attack.

In fact, what we assess as one part of the problem is the approach and expectation of some that someone else should do these things so that they do not burden them. Societicide and genocide create such a state of mind and understanding in societies and individuals. This is the reason why they are discussed so much but are not practiced as much as they should be. This means that societicide and genocide have been quite successful. The first thing to do, as an answer to this, is to completely eradicate this state of mind and understanding, to wipe it out of our minds and hearts. If we do so, we will find the right and adequate answers to the question of what we need to do to ensure our own security. Unless we do so, no valid solution can be found, no matter how much we discuss and search for it. Therefore, correcting mistakes in the approach to self-defense comes first and foremost.

It is becoming more and more striking every day that the existence and freedom of Kurdistan and Kurds cannot exist without self-defense. Ensuring this is, of course, the main task of the whole population. Some autonomous organizations are organizing actions, but we see that there is more expectation from the guerrilla and professional forces. What would you like to say about this? How should people as a whole participate in the self-defense mechanism? How can all parts of society play a role in this?

In fact, not only Kurds but also no other individual, people or society in this world can exist and live freely without self-defense. Self-defense means security. Security is one of the three basic conditions of existence, along with nutrition and reproduction. If an individual, people, or society ensures its security through its own strength, if it can feed itself through its own strength, if it creates the conditions for reproduction, then it can continue its existence and live freely. There is an unbreakable link between security and freedom. Those who cannot ensure their security cannot be free. Those who leave their security to others become their slaves. Only those who provide their own security can live free. Therefore, anyone who wants to be free and live freely must ensure their own security. There are no buts to this. Anyone who has fallen into such a situation has actually lost a lot of his or her freedom.

When we look at history, we see that the lives of all clans, tribes, and peoples were based on self-defense. The tribal and clan life of the Kurds and the clan life of the Turkmens are all based on self-defense and were therefore free. What does this mean, or how was this realized? It is very clear that everyone, men and women, who can hold a weapon is trained in self-defense, learns how to use weapons, organizes on the basis of self-defense, and when faced with an attack, everyone fulfills their duties. This is the life of a free society.

It is well known that this situation changed with the emergence of power and the state system. The power and the state took the weapons and tools to ensure security from the hands of society, gathered the power for itself, and declared itself as the 'security force'. Since the patriarchal mentality, hierarchy, and male dominance constitute power and the state, all security has been monopolized by the state and particularly men. On this basis, women and the whole society have been constantly disarmed, rendered powerless, and dependent on men and the state for 5,000 years. Now it is clear that if one really wants to get rid of this

situation, the task is to take the weapons and power out of the hands of the state and men. For this, it is imperative that women and the entire society achieve the right security consciousness and train, organize, and equip themselves on this basis. This is how the reality of a warring people is formed, which is a phrase used very often by Rêber Apo. This is an inevitable point.

The current understanding and attitude of many, which shows the expectation that security is provided by the guerrilla or professional forces, is in fact an understanding and attitude that accepts male and state domination in advance. One cannot be free with such an understanding and attitude. First of all, it is necessary to change this approach and adopt a correct attitude toward security by clearly seeing the inseparable link between freedom and security. For this, it is necessary to fight against any kind of wrong understanding. Undoubtedly, revolutionary forces must lead this struggle, our party must lead this, and the process of forming a Democratic Nation must be completely on this basis. The most active force in the struggle on behalf of all this is the press, broadcasting, art, and literature. They must both struggle against the wrong approaches and replace them with the right ones. Societies have already been subjected to nation-state genocide. Kurds have already been under genocidal attack for a century. Therefore, they cannot be expected to get rid of these wrongs by themselves. Societies need to be educated with a correct understanding of security. The main task lies with those who are responsible for educating society. The party and guerrilla leadership, the press and broadcasting, art, and literature have to fulfill this task. The main problem we face today stems from the weakness and inadequacy in these areas. The forces in charge and responsible for educating society must know how to overcome these inadequacies and weaknesses and fulfill their duties successfully. The problem can only be solved if people and society are given awareness of self-defense at the right and sufficient level, if mistakes in this regard are corrected and weaknesses are overcome, and if society is trained and organized on the basis of self-defense. There is no other way.

Your guerrilla forces are also part of self-defense. What is its concrete role in this context? Do you think that your guerrilla forces are left alone in this resistance and that they are not supported enough? If so, what should be done to ensure that the guerrillas and the people's self-defense complement each other in the struggle against fascism?

The role and mission of the guerrilla in self-defense are leadership and guidance. It is true that today it is solely the guerrillas that are waging the war. In this sense, it can also be said that the guerrilla is alone. Still, this should not be expressed as 'the guerrilla is left alone'. In the recent past, such views have been expressed in different ways. We have discussed and evaluated this situation in all its dimensions. We have re-evaluated and planned the concept of self-defense according to the mentality of Democratic Modernity and have concretized it in the form of the professional guerrilla, which is the vanguard, and local self-defense, which is the basic force. In other words, we consider the guerrilla and local forms of self-defense in a holistic manner. According to this definition, the guerrilla is the main force that trains, organizes, and manages self-defense. Therefore, if self-defense is weak and the war is currently being waged on the shoulders of the guerrilla, the guerrilla itself is mainly responsible for this. Since the people cannot educate and organize themselves, and since this education and organization should mainly be done by the guerrilla leadership, the guerrilla leadership is mainly responsible for the weakness of self-defense. Rather than criticizing others, the guerrilla gives self-criticism for the current situation and foresees eliminating the deficiencies on this basis.

For guerrillas and local self-defense to complement each other, both must be trained, organized, and mobilized together. Our party and guerrilla leadership are responsible for this. The work of the entire party

and guerrillas must mainly be focused on this. In other words, it must educate, organize, and mobilize people, especially young people and women, on this basis. It must correct the existing misunderstandings about self-defense among people and ensure the emergence of a correct self-defense consciousness and practice. Of course, everyone who calls themselves patriotic and libertarian must also know that they have a duty within this, believe that free life is only possible through self-defense, and embrace their duty on the basis of the consciousness given by the leadership of the party and the guerrilla.

In its current state, there is a serious illusion in Northern Kurdistan. There is a fascist and genocidal dictatorship, but it is thought that this dictatorship can only be overcome through legal organization and democratic mass action. This understanding is not correct. Fascism means total attack and war. The anti-fascist struggle can only succeed if it is developed on the basis of revolutionary warfare. However, in its current form, the masses are given the wrong understanding that results can only be achieved through a narrow struggle for peace and democracy. The press is responsible for this, along with the organized forces. This false awareness must be corrected immediately, and the masses must be made aware that only total resistance against the fascist-genocidal dictatorship on the basis of anti-fascist revolutionary warfare can bring success. So far, almost everyone has made serious mistakes and shown shortcomings in this regard. These must first be eliminated and corrected through self-criticism. It is necessary to make correct propaganda and education on the basis of an ideological and strategic line, to tell the people the truth, and to make it possible to fight against the fascist-genocidal system correctly and holistically with such a correct education.

Rêber Apo once asked society, 'If they can commit a massacre in Amed, how will you defend yourself? Will the guerrillas come and save you from massacres?' drawing attention to the vital importance of social self-defense. Since the day this assessment was made, there have been many massacres against the people. In this context, what should society, the people do, and how should they organize their defense?

We, as the party and guerrilla leadership, take the criticism of Rêber Apo upon ourselves first and foremost, and we are self-critical. Like I stated before, people cannot educate and organize themselves. The party and guerrilla leadership have the responsibility to do this. Rêber Apo wants people to be educated and organized correctly and adequately on the basis of self-defense. We are determined to accomplish this task, which we have not been able to do sufficiently for various reasons so far. In this context, let our people, especially the young people and women, believe in and trust us. Of course, we will do our duty. Society must be open and ready for such education to discard old misunderstandings and acquire a new understanding of self-defense.

Also, as I have stated before, the understanding that the fascist-genocidal system can be overthrown only through narrow legal organization and democratic mass action is not correct. Our people must free themselves from this wrong understanding. They must convince themselves that the fascist-genocidal mentality and system can only be overthrown through total resistance on the basis of revolutionary people's warfare, and as a requirement of this, they must participate in and support the guerrillas and self-defense activities. Weakness is experienced on this basis. Not all patriots are working to join the guerrillas. We know that there are so-called patriots who prevent their own and their relatives' youth from participating. Obviously, there is no such thing as patriotism. We must throw such people out of our midst. There is not enough participation and support for those working for self-defense. There is too much legalization and legalism. There is a situation of losing the revolutionary stance and becoming too reformist. It is absolutely necessary to overcome this legalist-reformist understanding and style. It is necessary to understand the self-de-

fense war correctly and to know that the first condition of patriotic duty is to participate in and support the self-defense war and to act accordingly.

At the same time, we must educate ourselves and our environment with the right patriotic consciousness. Acting with the awareness that we are waging the most relentless war for existence and freedom in history, we must both involve ourselves in this war and live according to the requirements of it. Everyone must pay attention to the way they live, act, and work. No one should act as if we are not under genocidal attack. Everyone should be organized. No one should act randomly or wander around alone, but they should always live and work in readiness for any possibility of attack. The same must be done as a people against the possibility of any kind of massacre. We will provide our own security. The state forces do not provide security; on the contrary, they want to destroy us. So we cannot entrust our security to such a force. We cannot live unprepared, either. We must always be prepared, and at the same time, we must be able to resist and defeat the attack without hesitation. This is a new situation and understanding. But it is a reality that has been experienced in the historical past. The fascist, colonialist, and genocidal mentality distanced us from this reality and revealed the current reformist-submissionist understanding and attitude. So we must bring this reality to consciousness and free ourselves from any understanding or attitude that means reformism and submission.

Every day, women are murdered solely for being women. The state has a systematic policy of extermination, specifically against women. For example, Nagihan Akarsel was murdered in the middle of the city in Sulaymaniyah. The Iraqi representative of the Turkish state openly claimed responsibility for this massacre. Regarding the situation of women, Abdullah Öcalan once stated, "They should not go down to uncanny social areas without guaranteed self-defense." How can women's self-defense be developed? What does self-defense mean for women?

A few weeks ago, the coordinations of the PAJK and KJK issued a joint declaration on self-defense and called on all women to acquire a proper self-defense consciousness and to accordingly organize and take action. As the PKK, we agree with this declaration. Of course, the situation of women in today's world is much more severe than ever before. It reveals the true face of the male-dominated power and state system and the last form of Capitalist Modernity. In fact, the situation of women indicates the situation of society. It is not only women who are being driven away from awareness about self-defense and its organization, but also the whole society. This is how slavery, oppression, and exploitation were developed.

Obviously, the oppression and massacre of women are not one-dimensional but multi-dimensional. Under the current system of Capitalist Modernity, there is actually no life envisaged for women. The system has enslaved the whole society, and women have been made the slaves of the slaves. There is absolutely no way of life left for a woman other than to become what the male state wants her to be and to serve it. In this system, the woman is openly murdered both spiritually and emotionally, intellectually and physically. The law and all the rules of the system are structured around the slavery of women. The number of women murdered in Turkey in the first four months of 2024 was announced as 185. Almost every day, two women are murdered. These are the known and visible ones; of course, the unknown and invisible massacres of women are tens of times greater. Therefore, self-defense is vital for women more than anyone else.

In the current environment, self-defense is the only way for women to survive and live freely. Other than this, it is not possible for women to protect themselves from harassment, rape, and massacres. In short, self-defense is vital and inevitably necessary for women more than anyone else. This is the only way to gain

free consciousness, will, and life. In order to keep society under slavery, the current system attacks and fears women the most. Of course, overcoming Capitalist Modernity and building Democratic Modernity on the basis of the free individual and the democratic commune will only be possible and successful on the basis of women's freedom. On this basis, an important women's consciousness and organization are developing. If it is not harmed by petite bourgeois perversions, a correct and effective women's organization and struggle will develop on the basis of self-defense. The experience of self-defense and freedom struggle developed by Kurdish women on the basis of YJA Star is a concrete example for everyone with the successes it has created.

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Kalkan: Self-defense means security

ANF | BEHDINAN | 21 MAY 2024

In the second part of this comprehensive interview, Duran Kalkan, member of the KCK Executive Council, spoke about the broad topic of self-defense within society.

When it comes to self-defense and resistance, the first aspect that comes to mind is, of course, youth. What should be the means of self-defense of Kurdish young people, and what kind of methods should they use?

Kurdish young people successfully played a historic role by creating the PKK and the Kurdish freedom guerrillas. As it is known, the PKK is a party of the youth, and the guerrillas are the most fundamental youth organization. Self-defense is the basic form of organization and struggle of the youth. Work other than this is an afterthought for them. Even though this is the reality, youth work in Northern Kurdistan is currently highly legalized. The youth work in Rojava is carried out around secondary activities such as mass marches.

Undoubtedly, in order to reveal their will, the youth need their own unique organization, but it is important in which line this organization will be. Recently, mild methods of organization and struggle have become almost fundamental for youth work. In our opinion, this is a mistake. The motto of the youth's organization and action must definitely be self-defense. Like the party and the guerrillas, the youth movement must be the vanguard and the main force of social self-defense. The young people must constitute the main force of the self-defense force of society. In addition, the youth must lead all other social education, organization and actions, especially the serhildan.

Can young people carry out such a comprehensive task? If it is trained and organized correctly, sure, it can. But it should be known that the ruling orders always close the door to revolutionary organization and action and open the door to reformist forms. In the face of such a situation, youth movements should not be mistaken, should not leave what is difficult and run to the open door. Especially under conditions of fascism and genocide, it is imperative that the youth organization take the illegal style as its basis and achieve this. Under fascism, if youth organization becomes legalized, all other organizations become more legalist; if youth actions become reformist, the actions of other parts of society become completely ineffec-

tive. In this respect, it is necessary to re-evaluate the existing youth work and insist on developing it in the right direction.

When it comes to self-defense, which also comes directly to mind, is physical resistance. This, of course, is quite reasonable, keeping in mind that genocide is imposed on a people. What kind of dimensions does self-defense have besides physical resistance?

Resistance and self-defense have various methods and dimensions. Resistance takes place in the soul, in the emotions, in the consciousness, in the culture, also in physical forms, i.e. serhildan and war. All these resistances can be considered within the scope of self-defense. Under conditions of fascism and genocide, all these are both necessary and meaningful. Unless they are based on and connected to the struggle of self-defense, all these methods of resistance are ineffective and inconclusive. It is absolutely necessary not to make a mistake in defining self-defense, not to see it only as a thought, emotion and attitude, but to consider them together with the struggle of defense. I have criticized some misunderstandings on this issue above. I think it is best to deal with it on that basis.

What is the connection between the organization of society and self-defense of society?

As I mentioned above, self-defense means security. Security is one of the three basic conditions of existence, along with nutrition and reproduction. Social organization is determined by the fulfillment of these three conditions. Natural society is based on communalism in nutrition (i.e. economy), equality based on differences in reproduction (i.e. the relationship between the sexes), and freedom using its own power in security (i.e. self-defense). It is mainly at these three points that the mentality, system of power, and state, the product of the male mind, attack society. It develops individual private property by destroying communalism in the economy, the male-dominated mentality and system by eliminating equality based on differences between the sexes in reproduction, and the army and police system that protect themselves by destroying self-defense in security. This means that any democratic struggle of society against the power and state system must be based on communal property against individual private property, women's freedom (i.e. equality based on differences) against male domination, and self-defense against the army and police force. In other words, the organization of democratic society can be realized on the basis of the democratic commune, women's freedom, and self-defense.

From this, we understand that just as there cannot be a democratic social organization without taking the democratic commune and women's freedom as a basis, there cannot be one without relying on self-defense either. This reality is essentially valid for today's Kurdish society. Self-defense comes first for Kurdish society, as it is a people that has been subjected to genocide for centuries, that is wanted to be destroyed by the global system of Capitalist Modernity, and that can only continue its existence and gain freedom through a revolutionary people's war based on self-defense. As I have stated, for Kurds, security comes before bread and water. In this respect, it is both right and absolutely necessary to put self-defense at the center of the struggle for freedom and the organization of a democratic society. The democratic organization of Kurdish society, i.e., the formation of the Democratic Nation, can be realized mainly on the basis of and around self-defense. Democratic communal life and women's freedom can be built and realized around self-defense. Therefore, the democratic organization of Kurds and women must be based on self-defense. Those who address the problem in this way can be successful. Those who search for other ways, no matter what they intend, will ultimately fail and will pour water on the mills of the colonialist-genocidal system.

MPs and elected functionaries are being attacked and tortured by soldiers and police in the streets and in front of cameras. What kind of measures do you think can be taken against these attacks in the political arena?

As in all nation-states, the Turkish parliament is an institution of the Republic of Turkey. Therefore, those elected to this institution essentially become civil servants. Yes, ostensibly, society elects them, but in reality, they become servants of the state. They promise to protect the interests of society in the election, and later they promise to protect the existence and interests of the state in the parliament. In return, the state pays them salaries and feeds them. It wants to make them instruments of its sovereignty over society. And those who do not take such a position are subjected to all kinds of pressure and attacks, just like the Kurdish deputies in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. This is a very clear and understandable situation. Therefore, it is difficult to be a deputy in the assemblies of the nation-state, and even more difficult to try to defend the interests of society against the state.

If we come to the concrete case of Turkey and Kurdistan in the context of the question, it is indeed very difficult to be a member of the parliament under the current reality of a fascist, colonialist, and genocidal state. The state demands support for all fascist, colonialist, and genocidal practices from those whom it makes civil servants. If these people want to oppose this because of their democratic mentality or because they remember their promises to society, then they are subjected to state attacks in the spirit of revenge. Indeed, this is very much the case. In our opinion, it is necessary to expose this situation in all its clarity to the masses of the people and not to deceive them. After all, the state is asking them to deceive the public. On the other hand, they should try to do the limited things they can do very carefully, being aware of the real situation. They must always act in an organized and careful manner, must protect themselves against attacks from the military and police, and moreover, from fascist gangs. They must live in a state of self-defense. Obviously, this is a very serious and complicated area of struggle. One cannot run away from the struggle because there is a danger of oppression and attack, but trying to struggle in an unorganized and careless way will not yield any positive result.

Another important point that can be made here is that it is not right for people, especially women and young people, to have excessive expectations from the MPs. Like I said, it should not be forgotten that they are civil servants and have to act according to the laws of the state. When it is about struggling against state terror and oppression, those who rely on state laws cannot do much. Knowing this, it is necessary not to attribute too much role to MPs in the struggle for freedom. On the contrary, it is necessary to succeed in carrying out the struggle with the people's own power and without being bound by state laws. In other words, the masses of people must organize themselves and know how to conduct serhildans.

Regarding culture, how can the defense of a people's culture and its cultural values be achieved? How important do you value acts of art, literature, and cinema for the self-defense system of the Democratic Nation? How do you assess the struggle of the Kurdish society and democratic forces in this field?

The existence of a people becomes tangible with its language, history, and cultural values. If a society cannot protect, preserve, and develop these values, it fails to be a society. Cultural genocide and plunder of its values are the destruction of society. In Kurdistan, such a genocidal attack has been carried out with unprecedented methods for the last century. The looting and destruction of language, history, and culture, as well as the attempt to Turkify, continue at the most advanced level. The freedom movement must be sensitive in all these areas, develop organization, and wage an effective struggle. For example, the Kurdish lan-

guage is being destroyed through assimilation, but there is not a very organized and effective stance against this. Kurdish culture and historical values are being plundered, destroyed on the one hand, and absorbed on the other. There is a lack of an adequate response. Forests are being cut down and nature is being plundered in Kurdistan, but there is no organized and adequate reaction against this. All this stems from the weakness of self-defense consciousness and organization. An organized popular reaction against such genocidal attacks must develop immediately, and hell must break loose, so to speak.

Above, I have defined self-defense as a matter of consciousness, organization, and action. Undoubtedly, in order for organization and action to develop, consciousness is required first. Society must be adequately trained in self-defense consciousness. Of course, this needs to be done in different ways and methods. Within this, the role of both the press, art, and literature is very important and almost decisive. Literature and art, in particular, form the basis of such an education because their analysis is deep and has the power to appeal to the soul, emotion, and thought together. Therefore, they provide the most in-depth and powerful public education. Unfortunately, Kurdish literature and art in their current form are still very weak. It is far from playing its role in educating society. Moreover, those that exist are not sufficient. In order to develop self-defense consciousness in society, it is essential to strengthen art and literature. This must be achieved regardless of the obstacles and difficulties.

Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Ocalan has expressed many times that self-defense and resistance cannot be permanent if they are not integrated with moral and political social construct. How do you evaluate the connection and relationship between self-defense, society, and the formation of the Democratic Nation? What should the mechanism of self-defense of a Democratic Nation look like?

Already before, I have mentioned the link between forming a Democratic Nation and self-defense. I have stated that forming a Democratic Nation must be based on the democratic commune, women's freedom, and self-defense. I have also added that self-defense comes first, especially for Kurdistan, and I briefly defined the self-defense system of the Democratic Nation. The first link in the self-defense system is the professional guerrilla. The professional guerrilla is the educating, organizing, and pioneering force. Without professional guerrilla leadership, the defense system of the Democratic Nation cannot be formed. The professional guerrilla vanguard is also the party vanguard, without the party vanguard, nothing can happen in Kurdistan, not even a leaf can move, as Rêber Apo put it once. This is how important and meaningful professional guerrilla leadership is. Obviously, without professional guerrilla leadership, the self-defense system of the Democratic Nation cannot be formed, but with only professional guerrillas, the self-defense system of the Democratic Nation cannot be sufficiently realized. In this respect, the second link in the defense system is the self-defense of the people. Everyone who can hold a gun in their hands must be trained in self-defense, organized, and equipped on this basis. The organization of the people is the basic power of the self-defense system of the Democratic Nation. This force is not professional, but local. It is also possible to call it a local guerrilla. Those who take part in this force both maintain their economic and social lives and work on the basis of self-defense. The third link is the total organization of people in the economic, social, and political spheres. In other words, it is the creation of an organized society along the lines of Democratic Confederalism and based on network organization. Undoubtedly, the organization of all areas of social life, economic, social, political, and cultural, must be based on self-defense and serve it. This field also refers to mass action, serhildan, and similar actions.

In short, professional guerrillas, local self-defense, and organized society constitute the self-defense system of the Democratic Nation. Youth and women play the main role in this. There is no work for money or

salary in self-defense service. Self-defense is completely based on sacrificial commitment. Sacrificial commitment is inevitable for the professional guerrilla as well as for local self-defense and social organization. The guerrilla style is the basic style of the self-defense system of the Democratic Nation. It is essential to reach a guerrillized people. All self-defense forces must be trained and organized ideologically and militarily.

What does self-defense mean in the context of protecting revolution and the gains achieved? Concretely, what is the role of social self-defense in the struggle for the protection of the revolution of Rojava and its gains, which are subjected to attack every day, and how can it be further strengthened?

Undoubtedly, the protection of revolutionary gains is always essential, and this protection must be on an active basis. It is necessary not to fall into narrow and conservative approaches in the name of protecting the gains. It is well-known that the best defense is attack. The same applies regarding the protection of revolutionary gains. In other words, the best protection of revolutionary gains is the continuous development, deepening, and spreading of the revolution. Revolutions that do not develop and deepen become conservative and rot from within. And no power can prevent this. This understanding is just as valid for Rojava.

The revolution of Rojava will always be attacked in the world of power and state. As long as the power and state system exists, it is not possible to prevent this. Therefore, instead of wishing and waiting for these attacks to not happen, it is necessary to develop a self-defense system that includes measures to prevent and nullify the damage of these attacks. This is as much about deepening and spreading the revolution as it is about developing defensive measures.

The current situation in Rojava depends on today's conditions and is open to change. The important thing here is to carry out these processes of change on the basis of self-defense and advance them in favor of the revolution. There are plenty of opportunities and possibilities for this in Rojava. The important thing here is to make effective use of these opportunities instead of complaining about attacks and waiting for security from others. It is to train, organize, and equip whole society, everyone who can hold a weapon, on the basis of self-defense. It is clear that the possibilities and opportunities for this are abundant. It must be known that Rojava, or North and East Syria, can only be defended by the peoples of North and East Syria and no one else. In order for these peoples to successfully carry out the task of defense, they must be trained, organized, and equipped ideologically and militarily.

Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Ocalan once stated that the nation-state has left society without self-defense and said that "there can be no greater catastrophe than society losing its self-defense." How can society be made self-defensive? How can a total self-defense against capitalism and the nation-state be organized? How can a self-defense front be developed?

The total sum of what I have expressed so far constitutes the answer to this question. Undoubtedly, reaching a system of total self-defense is not something that will happen instantly and easily. It is a matter of struggle and develops over time. The important thing here is to have such an understanding of self-defense and to make a continuous effort to realize it, starting from the first steps. The rest develops in practice. The struggle for Democratic Modernity against the system of Capitalist Modernity must be based on self-defense, and this applies to all areas, regardless of concrete conditions. The important thing is to have a clear understanding and determination, and to know how to work and struggle with great courage, sacrifice,

and patience. The rest will come into practice because this world cannot go on like this. The peoples and particularly women, will not accept such a slavish life as it is forever. If there is to be life, it must be free. And the way to a free life is through self-defense. Therefore, while developing the struggle for freedom and democracy in every field, our basic principle and slogan should be as follows: There is no free life without self-defense!



Bayik: Politics being implemented against President Öcalan are the politics of genocide

ANF | BEHDINAN | 21 MAY 2024

KCK Executive Council co-chair, Cemil Bayik, spoke about the meaning of the Kurdish Language Day and the significance of May as the 'Month of Martyrs'. Bayik also spoke about the situation of Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan and the second phase of the global campaign for his freedom.

I would like to start the program by congratulating you on Kurdish Language Day. What would you like to say about this important occasion?

First of all, I wish a happy Kurdish Language Day to everybody. This day has become more important for Kurdish society in the face of the very strong assimilation policy aimed at them. Some forces want to eliminate the Kurdish people. Language and culture are the basis of the existence of a people. If a society loses this, it cannot survive; it will cease to exist. Today, technology is very advanced, and it is particularly the occupying forces that benefit the most from this. They are putting forward an intense assimilation policy in order to achieve their goals. Therefore, they use any form of technology and science. The genocidal Turkish state distributed tablets to many Kurdish children, even in primary schools. They install programs on these tablets, and through those, they want to turn all Kurdish children into Turks. They aim to separate Kurdish children from their identity and reality. Like this, they seek to eliminate Kurdish society.

All of our people must protect their language and culture. Not only Kurmanji but also Dimilki, Sorani, and Gorani, all dialects must be protected and developed. They should speak, write, and live according to their language and culture. Day by day, our people are taking some steps in developing Kurdish language and culture. This is positive but also insufficient; much more has to be done to be able to reverse policies of assimilation. For example, the people often give their children Kurdish names, the names of martyrs, which is a very good thing. But if they give these names, they should also teach their children the importance of these names. They should tell their children in detail where these names come from and what they mean to Kurds, so that these children do not drift away from their society and reality.

The occupying Turkish state continues its policy of genocide, especially through language and culture. In order to liquidate this society, it first aims to destroy their language and culture. Our people, our youth, will have to protect their language and culture that is their future. They will have to live and struggle for themselves. Therefore, they must take the struggle for freedom as a basis. For a person to claim their lan-

guage and culture, means to claim the principle of freedom. This is a struggle, a great struggle, on a social, military, and intellectual level. If our people do not want to disappear in the face of assimilation, they must protect their language and culture, fight for themselves, and raise their children according to Kurdish culture. Wherever they are, all our people should speak Kurdish at home and outside, keep their culture alive, and live based on this mentality.

The Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Ocalan has been under total isolation for 38 months, but the responsible minister of the occupying state still claims, "There is no isolation, everything is normal, he is enjoying all his rights". What is the reason for this torture and these statements? What should be done against this?

The politics being implemented against Rêber Apo are the politics of genocide. They are conducting the politics of genocide against the Kurdish people in the person of Rêber Apo. As it is known, Rêber Apo went to Europe to solve the Kurdish question through political means. He even defined eight points for a democratic solution in Europe. Europe's response was the international conspiracy. This shows Europe's approach towards Kurdish society and the Kurdish question. If Europe wanted the Kurdish question to be solved through political means, they would not have taken such an approach towards Rêber Apo. If today Rêber Apo is being subjected to severe isolation and unlimited torture, not only the Turkish state and the AKP-MHP government are responsible for this, but also NATO and Europe, who took part in this conspiracy. The 'European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment' (CPT) is implementing the decisions made by Europe. And it does so by collaborating with the Turkish state.

Europe talks a lot about law, justice and human rights, but these are all lies. The politics developed against Rêber Apo has revealed both the reality of the Turkish state and the reality of Europe. Everyone sees this. There is no justice, no law, no human rights. They have trampled on everything for their own political and economic interests. And they are sacrificing the Kurdish people for this. This situation is as clear as day. Europe's law and justice have gone bankrupt. Instead of justice and law, they apply the laws of Gladio.

There is never justice in Gladio's laws, there is arbitrariness, death and massacre. If this policy against Rêber Apo had been carried out against anyone else in the world, these institutions would have raised hell. But today we see that they act deaf and dumb. The Turkish Justice Minister said there is no isolation, everything is going perfectly. He went on TV and told such big lies. Where does he get the courage to stand in front of these cameras, lying and deceiving? He is backed by Europe, and NATO; by the forces that developed the international conspiracy. If these forces had not given him the courage, he would not have been able to make such a speech.

Let's take Veysi Aktaş as another example. He has already served his sentence of 30 years, but they extended his sentence so to not to release him. Where is the law here? Where is justice? It is completely arbitrary; they are applying Gladio laws. They are not releasing someone who has remained in prison for 30 years. What can be understood is that there are some things going on in that prison that should not be leaked out. That's why they are extending Veysi Aktaş's sentence for one more year. This explains everything. In İmralı, a system which has been developed by NATO, Europe, the CPT, and the traitorous Kurds who paved the way for the conspiracy, is being implemented. Our people must increase their struggle against this. They should read the writings of Rêber Apo over and over again, understand his prison writings, and increase their struggle accordingly. Only when our people and the international friends of

our people increase the struggle and put pressure on this system will the conspiratorial forces be forced to give up this policy. If this does not happen, they will persistently continue their politics.

I call on all the lawyers; it is necessary to develop the legal struggle in the most efficient way. They should not take small steps and then complain that they achieve nothing. They need to strengthen the legal struggle. They should develop this struggle together with international lawyers and legal experts. This is a struggle, and it must be understood as such. If it is understood this way, when the legal struggle is strengthened, NATO, Turkey, the EU, and the CPT will be pressured. When the reactions against the isolation increased, they were forced to make a statement. The head of the CPT confessed everything in his speech and made it clear what kind of politics was being carried out.

The global campaign under the name 'Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, a Political Solution to the Kurdish Question' has been ongoing for eight months and has entered its second phase. How do you evaluate the level the campaign has reached and what needs to be done next?

Many comrades and patriots are struggling in the prisons of Turkey in order to ensure the success of the campaign. That is an honorable struggle. Our imprisoned comrades have developed an attitude against the International Conspiracy; they said: "Since you are conducting absolute isolation against Rêber Apo, we want to live like Rêber Apo; you cannot separate us from Rêber Apo. We do not accept that you cut off all communication with Rêber Apo, torture him every day and every hour, and apply different laws to us. Therefore, if Rêber Apo cannot meet with his lawyers and family, we will not meet with our lawyers and families either. We will not appear in your courts either. You are playing with Rêber Apo's health and waging a special war; we do not accept this."

They stated this and took accordingly action. They took Rêber Apo, his approach, and his resistance as the basis for their own approach and resistance.

Also, many international intellectuals, writers, academics, politicians, and lawyers sent letters to the CPT. They demanded that the CPT release the report on Imralı, and they demanded their right to go to Imralı immediately. They wrote: "We are skeptical whether Rêber Apo is on Imralı or not and what his condition is. Why are you preventing us from having contact with him?" Every day, they send such letters and give statements. Again, our people, especially in Rojava, are demonstrating every day in the frame of the campaign. There are demonstrations, statements, letters, and protests in the other parts of Kurdistan as well. I take this opportunity to greet, congratulate, and pay my respects to all who took part in and organized these.

As you said, the first phase of the campaign was completed successfully despite all its shortcomings. It created an agenda. We then developed the second phase, which is still ongoing. Some actions are being taken, but they are incomplete. These actions need to be developed more strongly. If we do not develop these actions in diverse ways, if we do not create great pressure on the occupying Turkish state, on the CPT, and on the Council of Europe, they will insist on this policy they are conducting. Our people need to be aware of this. Rêber Apo's prison writings are being read both by our people and internationally. This is a very good result of the campaign. This work needs to continue with more strength and be carried to the next level. All of us should read the prison writings, write down what is said there, share it with others, and discuss them. In this way, everybody participates. Like Rêber Apo said, "Wherever my prison writings are, there am I."

Rêber Apo demanded of us that we spread his ideas everywhere. This is the duty of every comrade, every patriot, and every international friend of the Kurdish people. Everyone should put forward a program on how to further spread the prison writings through seminars, workshops, etc. There should be a very strong social movement, both among Kurds and internationally. The current actions do not complement each other; they are being carried out piecemeal. These actions should complement each other so that their power can emerge. Many people conduct simultaneous actions without knowing each other. That is why these actions do not yield strong results. For example, a central legal committee for Rêber Apo must be established. That committee should protect Rêber Apo's rights and law and develop the struggle for this. It should mobilize everyone on this basis. As long as the work is carried out outside of this framework, the second phase of the move cannot be successful.

What is the aim of the second phase of the campaign? To ensure the physical freedom of Rêber Apo, to end the policy of the occupiers and conductors of genocides against the Kurds, and to ensure the freedom of the Kurdish people. This is why this campaign is a strategic one. Based on this, everyone should know and fulfill their duties, no matter where they are. This is what I ask of everyone.

We are in the month of May, which your movement calls the 'Month of the Martyrs'. How do you evaluate the importance of the May Martyrs in today's struggle?

We have designated May as the 'Month of Martyrs' and May 18th as 'Martyrs' Day'. This must be understood very well. For us, May is not the only month of martyrs, neither is May 18 the only day of Martyrs. We are the movement of martyrs. We walk in the footsteps of the martyrs; we are based on their goals and dreams. We give more martyrs every month, every day. With the sacrifice of more and more people, our values are shaped. Thus, we protect and defend them by staying true to their sacrifices. Our people have revived and developed this; this tenet has reached the international arena, and now humanity sees the Kurdish people as a great hope. This was achieved entirely through the struggle of the martyrs. This movement is based on their struggle. Whatever we have gained, we have gained with these martyrs. We owe them, and we want to repay this debt. We struggle on this basis. We develop ourselves with their dreams, their emotions, their struggle and the values they created. This is our strength. That is why this movement has become a freedom movement and a great hope for humanity.

Rêber Apo made it possible for us to follow in the footsteps of the martyrs because he searched to create values for the Kurdish people. Because before, all the values of the Kurds had been taken away from them. That is why the Kurds were very close to extinction. That is why Rêber Apo developed this great struggle. And he developed this with martyrs. Every one of them contributed as a spark to increase the flame in order to create values for the Kurdish people. The revival of those values also symbolized the revival of the Kurdish people. It developed and, in this way, became a hope for humanity. If a society does not create values for itself, if it does not strengthen and develop its values of freedom, that society cannot survive.

If our people are standing on their own two feet today, if they are writing history today, if they are a great hope for humanity today, it is all thanks to these values created by the martyrs. The reason we declared May 18 Martyrs' Day is because Haki Karer was murdered on that date. Comrade Haki was neither Kurdish nor from the society of Kurdistan. He was from Turkey. Comrade Haki stood up for the Kurdish people during a time when the Kurds were not claiming their own cause or opposing the politics of the genocidal Turkish state. Because the Turkish state has always pursued the strategy of isolating the Kurds, In this

way, it aimed to eliminate the Kurds. Comrade Haki opposed this policy and took part in the movement. That is why he was murdered.

In this month, great militants were martyred from not only among us, but also among the peoples of Turkey and the Arabs. Many struggles for freedom and democracy developed in the Middle East. Many people were martyred. In Turkey, this included: Deniz Gezmiş, Hüseyin İnan, Yusuf Aslan, Sinan Cemgil, İbrahim Kaypakkaya, and those that were killed in the mine in Soma. Again in Rojhilat, four Kurdish revolutionaries were executed. Suleyman Mouni was murdered, Leyla Qasim was martyred. So there are such great martyrs in all parts of Kurdistan and in Turkey. In the PKK, Mehmet Karasungur, comrade Mizgîn, Kasim Engin were martyred, we could mention many more. Over 100 comrades were murdered in the Hewler (Erbil) massacre committed by the Barzanis.

On this occasion, I commemorate all these martyrs with respect. I reiterate our promise to the martyrs. We developed this struggle with our martyrs and we are still developing it with them. We will never deviate from Rêber Apo's line, which is the line of the martyrs. Just as Rêber Apo is the spokesperson of the martyrs, all the militants of this movement, the PKK and PAJK will continue their struggle on the path of the martyrs. They will put everything at the service of this line. In this line there is success. Every one of our people should take the martyrs as a basis, research and study their lives, infuse their own lives with the lives of the martyrs so that they can keep those martyrs alive. This is the duty of all of us.

The Turkish state is the enemy of the Kurdish people, both in prisons and outside. Not only in Northern Kurdistan but in all its parts. Our people are aware of this. Every day now, corpses are coming out of prisons. They throw old women, 60, 70-year-old people who cannot walk, into prisons. They are taking revenge on the Kurdish people. In this way, they want to achieve their goals by intimidating everyone and deviating them from the struggle. This is exactly why they are conducting these politics. They are carrying out this policy of genocide in prisons, outside, and in all parts of Kurdistan. Our people need to know this very well and feel great anger against the enemy. You cannot live alongside this enemy. Everything the enemy develops in Kurdistan is for the complete elimination of Kurds. It is a requirement of patriotism to reject this. Being a patriot requires standing against occupation and genocide in every sense. This is the right and duty of every Kurd.

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Bayik: Women and ecology are the basis to build a democratic society

ANF | BEHDINAN | 22 MAY 2024

In the second part of this interview, KCK Executive Council co-chair, Cemil Bayik, spoke about the role of Kurdish young people and their responsibility in the fight against the special war being waged in Kurdistan.

Bayik also goes into detail about the importance of the struggle against the exploitation and plunder of nature and, finally, he explains why the KDP is campaigning for the elections to be delayed and what interests it is currently pursuing.

The Apoist youth have taken a pioneering role in Northern Kurdistan, Rojava and abroad, and they have achieved important results. They left their mark on the Newroz celebrations, the municipal elections in Northern Kurdistan and Turkey and most recently in the 'serhildan' in Wan. How do you assess the current state of the Apoist young people?

Kurdish youth are not like the youth in other countries. During this process, the Kurdish people have been experiencing something between life and death. The Kurdish young people are the children of these people. That is why they cannot live like the children of other peoples, they cannot live within the framework developed by a system that provides no other route than death for them. They have to live completely outside that system. In this way, they can be the youth of the Kurdish people, lead the Kurdish people, and keep them alive. A policy of genocide is being carried out against the Kurdish people. It is particularly the duty of youths to stand against this policy before anyone else. Because young people determine the future of a people. If young people want to keep the Kurdish people alive, they must lead the way. Just like this, they can keep themselves and their society alive.

We are a youth movement. As Rêber Apo once put it, "We started young, we will succeed young". The youth of the Kurdish people should take this slogan as a basis. This movement has a history and struggles on its basis. Kurdish youths will never give up on their history or their goal. What is required of them is to struggle on the basis of their history. The Kurdish youth must act with a revolutionary spirit and recognize no obstacles. They should not accept the various obstacles put in front of them by the state, by traitors, or even by their own families. I thereby call on all the families: what patriotism demands from us is to take care of ourselves, our country, and our children, and to stand against the enemy. It is not right for families to see themselves as patriots and, at the same time, to be an obstacle in front of their children and to divert their direction to a system that will kill them physically or culturally. This goes against patriotism. The regime wants to eliminate the Kurdish people, so it starts with the youth. They are diverting youth to many evils. The governor of Siirt said, "Let them engage in prostitution instead of joining the guerrillas." That is something he openly declared. And this is exactly the policy of the Turkish state, because they seek to eliminate the Kurdish people.

So again, why do they want to eliminate our young people? When they eliminate the youth, they will also be able to eliminate Kurdish society. If young people do not fulfill their duties for their people and for their country, if they do not participate in the struggle, if they do not stand against occupation and assimilation, the state diverts them in the direction of wrongdoing. Instead of showing their children the path of freedom, families are showing them the path to the system. The system is eliminating these people. Patriotism and humanity cannot accept this. That is why I call on all families: do not approach your children in this way; take care of them. Educate your children on Kurdish reality. Do not allow them to become tools for the enemy's politics. Keep them away from the politics of drugs, spying, prostitution, migration, and assimilation. Young people are living under the politics of the Turkish state. The Turkish state puts a different culture in front of them: arabesque culture. With this culture, they are killing the soul of the youth completely. The youth of the Kurdish people must not accept this. Especially, the Apoist youth must oppose this; they must fight against it; they must stand up for themselves and their people, and fulfill their historical duties. This is what we want from them. They should both struggle, wherever they are, and join

the guerrillas. They should organize their acquaintances and carry out actions together. This is how this movement started and developed. The youth of this movement should take this as a basis.

As you have mentioned before, policies of special warfare are being waged in Northern Kurdistan, especially targeting Kurdish women, the youth and even the children. And there are efforts by young people against these policies. In your opinion, what should and can be done against these policies of special warfare?

If the Turkish state focuses so much on women, youth, and children, there is a reason for this. Because they all represent the future of the Kurdish people. Another reason is that Rêber Apo declared both the youth and women the pioneers of the people. Since the fascist Turkish state seeks to eliminate the Kurdish people and Kurdistan, it wants to destroy everything in the name of the Kurds and Kurdistan. It is conducting its politics based on this mentality. To achieve this goal, it targets women, young people, and children. Every day, the state kills children somewhere. They don't do this in Turkey, only in Kurdistan. This clearly demonstrates enmity towards Kurds. They don't even allow children to play or move in the streets; they go after them with tanks. They want to scare all Kurdish children into submission. In this way, they aim to eliminate the Kurdish people. They target women and young people with arabesque culture, drugs, prostitution, spying, immigration, and assimilation policies. In this way, they want to deprive young people and women of their souls, distract them from their reality and struggle, and ensure that they do not take care of themselves and their country.

That's why the Turkish state is conducting special war policies in schools, on the streets, and everywhere. For example, they even produce some TV series for this. The scenarios written for many of these series carry messages against Kurdish society, Kurdish women, and Kurdish youth. They want to promote Turkishness through these series. They aim to alienate the Kurdish people from their roots, their country, and their humanity and to make them serve the Turkish state. Or, as another example, they organize festivals to promote their language, culture, and history as superior through those. They eliminate and ban everything that will serve the Kurds, that will serve patriotism and revolutionism. They also do not allow Kurdish theater to develop; they do not allow Kurdish music to develop; they do not allow the Kurdish language to develop; in other words, they do everything to eliminate Kurdish language, culture, and identity. And they recognize no border in doing so.

Particularly, women and youth must stand up for themselves, their country, and their society. They must stand up and fight against occupation and genocide in every sense. They must protect their language, culture, identity, country, and everything else. They must lead their people. They must stand against the politics of the Turkish state, educate, and organize the people so that they can protect themselves against the politics of the Turkish state and gain their freedom and identity. This is what is required of them.

Free ecology is a fundamental pillar of your paradigm. The enmity against Kurdistan is most evident in the state-led ecological and natural plunder. What is the reason for the enemy attacking the ecology so extensively?

Building a democratic society is only possible through women's freedom and the consciousness of ideological struggle. If you do not take both women and ecology as a basis, if you do not develop your consciousness, organization, and struggle, you cannot build a democratic society; you cannot achieve your goals of freedom and democracy. The value of nature is embedded in Kurdish culture and society. They live and

struggle together with nature. Taking nature as a basis means taking life and freedom as a basis. Those who do not take nature as a basis, who do not protect nature, cannot live and cannot be liberated. The Turkish state is plundering the nature of Kurdistan without limits, eliminating their means of life. It plunders the Kurdish geography by constructing mining sites everywhere; it burns the forests of Kurdistan, cuts down trees, floods many places with dams, and cuts off electricity in Urfa and Mardin to prevent agriculture. In this way, it aims to migrate the people and change the demography of Kurdistan.

For example, everyone knows what happened in Iliç; there is plunder in the areas of Sirnak, Gabar, Colemerg, and Dersim. In Colemerg, in the village of Marinos, the people stood against the plunder. I congratulate them. Our people everywhere must protect their lands, geographies, values, and lives like the people in Marinos village. They should not allow the plunder of the occupiers. Maybe some steps are already being taken, but they are very insufficient. Everywhere, everyone must show a stronger reaction and defend their lives and their future. Because the state is destroying the lives of the Kurdish people with the policies they are developing. For example, when they mine minerals, they use poison. The water becomes contaminated, the environment deteriorated, the people cannot farm, the trees are drying up, and they are creating great damage to people's lives and psychology. If you do not develop the consciousness of ideological struggle, if you do not organize, you cannot prevent plunder or genocide. The Turkish state wants to make Kurdistan its own homeland, and for this, it wants to eliminate the Kurdish people. The Kurdish people must protect their water, their land, and their region. This means protecting themselves and their freedom.

You cannot live in Kurdistan and just tolerate such destruction, if you want to live, you will live in your country, in your geography, and defend it. You will not allow the enemy to plunder nature, you will prevent them from destroying your means of life. The Kurdish people stand by their geography. If their geography is taken away from them, then they cannot live. For example, they say that Sirnak has the worst air quality in Turkey. Why is it so? The state has left no trees or forests. They pollute it with their oil refineries. The Turkish state is pursuing a policy that aims to justify the plunder in Kurdistan. The Turkish state stated not long ago, "Until now, the PKK did not let us discover these mining sites; it did not allow us to uncover the riches of Kurdistan or put them at our service. But in fact, other foreign states that do not want Turkey to prosper and develop are doing this. There are some foreign states behind the PKK, they were helping the PKK to prevent us from getting these riches." This is how they want to deceive and mobilize Turkish society against the PKK and the Kurdish people. This is how they want to legitimize the genocide against the Kurdish people and the massacres against the PKK. In other words, it aims to gain the support of the peoples of Turkey and strengthen chauvinism. This is how it wants to complete its genocide policy in Kurdistan. The peoples of Turkey need to understand this. Right now, hunger and poverty have increased in Turkey. The situation is very serious. It is the result of the Turkish state's policy against the Kurdish people. The state cannot give anything to Turkish society with such plunder and war. The peoples of Turkey need to be aware of this. They are realizing this day by day, but they should see it sooner.

If they want to get rid of hunger, the way out is to oppose the Turkish state's policy against the Kurds. Then hunger and poverty will be overcome. In order to conceal the state's plunder in Kurdistan, the Turkish state wants to draw ecological movements to the state's line. It is also doing a lot of work in this field. No one should fall into this trap. No one should expect the state to stand against prostitution, drugs, spying, migration, and hunger because these wrongdoings originate from the state. It carries out this policy both to eliminate the Kurds and to forcefully bind society in Turkey completely to itself. No one should

say that the state should take measures against those things I managed, since it is the state that is putting those things forward. How can this be prevented?

Some people come forward and make demands from the State, saying: "The state should do this, do that, and take this and that measure." At this point, such statements are shameful and embarrassing, especially for Kurds. They have nothing to ask for and nothing to expect from such a State. This state kills Kurds every day; it tries to eliminate the Kurdish people. How can a Kurd ask for something from such a State? Kurds should struggle for what they need by themselves. Whatever they achieve, they will achieve through their own struggle. This is the truth. Therefore, they should not demand anything from the state. They should not ask the state to prevent prostitution, evil, and theft because the state is consciously developing this policy in Kurdistan.

The elections in Southern Kurdistan have been postponed once again. Why is the KDP and the Barzani family so opposed to the elections? What dangers does this policy pose for Southern Kurdistan and Iraq?

The Barzanis are everywhere propagandizing that "the PKK is abolishing the status of southern Kurdistan." However, it is the Barzanis themselves who are abolishing the status of southern Kurdistan. The Barzanis have completely tied their fate to the AKP and MHP. If the Barzanis want the elections to be postponed, there are some main reasons for this. The first is their betrayal of the Kurds. Because they are acting together with the occupying, genocidal Turkish state, they are not only hostile to the PKK; they are also hostile to the Kurdish people. Their politics against the Kurdish people and the Turkish state showed their true face to everyone. They were exposed among the Kurdish people.

The second reason is that through the municipal elections in Northern Kurdistan and Turkey, the AKP-MHP suffered a big blow, and the Barzanis suffered an even bigger blow than the AKP, they were weakened. That is why they want the elections to be postponed. Because they know that if there are elections, they will lose the same way Erdogan did. They drew conclusions from the elections in Turkey. They see that if there is an election now, they will lose, they will fall from power. They don't want to lose the opportunities they have. Right now, there is no government in southern Kurdistan. The Barzani family rules under the name of the government of southern Kurdistan. They have put everything at their disposal. They are conducting plunder. Just as the AKP is getting rich by plundering everywhere in Northern Kurdistan and Turkey, the Barzanis are plundering the same way in the South. They have billions of dollars, own several houses in America, and in the Golden Horn, they have villas. However, the people in southern Kurdistan are hungry and getting poorer by the day, while the Barzani family is getting richer day by day. Why? Because there is no government, there is no control over the power, it is the absolute power of the Barzanis functioning in the south. They do whatever they want, whatever they like. There is no law, there is no justice. If they were really fighting for Kurdishness, if they were really fighting for the people of Southern Kurdistan, if they were democrats and free people, then why are they postponing the elections? What are they afraid of? They are afraid because they have things to hide. They don't want these to be revealed. They don't want to lose the opportunities they have. That's why they want to postpone the election.

Another point I would like to draw attention to in this regard is that they are not saying that there should not be elections, they are saying that they should be postponed until the end of the year. Why? Because Erdogan says, "We will expand to more areas in southern Kurdistan." They are obviously carrying out a program related to this. They are waiting for Turkish troops to spread into southern Kurdistan. Once

Turkish troops spread more and enter all of southern Kurdistan, the possibility of elections will disappear, and they will maintain their power and dictatorship. That's how they imagine it. Just as the Minister of Justice in Turkey is saying, "There is no isolation going on in Imralı; everything is perfect," the Barzanis say, "in Southern Kurdistan, everything is working perfectly. There is no one in our prisons who have been stripped of their communication rights." While they say this, they are preventing people from their rights to visitations. Even lawyers are being blocked from seeing their clients. They are persecuting the people.

Our people of southern Kurdistan paid a high price in Behdinan and Soran. Thousands of peshmerga were martyred. These martyrdoms did not happen so that Saddam would fall and the Turkish state would come to power in southern Kurdistan. If our people in southern Kurdistan struggled, if thousands of peshmerga were martyred, if they were subjected to chemical attacks, they did it to get rid of the dictatorship and to live in a free and democratic way. But we see that now the Barzani family is bringing the Turkish state to southern Kurdistan. They are replacing Saddam with the Turkish state. What does this have to do with Kurdishness? Why should our people in southern Kurdistan accept this? Our people of southern Kurdistan are very patriotic; they have fought very hard and given many martyrs. They cannot accept this occupation by the Turkish state. I am convinced that they, and particularly the people of Behdinan, are deeply disturbed by Barzani's rule and dictatorship, and they want to live in a free and democratic way as soon as possible. They must protect their history, their values, and their status. What the Barzanis want is to abolish the status of southern Kurdistan with the Turkish state.

It is the PKK that protects their status. Right now, it is the PKK that is paying the price for this. The PKK has paid many high prices and struggled not only for southern Kurdistan but also for Iraq. Everyone knows this. Some people say, "Barzanis are not traitors; they have martyrs." The peshmerga and the Barzanis were not martyred so that the KDP would serve the Turkish state and make southern Kurdistan a province of the Turkish state. This needs to be understood well. If anyone else was to do what the Barzanis are doing, they would be condemned for committing treason. But some do not say this to the Barzanis. Why not? Because they get money from the Barzanis, that's why. Our people need to be sensitive at this point. Those who do not stand for the freedom of Rêber Apo, those who do not stand for Kurdistan, those who do not stand against the Turkish state, and those who do not stand against treason cannot be patriots. Kurds must have criteria. Their criteria is patriotism. Patriotism means to stand against the occupation, its policies, practices, and betrayal. My call to all patriots is on this basis.

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Opinion

Conspiracies and plots as a form of governance

ZEKI AKIL | 18 MAY 2024

The Kobanî conspiracy trial was concluded on 16 May. It is no secret that the verdict is entirely political and has nothing to do with the law. HDP co-chairs and executives have not been involved in any armed

and secretive work. All their activities and statements are open to the public. Those who filed this lawsuit have also admitted this in some way. If the fascist duo of Erdoğan and Bahçeli knew that HDP executives had committed a crime, they would not have waited for years to file a lawsuit. They would have immediately started investigations and filed lawsuits when the demonstrations for Kobanî were organised.

This case was put on the agenda according to the "Decomposition Action Plan" concept. They seized the municipalities won by the HDP for two terms by the force of the state. These decisions have nothing to do with the law. The trustee system was put into effect completely on Erdoğan's orders. Erdoğan once said "I will not let the elected oppress the appointed". He was also propagandising that he was against the tutelage system, but now he has taken a turn for much worse than them. He is so blinded that he will not implement the decisions of the Constitutional Court and the ECtHR. He is introducing a more crude and brutal form of the tutelary regime for the whole world to see. He gives instructions to the courts and other institutions of the state, terrorising and militarising society.

The government is spending billions of dollars in its war against the Kurds. The economy is at rock bottom. They left no stone unturned to get money flowing. Now they are announcing "Savings Packages" as if mocking the society. It is stated that a saving of one hundred billion is aimed with these packages. The budget of the Ministry of National Defence is one trillion three hundred billion liras. It is clear that Turkey's budget is also militarised. If they reduced the budget of the Ministry of National Defence to one trillion, there would be no need for these austerity tricks. The measures taken will do nothing but tighten the belts of the people and labourers and increase poverty and unemployment. The government and those close to it are grabbing billions of dollars. The mafia, gangs and the administration are all intertwined.

Erdoğan brags that he has neutralised more than 40 thousand "terrorists" since 2015. These terrorists are not people from outer space. They are the most enlightened and valuable sons and daughters of the Kurdish people. They are after rights, law and freedom. They are not working to get tenders, to fill Euros and dollars into shoe boxes. They do not set up foundations for themselves and their relatives and collect millions of dollars. Erdoğan and his cohorts have mastered the art of stealing and have become world-famous in this regard!

The Erdoğan-Bahçeli administration has been waging an unremitting war against the Kurds for years. More Kurdish intellectuals, politicians, deputies and mayors were imprisoned than during the 12 September junta period. It has intensified its attacks on South Kurdistan (North Iraq) these days. They started to concentrate on chemical and banned weapons. They say they will take South Kurdistan and Rojava under their control this year. For this, they held talks with Iraq for months. They turned the KDP into a pillar of this war. But they have not been able to involve the other parties of South Kurdistan in this war so far. It seems that the Iraqis will not participate at the level they want. That is why they concentrated on chemical weapons and air strikes. In parallel to this, they want to destroy the democratic and legal Kurdish political movement with conspiracy cases such as Kobanî.

The Gezi trial, stripping Can Atalay of his MP status and the non-implementation of the ECtHR judgments cannot be considered outside these plans seeking to intimidate and liquidate the opposition. There is no reason for Osman Kavala to be imprisoned. Moreover, the Constitutional Court took a decision for Can Atalay. But Erdoğan did not recognise this decision. He also ignored the ECtHR judgement for Kavala. It should not be overlooked that there is a fascist mob at work, trying to protect its power by setting up conspiracies and plots against Kurds and democratic circles.

The government is responsible for the security of life and property of its citizens. The oaths they take and the laws they enact are in this direction. However, the government itself sets traps and conspiracies against its citizens. It accuses them with unlawful ways and methods and puts them in prisons. It bombs mountains and stones. It propagandises how determined and successful it is by killing tens of thousands. In such a country, there is no right and law. Theft and injustice do not end. There is no end to plots and conspiracies. In this respect, the peoples of Turkey and the forces of democracy must raise their voices louder against this lawless, tyrannical power and not recognise these lawsuits and their decisions, which have no legitimacy.

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