

# THE İMRALI POST

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

Issue № 99 / 27 March 2024 ★ Contact: imralipost@freeocalan.org

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## Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

### Scottish Trades Union Congress passes motion calling for Öcalan's freedom

ANF - Dundee - 20 April 2024

A motion calling for Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan's freedom was passed by the Scottish Trade Unions Congress at their Annual Congress in Dundee.

The mover of the motion was Dundee Trades Union Council, while the seconder was East Kilbride & South Lanarkshire Trades Union Council.

The motion reads as follows:

"That this Congress notes that the Kurdish question in Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey is one of the major unresolved problems of the Middle East. The conflict between the Turkish state and the Kurdish freedom movement has cost tens of thousands of lives while millions of Kurds have become refugees across the world.

Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan has endured 26 years in prison after being illegally kidnapped from Kenya and handed over to Turkey. He has had no contact with the outside world, in violation of both Turkish and international law, for 3 years. His last meeting with his lawyers was in August 2019 and his last communication with anyone outside prison, a phone call with his brother, was in March 2021.

Meanwhile, Turkey, as a NATO country, continues to bomb Kurdish settlements in North and East Syria and in Iraq as well as oppressing and imprisoning Kurdish politicians and citizens at home.

Congress reiterates its view that his release is essential to starting a political dialogue to resolve the ongoing issue of Kurdish self-determination. Öcalan's principle of Democratic Confederalism, put into practice in Rojava and inspiring many, including the CUB Trade Union in Italy, offers solutions to many of the problems of the Middle East and beyond, with its methodology of women's liberation and democratic, autonomous organising.

Congress regrets the invitation offered to Turkey's President Erdoğan to visit Scotland by the First Minister. President Erdoğan's government has continued the war on the Kurds, refused to hold peace talks, sanctioned the use of violence and legal action against political opposition and attacked independent media/journalists.

Congress demands that;

The UK Government

- stops its arms sales to Turkey;
- through diplomatic and NATO channels, pressurises Turkey to stop the bombing of Kurds in North and East Syria and Iraq;
- pressurises Turkey to release Abdullah Öcalan;

The Turkish Government

- releases Abdullah Öcalan;
- ends its oppression and imprisonment of Kurdish political and cultural organisations and individuals; and
- enters into negotiations to resolve its conflict with the Kurdish freedom movement."

## Wilson: Abdullah Öcalan presents a model

Muhammed Kaya - Berlin - 20 April 2024

Seán Michael Wilson is an award-winning Scottish comics writer currently living in Japan. His books deal with history, politics and social issues and have been nominated for the Eisner and Harvey Awards. "Secrets of the Ninja" was awarded the International Manga Award in 2016. His most recent work is the graphic novel signed together with the Kurdish illustrator Keko, "Abdullah Öcalan – An Illustrated Biography", which has so far been published in German, English, Kurmanci and Turkish and was presented in Berlin on 4 April. ANF spoke to Seán Michael Wilson about the book.

*How did you come into contact with Abdullah Öcalan's ideas?*

I met him through the International Initiative. I've done a lot of things. We call them graphic novels, kinds of comics for adults. These comics are not intended for children. I did a graphic novel in association with the Labor Party in England and Jeremy Corbyn, the then leader of the Labor Party, and we did a book about the struggle of people in England in a union. And when we finished that book, we thought about what the next book will be about. And then someone, I don't remember if it was me or someone else. I think it might have been Estella Smith, a long-time Kurdish people supporter. Maybe she suggested it, but I don't remember, someone suggested that we do a book on Kurdistan. Since then, thanks to Estella and the International Initiative, I've learned more about Kurdistan and Abdullah Öcalan. Until then, I didn't know much. Now that I've written the book and researched it, I know a lot.

*Wasn't the writing process difficult?*

The writing process was not difficult. For me, it's easy because I've already written 40 graphic novels and comics like this. So it was pretty simple, but it was difficult to provide the right information. We had to make many corrections in order to accurately reflect the facts about the life of Abdullah Öcalan, Rojava and various issues in Kurdistan in general. This is, of course, very, very complicated. So I made some mistakes or there were things I didn't know. So it was very difficult to get accurate information. As I said, the International Initiative was very helpful. It wasn't difficult for me to write the actual scenario because that's what I do every day.

*I think there was another problem: you speak English and Japanese; Keko is Kurdish and did not speak English before. How did you do that?*

That wasn't unusual for me, because I work with artists from all over the world, from around 20 different countries, and it's completely normal that not everyone can speak English well, and I don't understand their languages. So it wasn't the first time, and it wasn't a big problem for me, because the International Initiative organized the Turkish and Kurdish editions, so I didn't have to worry too much about it. For me, this is normal, but for Keko it might have been difficult.

*As you said, you have written more than 40 graphic novels. What place does the Öcalan biography occupy among them?*

I think it's the most complex of the 40 books I've written. There are about two or three different styles or not styles, genres, types. One of these genres I call "social" and by that I mean books about history, politics and sociology. I have written about ten books in this genre. This was probably the most complicated. It is certainly the most controversial because it is obviously talking about the present or recent history. The book about the Labor Party and the union began 700 years ago with the peasants' revolt. If you're right, it's easier because history is hundreds of years ago. People aren't really angry about it anymore if you are wrong. Abdullah Öcalan is now in prison and the conflict between Turkey and Kurdistan is currently going on. So the point is that this is an issue that is happening very much now, today, and is not yet finished. That makes this graphic novel something special among my books.

*I have a question about Abdullah Öcalan's freedom. He is on the island of İmralı and there has been no news of him for 37 months. A campaign is calling for "freedom for Abdullah Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question". What do you think of this campaign?*

That's a problem. I mean, the people in this place in Berlin know this topic very well. Maybe you know it too. The International Initiative knows it. But, of course, most people in the world don't know anything about it. Most people don't even know where Kurdistan is. There is a lack of information about it. What should we do? I hope we can also publish this book in French, Italian and Spanish. It will help a little to spread information and knowledge about what is happening, not just the idea of releasing Abdullah Öcalan. The idea of democratic confederalism is a model showing how the world can be organized. I think this is very, very important.

Therefore, it should be better known. Of course, that's one of the reasons why it's not talked about, because it poses a threat to the existing capitalist system. When we have an alternative that actually works, the mainstream media generally doesn't want to talk about it because it's too dangerous. That's one of the good things about comics. Comics are an art form or mass medium that can be read by many people, but you can do them in a very clever way. It's a kind of grassroots creativity that's hard to achieve on television, which is still very mainstream. That's one of the reasons I like making books as comics. You can design them intelligently and many people can read them. So I hope that our books in different languages will help spread knowledge about Öcalan and democratic confederalism.

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Political parties, legal organisations and NGOs call for an immediate end to the İmralı isolation

ANF - İzmir - 27 April 2024

Political prisoners in İzmir Şakran Women's Closed Prison were subjected to disciplinary proceedings due to their decision to boycott the courts and not to attend family visits and phone calls in protest at the iso-

lation of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan. Within the scope of the investigation, prisoners were sentenced to solitary confinement.

Political parties, legal and non-governmental organisations in the city made a press statement in front of Aliğa Penal Institution against the torturous practices in prisons.

Aynur Gezici read the statement and said, "Political prisoners announced in a written statement on 4 April that they have turned their hunger strike into 'boycotts of court, family visits and phone calls'. Prisoners are in resistance for the end of the isolation of Mr Abdullah Öcalan, for his physical freedom and for a democratic peaceful solution to the Kurdish question."

Stating that the isolation policies are being deepened and the society is being left breathless, Aynur Gezici said that 61 percent disabled Makbule Özer (82), Hatice Yıldız (75), Besra Erol (65) and Hanife Arslan (76) were arrested despite their advancing age and illnesses. Emphasising that political prisoners continue their resistance despite all kinds of pressure, Aynur Gezici said, "Those who are trying to prevent the freedom struggle of our women companions in İzmir Women's Closed Prison are subjecting our friends to isolation with disciplinary penalties and solitary confinement. All the fascist practices that İzmir Women's Closed Prison has been implementing for years are aimed at breaking the struggle of women and intimidating women."

Gezici said, "We will continue to resist these practices in prisons and at the prison gates, regardless of the conditions and circumstances. Immediately lift the solitary confinement of women prisoners and end these practices. The demand of political prisoners is the demand of millions. Lift the İmralı isolation and ensure a democratic solution to the Kurdish question."

The parties and organisations that endorsed the statement are as follows: Free Women's Movement (Tevgera Jinên Azad-TJA), Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party), Peace Mothers, Aegean Association for Assistance and Solidarity with the Families of Prisoners and Convicts (EGE-TUHAYDER), Democratic Regions Party (DBP), İzmir Branch of Association of Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD), JinArt and Anatolian Association for Assistance and Solidarity with Families who Lost Relatives (ANYAKAYDER).

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## Prisons

Rozerin Kalkan's release postponed for 11 months for letters exposing violations in prison

ANF - İzmir - 20 April 2024

The release of Rozerin Kalkan from Izmir Şakran Women's Closed Prison was postponed for 11 months and prevented by the Administration and Observation Board.

Following the decision, Kalkan, who has been held in prison on allegations of "being a member of a terrorist organization" and "making propaganda for a terrorist organization" since 11 August 2016 and was expected to be released on 16 April 2024, saw her release postponed by 11 months. Family lawyers objected to the postponement of Kalkan's release and asked for the decision to be annulled. Following the request of the lawyers, the justification of the decision was given. The Prison Monitoring Board claimed that the prisoner's conditional release date "does not constitute an acquired right" and added: "The prisoner should not see this opportunity given to her as a grant or an already acquired right and should make an effort to meet the conditions of conditional release."

The decision confirmed that Kalkan had no disciplinary punishment. However, it added that since the first day Kalkan entered the prison, "she continued to stay in the ward where the convicts who were members of an illegal organization were housed."

The real reason for the postponement, however, appears to be the letters that Kalkan wanted to send to civil society organizations and human rights defenders regarding the rights violations in the prison, but were confiscated by the prison administration, which claimed that "the security of the institution was threatened" by the content of the letters.

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## Prisoners in Urfa face punishment for their participation in the freedom for Öcalan protest

ANF - Urfa - 21 April 2024

The prison administration of a high-security jail in Urfa (Riha) has initiated disciplinary proceedings against several inmates. The background to the action, which is directed against political prisoners, is the participation of those affected in the campaign "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question".

According to Mezopotamya (MA) news agency, a total of fifteen prisoners at T-Type No. 1 Prison are facing new disciplinary measures. They should be punished because they stood up for peace, freedom and human rights. The punishment usually means bans on visits or exclusion from sports activities.

The campaign "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question" was initiated in October last year and is being conducted internationally. As a contribution to this initiative, prisoners from the PKK and PAJK in Turkey went on an alternating hunger strike in November. At the beginning of April, this prison resistance entered a new phase.

The prisoners are sticking to their demand for Öcalan's release and a solution to the Kurdistan question and have decided to boycott court hearings and visits and telephone conversations with their relatives. The

prisoners' spokesman, Deniz Kaya, explained the background to the action by saying that the prisoners viewed the Kurdish people's leader's freedom as being equivalent to their own freedom and therefore started their protest.

Öcalan has been imprisoned on the prison island of Imrali since 1999, most of the time in isolation conditions. There has been no sign of life from him for over three years.

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## 81-year-old Makbule Özer sent to prison again

ANF - Van - 23 April 2024

Makbule Özer, 81, was arrested on 9 May 2022 after the court sentenced her to 2 years and 1 month in Van/Edremit Prison for helping "a terrorist organization" and was released on 7 September 2022 after a one-year deferral of sentence.

The report sent by the Institute of Forensic Medicine (ATK) was examined by the 3rd Specialization Commission of the Ministry of Justice and the elderly woman was arrested by police once again on Monday morning following the Forensic Medicine Institute's ruling that she can remain in prison and taken to Van T-Type Prison.

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## Iranian court sentences rapper Tumac Salihi to death

ANF - 25 April 2024

It has been announced that the Iranian state has sentenced rap artist Tumac Salihi from Lorestan to death. The rapper was arrested during the 'Jin Jiyan Azadi' rebellion.

Emir Reyisiyan, one of Tumac Salihi's lawyers, said that the Isfahan Islamic Republic Court sentenced Tumac Salihi to death on Wednesday afternoon.

Reyisiyan said that the allegations shown as the reason for the death penalty are far from the truth and that they will appeal.

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# Military aggression and occupation



## Villages in Manbij under attack

ANF - 20 April 2024

The Turkish army and allied jihadist proxy forces launched an aggression on villages in the Manbij region on Saturday.

According to Manbij Military Council (MMC), which is affiliated with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), the villages of Awn al-Dadat and Tokhar north of the city have been targeted by artillery and mortar shelling.

Manbij Military Council reported that the attacks caused damage to crops and green areas, but did not result in any casualties. The starting point of the attacks was a Turkish army base in the occupied town of Tokhar al-Kabir (Greater Tokhar). "With the attacks on the region, the occupying state is systematically pushing for the attrition and displacement of the population," the MMC said, condemning the aggression.

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. The city, which is administered by the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (DAANES), is located on the important M4 motorway, which runs through northern Syria like a lifeline and was a strategic supply route for ISIS. The military council set up for the defence of Manbij also includes the Enîya Kurdan (ar. Jabhat al-Akrad, or Kurdish Front) and the Revolutionary Brigade Idlib. They fend off attacks by the occupying forces and infiltrations on an almost daily basis.

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## Turkish army launches military operation on Metina

ANF - Behdinan - 21 April 2024

The Turkish state has launched an occupation operation against the region of Metina in South Kurdistan.

Not many details are available, however the People's Defense Forces (HPG) said in a statement: "The invading Turkish army launched an invasion attack on the night of 16 April, covering the areas of Asê, Yekmalê, Xirabê, Xankê and Şêlazê villages in the region of Metina region. The occupying Turkish army wants to expand its occupation operation in these areas by resorting to different tactics, not all at once, but step by step."

The statement added: "On the nights of 17, 18 and 19 April, Girê Çarçel and Girê Ortê Resistance Areas were bombed by attack helicopters and warplanes. On the night of 19 April, the invasion attack in the Şêlazê area continued, expanding towards the Dergelê area.

Currently, Girê Hakkarî, Girê Çarçel, Girê Şehîd Çekdar, Girê Şehîd Piling, Girê Ortê, Asê, Yekmalê, Xirabê, Xankê, Şêlazê and Dergelê areas are the target of the occupation attack, and the activity in these areas continues. At the same time, these areas are constantly bombed from the air by helicopters and war-planes, and from the land by artillery and howitzers. As detailed information becomes available, it will be shared with our people and the public instantly."

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## 27-year-old civilian shot dead by Turkish occupation forces in Ain Issa

ANF - Ain Issa - 21 April 2024

A civilian was allegedly shot dead by a Turkish army sniper in Ain Issa. The bullet fired from the Girê Spî area hit the 27-year-old while he was irrigating agricultural land in the village of Umm al-Baramil, east of Ain Issa, said ANHA news agency on Saturday night. The man, named by the Autonomous Administration as Hassan Muhammad Hussein Al-Sheikh Al-Mukhlat, was taken to a hospital in Raqqa, where he died from his injuries.

The city of Girê Spî, located north of Ain Issa, and its surrounding area were, until a few years ago, part of the canton system of northern and eastern Syria. In October 2019, the region was occupied as part of a war of aggression by Turkey, in which the government in Ankara made use of particularly allied jihadist militias, and, like Serêkaniyê and previously Afrin, was transformed into a colony. According to data from the Girê Spî Cantonal Council in Exile, more than 100,000 people were forced to flee the region after the Turkish invasion. In their place, people loyal to the Turkish jihadist occupation regime were settled.

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## 40 suspects apprehended in joint Security Operation in Heseke

ANF - 21 April 2024

Based on their security and military duties towards our people, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), in collaboration with the Women's Protection Units (YPJ) and Internal Security Forces, launched a joint security and military operation yesterday, April 20th. The operation, targeting the outskirts of Heseke city, was based on intelligence gathered by security institutions regarding the activities of ISIS sleeper cells within these areas. The objective was to apprehend members of these cells, along with any suspected collaborators or individuals deemed threats to public safety.

The operation commenced swiftly and with meticulous attention to detail, adhering to the plans established based on verified intelligence provided by our security institutions. The thorough combing and search of designated locations resulted in the successful apprehension of 40 suspected ISIS sleeper cell

members. Additionally, a significant quantity of weapons and ammunition was seized, according to the SDF Media Center.

“The remnants of ISIS are trying to revive the terrorist organization through their ongoing attacks on most areas of north and eastern Syria and reorganize its ranks so that they can carry out more terrorist operations. Their recent surge in activity, marked by a significant rise in attempted attacks since the beginning of 2024, underscores their intent to rebuild their ranks and orchestrate further terrorist operations. However, the success of this latest anti-ISIS operation disrupts their efforts and demonstrates our unwavering commitment to safeguarding the region,” SDF said and pointed out that: “Therefore, we would like to remind, once again, that the threat posed by the resurgence of ISIS continues to threaten us and the whole world, and we call on the international community to uphold its security, humanitarian, and judicial responsibilities towards our region.”

“Our Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) remain steadfast in their fight against the remnants of ISIS until eradicating them. We are committed to protecting our people from all forms of terrorist threats, and our precise and focused security operations will continue relentlessly to achieve this objective,” the SDF statement underlined.

### **The outcome of the Special Joint Security and Military Operation:**

Apprehended Suspects: (40); Confiscated Weapons: Ak-47 Rifles: (9); Hand Grenades: (1); Walkie-talkies: (1); Pistols: (4); Additional Materials: A quantity of ammunition and military equipment.

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## **HPG: Turkish army wants to expand the invasion operation in Metina step by step**

ANF - Behdinan - 21 April 2024

The HPG Press Liaison Centre released a statement about the ongoing invasion operation of the Turkish army in the Metina region of the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

The statement released by the HPG on Sunday includes the following:

"The occupying Turkish army launched an invasion attack in the night hours of 16 April, covering the areas where the villages of Asê, Yekmalê, Xirabê, Xankê and Şêlazê in the Metina region are located. The occupying Turkish army wants to expand the invasion operation in these areas by resorting to a different tactic, not at once, but step by step.

On this basis, on the nights of 17, 18 and 19 April, Girê Çarçel and Girê Ortê Resistance Areas were bombed by attack helicopters and warplanes. The invasion attack launched in the Şêlazê area on the night of 19 April continues by expanding towards the Dergelê area. Currently, the areas of Girê Hakkarî, Girê

Çarçel, Girê Şehîd Çekdar, Girê Şehîd Piling, Girê Ortê, Asê, Yekmalê, Xirabê, Xankê, Şêlazê and Dergelê are the target of the invasion attack and the mobility in these areas continues. At the same time, these areas are continuously bombarded by helicopters and warplanes from the air and by artillery and howitzers from the ground. As detailed information is obtained, it will be shared with our people and the public instantly."



## KCK: Erdoğan's aim is legitimization of occupation and new attacks

ANF - Behdinan - 21 April 2024

The Foreign Relations Committee of the Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK) released a statement regarding Turkish President Tayyip Erdoğan's upcoming visit to Baghdad and Erbil.

The KCK statement released on Sunday includes the following:

"The Turkish President Tayyip Erdoğan plans to visit Baghdad and Hewlêr [Erbil] on April 22nd. Although the official purpose of this visit is the promotion of trade and economic relations between the two countries, Turkey's real aim is to gain legitimacy for its 87 military bases as well as its occupation of Iraqi territory and to legitimize its planned new attacks. Based on this and under the pretext of 'security', the Turkish state thus wants to broaden its occupation of Iraqi soil.

Erdoğan's government violates Iraq's sovereignty and uses the country's territory and airspace as it wishes. Every day, dozens of times, Iraqi villages, houses and cars are bombed and civilians are massacred by Turkey. The Turkish government carries out these reckless attacks with the open political, military and logistical support of the KDP. The Kurdish people and Iraqi society are against the collaboration of Turkey and the KDP and against the Turkish occupation. Erdoğan, who is aware of this situation, wants to both save the KDP from its current difficult situation and make the occupation in Iraq permanent by getting the Baghdad government over to its own side.

Turkey spreads instability in all the areas it enters and creates instability by provoking the clash of different ethnicities, identities, and beliefs. Turkey's invasion of Cyprus, the chaos it is trying to create in Kirkuk, its deployment of military forces in Libya and its ongoing support for the spread of ISIS in Iraq and Syria are concrete and clear examples of this policy. Another characteristic of Erdoğan as the head of the AKP government is that he is hypocritical and inconsistent enough to say 'no' tomorrow to something he says 'yes' to today. The Kurdish people and the Iraqi society need to know very well that Tayyip Erdoğan has a bad mentality and that he is trying to make the occupation in Iraq and Syria permanent.

The 21-year-old AKP government led by Erdoğan suffered a major defeat in the March 31st elections, becoming the second-ranked party of the country for the first time. The deep economic crisis in Turkey has directly affected politics. Therefore, it has become clear that Erdoğan's rule is not permanent. The Baghdad

government needs to also acknowledge this reality and should not enter into long-term engagements with the Erdoğan government.

At the same time, a new attack and occupation is being prepared using the PKK guerrilla forces as a pretext. Since the 1980s, our movement has been in friendly relations with Iraqi society and the Iraqi state on the basis of mutual respect, without any tensions or conflicts. On the contrary, during the last major ISIS offensive in 2014, the Kurdish guerrilla fought on the same front with the Iraqi people for the defense of Mosul, Kirkuk, Hewlêr, Şengal [Sinjar] and Maxmur and suffered hundreds of martyrs while defending Iraqi territory. While this war was taking place, Turkey supported the gangs of ISIS, not the Iraqi people.

The only Iraqi force that promotes and supports Turkey's permanent settlement on Iraqi territory is the KDP leadership. The KDP must immediately end its sinister relations with the Erdoğan government, which today finds itself in a process of collapse, and should not cooperate with Turkey on issues that are to the detriment of the Kurdish people and Iraqi society.

Iraqi society, the Kurdish people, political parties, civil society organizations, intellectuals, writers and the Iraqi press need to oppose Turkey's occupation of Iraqi territory and its plans for new attacks. A clear stance needs to be taken against the current occupation and the renewed attempts of the Erdoğan government to expand its occupation under the pretext of projects like the 'Development Road', new water agreements, or joint security agreements."

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## HPG: Three Turkish soldiers killed in Metina

ANF - Behdinan - 22 April 2024

The HPG Press and Contact Center said in a statement: "Our forces carried out an action with individual weapons against the invaders in the Şêlazê area of the region of Metina. In this action, 3 soldiers were killed.

Helicopter activity continues in Şêlazê and Golka areas of Metina."

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## Turkish army shells rural areas in Bagok

ANF - Mardin - 22 April 2024

The rural areas of 5 villages in the foothills of Mount Bagok in the Nusaybin district of Mardin were declared as "temporary special security zones" for 15 days. Mardin Governorate announced a 15-day temporary special security zone in rural areas of Xirabêmişka (Dağıci), Marîne (Eskihisar), Badibbê (Dibek), Qutbî (Yelekli) and Sîderî (Üçyol) villages. The governorate announced that the ban would last from 22 April until 6 May.

After the declaration of the restriction, warplanes bombed the areas of Ora Kevir, Dora Koçek and Kevirê Reş as well as the areas around the graves of fallen guerrillas.

Gunshots were heard around Xirabêmişka rural area today.

People in the region reported that they could not leave their houses due to the bombardment.

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## Erdoğan meets with Iraqi officials in Baghdad after 12 years

ANF - Baghdad - 22 April 2024

After the Turkish state launched a new invasion attack in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq), Turkish President Tayyip Erdoğan went on a tour to Baghdad and Hewlêr (Erbil).

Erdoğan's delegation included Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya, Minister of National Defence Yaşar Güler, Minister of Trade Ömer Bolat, Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Abdulkadir Uraloğlu, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry İbrahim Yumaklı, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Alparslan Bayraktar, Minister of Industry and Technology Mehmet Fatih Kacır, Presidential Communications Director Fahrettin Altun and Ambassador Akif Çağatay Kılıç, Chief Advisor to the President on Foreign Policy and Security.

Iraqi President Latif Rashid and Erdoğan met in Baghdad on Monday. The meeting was closed to the press and no information was given on what was discussed.

Erdoğan then met with Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Sudani. The Iraqi Prime Minister's Office announced that the two leaders would sign a "strategic framework agreement to expand co-operation".

The president of the occupying state will then go to Hewlêr (Erbil) and meet with KDP officials. The ruling KDP decorated the areas under its control with Turkish flags before Erdoğan's visit. The historical castle of Hewlêr was also covered with Turkish colours.

The main agenda of the talks is said to be the PKK. The Turkish state has been operating military bases in South Kurdistan for decades. These bases have increased exponentially in recent years. In addition, numerous invasion attacks have been carried out for years.

While Baghdad has been subjected to anti-Kurdish pressure from the Turkish state, in March, Iraqi Defence Minister Tabat al-Abasi ruled out the possibility of a "joint military operation" against the PKK, saying that Baghdad and Ankara would work to establish a "joint intelligence coordination centre" at the "appropriate time and place".

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## 26 cooperation agreements signed between Turkey and Iraq

ANF - Baghdad - 22 April 2024

Turkish President Tayyip Erdoğan of the ruling AKP travelled to Iraq for a series of meetings as the army launched a new invasion attack on southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq). In Baghdad, he met with Iraqi President Abdullatif Rashid and Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shiya al-Sudani.

Under the auspices of Erdoğan and Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shiya al-Sudani, a 4-way memorandum of understanding was signed between Iraq, Turkey, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates on cooperation in the Development Road Project. The transport-infrastructure ministers of the three countries and the energy-infrastructure minister of the UAE were also present at the signing ceremony.

In addition, 24 cooperation agreements were signed between Iraq and Turkey, including the "Framework Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Water" and the "Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Framework". A 10-year Water Resources Management Agreement was reached with Iraq.

### Joint steps against the PKK

A joint press conference was held after the meeting between Erdoğan and Sudani. Speaking at the press conference, Erdoğan expressed his satisfaction with Iraq's declaration of the PKK as a "banned organisation". Stating that they talked about joint steps against the PKK together with Iraq, Erdoğan referred to the strategic cooperation agreements they signed with Iraq.

### Barzani hopes for 'peace and stability' from the occupier

Erdoğan, who travelled to Hewlêr (Erbil) after his visit to Baghdad, was welcomed by Nechirvan Barzani, President of the Federal Kurdistan Region. Barzani, who posted on his X account in Turkish, said that he was happy to welcome Erdoğan in Hewlêr and that they would discuss issues such as "peace, stability and economic development".

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## One soldier killed, 4 surveillance cameras destroyed in Zap

ANF - Behdinan - 24 April 2024

The Press Liaison Centre of the People's Defense Forces (HPG) released a statement announcing the results of the actions carried out by the guerrillas against Turkish troops in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

According to the statement, details of the actions carried out by the guerrillas in Girê Amediyê Resistance Area and Girê Cûdî Resistance Area are as follows:

“Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region;

- On 22 April, the occupiers and the surveillance camera systems belonging to the occupiers in Girê Amediyê Resistance Area were targeted with assassination tactics. As a result of the strikes, 1 invader was punished and 2 surveillance camera systems were destroyed.
- On 23 April, the surveillance camera systems of the invaders in Girê Amediyê Resistance Area were targeted with assassination tactics. As a result of the strikes, 2 surveillance camera systems were destroyed.
- On 22 April, the invaders who took action in Girê Cûdî Resistance Area to install a surveillance camera were intervened with medium automatic weapons and were prevented from installing the camera."

HPG-BIM also provided the following details about the attacks carried out by the Turkish forces:

- "On 21, 22 and 23 April, Turkish warplanes carried out 13 attacks, including 8 strikes on the areas of Şêlazê, Dergelê, Bêşîlî, Serê Metîna Resistance Area in Metîna region, 3 strikes on the areas of Girê Bahar, Girê Cûdî Resistance Area in Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region, 2 strikes on the Sinînê area in Xakurkê region
- On 21 April, Şêlazê Resistance Areas in Metîna region were bombed by attack helicopters."

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## Entry forbidden for 15 days to Gabar and Cûdî Mountain regions

ANF - Şirnak - 25 April 2024

In recent weeks, many regions in North Kurdistan have been subjected to arbitrary and systematic bans.

According to Şirnak governor, Gabar Mountain, located in the rural areas of Şirnak and Basa (Güçlükönak) district, as well as Cûdî Mountain, located on the borders of Şirnak center, Silopiya (Silopi) and Cizîr (Cizre) districts, were declared a "Temporary Special Security Zone" for 15 days.

In the statement, the governor announced that entry to both regions was prohibited between 25 April and 9 May.

On 9 April, the governor declared the same areas prohibited between 10 and 24 April.

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## HPG: KDP convoy of 60 vehicles attempted to enter guerrilla areas

ANF - Behdinan - 26 April 2024

While the guerrillas continue their resistance against Turkish occupation, KDP troops attempted to enter the guerrilla areas and to secure a strategic road along which further Turkish troops are being transferred to the region.

The Press Office of the People's Defense Forces (HPG) released a statement providing information about the latest actions by the guerrillas, attacks by the Turkish army and military activity by the KDP in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

The HPG statement on Friday said: "On 23 April, a military force consisting of a convoy of 60 vehicles belonging to the KDP tried to enter a point belonging to our forces in the Berdespî area of Xakurkê twice, once before noon and once in the afternoon. Our forces fired warning shots to prevent this military force from advancing towards our point, after which a short clash broke out and this force turned back both times.

On the same day in the Goşînê area, our guerrilla force in the area fired warning shots at the military force of 6 vehicles that entered the area without notice, and they retreated and left.

During the hours of both incidents, the activity of reconnaissance aircraft of the Turkish state intensified in this area, and after the KDP force left, the area was bombed by warplanes, but we did not suffer any casualties."

In the Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region, guerrillas struck the Turkish invaders in Girê Cûdî Resistance Area on April 24 and Girê Amediyê Resistance Area on 25. The action by YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) on April 25 left a soldier dead.

Regarding the latest situation in the Metîna region, the statement said: "We previously announced that the occupying Turkish army had launched an invasion attack against the Metîna region. Currently, the occupying Turkish army is waiting in some places in Şêlazê, Kanîreş and Yekmalê areas of the Metîna region and bombarding the area. Meanwhile, KDP forces have held 3 points in order to ensure the security of the road between Yekmalê and Girê Amediye. The forces of the occupying Turkish state are transferred via this road, which the KDP is trying to secure.

On 24 and 25 April, the areas of Dergelê, Şêlazê, Serê Metîna, Bêşîlî, Golka in Metîna region were bombed by fighter jets 25 times, the Girê Bahar Resistance Area in Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region was bombed 3 times, the Bêpalan area in Qendîl region was bombed 2 times and the Lolan area in Xakurkê region was bombed 2 times.

On 25 April, the Lolan area in Xakurkê region was bombed by attack helicopters."



## MAK says it carried out action in Erzurum

ANF - Erzurum - 27 April 2024

The Kurdistan Freedom Militia (Mîlîsên Azadiya Kurdistanê) carried out an attack with molotovs and fragmented handmade explosives on the house of an agent of the Turkish state. The action was carried out in the Xinûs district of Erzurum, (Erzirom) on 23 April, at around 22:30, said MAK.

The statement said that an ambulance and many police teams were dispatched to the vicinity of the house where the attacked agent lived, and that the militia had successfully left the action area.

The statement added: "We will never support the colonialist Turkish state. We will not fall under the control of the empire of fear that the state wants to create. We are patriotic Kurdish children who protect the values of our people."



## Femicide

### Osman: Turkish regime deeply fears the power of women, that's why they attack us

ANF - Kobane - 21 April 2024

The attack carried out on Friday, was the 93rd that Turkey launched against the autonomous region of Northern and Eastern Syria since the beginning of the year.

Halime Mihemed Osman and her husband Elî Mistefa Osman were returning home when their vehicle was targeted by a Turkish state drone near the village of Ênbetê (Ayn Al Batt), around twenty kilometers east of the city center of Kobanê.

Osman's husband was driving and was injured on his head, eye, arm and leg. However, he managed to free himself from the car, in time to save the mother of their five children. Shortly after the drone hit it, the family vehicle caught fire. A short time later, it was completely engulfed in flames.

Halime Mihemed Osman had just been freed. An ambulance that was called eventually took the couple to a nearby hospital. There, Halime Mihemed Osman had her right leg amputated. However, she showed herself to be combative despite the severe blow.

"You cannot break our will, not through such attacks," the women's rights activist told a reporter from ANAH news agency from her hospital bed.

"We know that the Turkish state's intention is to destroy the Kurds. To achieve this goal, the strategy of expulsion is pursued, among other things. But we will not give up our country. No matter how brutal the bombings are."

Elî Mistefa Osman added: "There is relative security and stability in the regions of Northern and Eastern Syria. This calm is disrupted by the constant attacks from Turkey and its allies. However, we will not allow ourselves to be discouraged and will continue to defend our dignity in the spirit of Abdullah Öcalan's paradigm."

Osman saw the attack that seriously injured her as an expression of the Turkish regime's "deep fear" of the "power of women." That is why it is often the women of Northern and Eastern Syria who are targeted by the occupiers. It is not for nothing that the drone attack on 23 June 2020 in Helîncê, which also marked the start of Turkey's air war against Northern and Eastern Syria, which violates international law, was directed against three representatives of the Rojava women's movement, said Osman. "We never tire of pointing out this fact and calling on international organizations to fulfill their obligations so that international humanitarian law also applies to us Kurds."



## 15 women killed in Iran in one month

ANF - 23 April 2024

In Iran, including in the Kurdish regions of the country, 15 women and two girls were killed, five women and two children died in suspicious circumstances between 21 March and 20 April 2024. Furthermore, in the same period, Iranian mullahs executed two female prisoners.

The oppressive policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran continue to pave the way for gender-based violence and femicide. The NuJINHA agency compiled data on femicides and suspicious deaths of women and girls in Iran from newspapers and news agencies from 21 March to 20 April 2024.

The murders of women and suspicious deaths of women and girls are as follows:

- 26 March: A cardiologist died in suspicious circumstances at Noorabad Delfan Hospital in Lorestan province.
- 27 March: Former political prisoner Sara Tabrizi (20) died in suspicious circumstances after being summoned to the infamous Iranian Ministry of Intelligence.
- 28 March: A young woman is executed in Tabriz central prison.
- 29 March: A 34-year-old woman was killed by her husband in the town of Juybar.

- 30 March: A woman was killed by her husband in the town of Semnan.
- 1 April: An unidentified woman was killed by her father in one of the villages of Abadan, a town in Khuzestan province.
- 2 April: A young woman was killed by her husband in the city of Tabriz.
- 2 April: A young woman, a student at the Yasuj University of Medical Sciences, died in suspicious circumstances.
- 2 April: A woman was killed by her husband in Bushehr province.
- 3 April: Two girls died in suspicious circumstances when a fire broke out in their house located in the Gapi village of Dargaz, a town in Iran's Khorasan Razavi province. Their mother was seriously injured.
- 3 April: A woman was killed by her husband in the town of Dargaz, Khorasan Razavi province.
- 4 April: A 38-year-old woman was killed by her husband at the Urmia-Naqadeh transport center.
- 8 April: Four members of a family, including two women and a 7-month-old baby, were killed by unknown assailants in the village of Qomqaleh, in the Kurdish region of Mahabad.
- 8 April: The body of a 7-year-old child identified as Elmira Zarei, who went missing a month ago, was found in Isfahan.
- 9 April: A 27-year-old woman was killed by her brothers in the Arab town of Ahvaz.
- 11 April: A young woman identified as Sarveh Sarve died under suspicious circumstances in Javanrud.
- 13 April: A 19-year-old woman identified as Marjan Hajizadeh was executed in Zanjan Central Prison.
- 15 April: A 59-year-old woman was killed by her husband in the town of Khomeyn.
- 16 April: A 37-year-old woman is killed by her fiancé in Tehran.
- 18 April: A 43-year-old woman was killed by her husband in Isfahan.
- 18 April: A young woman is killed by her brother in the town of Saravan.
- 18 April: A young woman identified as Nagin Bahram died under suspicious circumstances in the town of Kermanshah.
- 19 April: A 50-year-old woman was killed by a customer in her store in the city of Shiraz.



# Ecocide

## People on vigil against mining activities in Hakkari

ANF - Hakkari - 24 April 2024

In Marunis (tr:Kavaklı) village of Hakkari, people started a vigil action against the mining activities that have been going on since 2007 and causing destruction of the nature. People from neighbouring provinces and districts demanded that the mining activities initiated by Sedex Resources Mining Company be stopped.

People marched from Şinê Bridge on the highway connecting Hakkari and its Çukurca district to the valley where the mining site is located and made a statement at the site of the destruction. The people also conveyed their demands to the company owners. A group of 40 people took over the first vigil.

### ‘Our soils polluted, water sources poisoned’

Salih Kurt stated that they were victimised due to the work in the mining sites, noting that the mines were located in pasture areas. Kurt said, "Our soils have been polluted and lost their fertility due to mining activities. Our water sources have been poisoned and become undrinkable. Air pollution has also increased, causing respiratory problems."

Stating that the animal grazing areas were also destroyed, Kurt said, "The natural beauty of our village has been spoilt. Despite all these problems, mining activities continue uninterrupted instead of being stopped. Although we have repeatedly applied to the authorities, no solution to our problem has been found. We no longer have the strength to endure. In order to protect the rights of our village and future generations, we demand that the mining works be stopped immediately."

### People’s demands

Kurt listed the following demands:

"The operation of the mine in the pasture areas of Marunis village should be stopped immediately.

The damage caused by the mining activity to the environment should be compensated.

The living spaces of the villagers should be restored.

The region should be reforested."



## Ecology conference in Qamişlo: We must return to the nature of humanity

ANF - Qamishlo - 26 April 2024

The Ecology Council of the Democratic Autonomous Administration in the North and East Syria Region (DAANES) is holding its first conference at the University of Rojava in Qamişlo. The two-day meeting is attended by 120 delegates from the Autonomous Administration, civil society organisations and political parties.

Alongside grassroots democracy and women's freedom, social ecology is one of the pillars of the Rojava revolution, which is based on the paradigm of Abdullah Öcalan. At the conference, Kurdish leader Öcalan's perspectives on a return to social ecology were presented. A film presentation illustrated the destruction of nature caused by military attacks and targeted interventions by Turkey in Kurdistan.

The conference will address the topics of "Ecology in democratic modernity", "Conducting ecological struggle alongside the struggle against capitalism and colonialism", "Developing ecological agricultural culture as part of ending the occupation in Northern and Eastern Syria" and "Solidarity between institutions and organisations in Northern and Eastern Syria".

Hesen Koçer, Co-Chair of the Democratic Autonomous Administration Executive Council, talked about the importance of the conference and said, "An attack on nature is an attack on society and its values. As we can see, the ecological system is in danger. That is why we must always protect the environment and nature."

Hesen Koçer stated that the world uses nature to establish its own economic system, which leads to the destruction of nature, and said, "If the world continues to exploit nature in this way, the world will be in danger. Scientists should be careful against this danger. For this reason, we wanted to discuss the dangers to nature and find solutions through this conference."

Koçer also drew attention to the wars in the world and the damage they cause to the environment and the will of the people and added: "This is a political, moral and cultural war and society is being targeted every day."

Stating that democratic systems attach great importance to the protection of nature and the environment, Koçer said, "Leader Abdullah Öcalan also attaches great importance to nature, so we must return to him and the nature of humanity."

Hesen Koçer's speech was followed by the screening of a film about how the nature of Kurdistan was destroyed by the attacks and bombardments of the occupying Turkish state.

Afterwards, Bêrîwan Xelîl, Co-Chair of the Environment Committee of the Democratic Autonomous Administration of Efrin-Şehba Canton, read Leader Abdullah Öcalan's perspectives on ecology.

In his speech, Ibrahim Assad, Co-Chair of the Environment Committee of the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, emphasised the importance of protecting the environment and nature by strengthening the rules of natural society and said: "Peoples control nature and they have destroyed it."

Ibrahim Assad hoped that important decisions will be taken at the end of the conference for the protection and development of the environment.



## Vigil against mining activities in Hakkari on its 4th day

ANF - Hakkari - 26 April 2024

The protest launched on 22 April against the mining activities in Marunis (Kavaklı) village of Hakkari, which have been going on since 2007 and causing destruction of nature, continues. Residents from neighbouring provinces and districts took part in the action and demanded that Sedex Resources Mining Company stop the mining activities in the area.

The ongoing vigil at Şinê Bridge on the highway between Hakkari and its Çukurca district entered its 4th day. The residents of the village, who held meetings with both Hakkari Governorate officials and the relevant company officials, stated that their demands were not met. While the locals continue their protest, the gendarmerie has taken intensive security measures in the region.

While a group of approximately 100 people is taking part in the vigil in the area where the mine site is located, citizens from different districts also support the protest.

The demands of the citizens are as follows; "The operation of the mine in the pasture areas of Marunis village should be stopped immediately. The damage caused by the mining activity to the environment should be compensated for. The living spaces of the villagers should be restored. The region should be reforested."



## Ecology Conference in Qamishlo discusses the ecological destruction in Kurdistan

ANF - Qamishlo - 27 April 2024

Alongside grassroots democracy and women's freedom, social ecology is one of the pillars of the Rojava revolution, which is based on the paradigm of Abdullah Öcalan. The Ecology Council of the Democratic

Autonomous Administration in the North and East Syria Region (DAANES) is holding its first conference at the University of Rojava in Qamişlo. The two-day conference, which started on Friday, is attended by 120 delegates from the Autonomous Administration, civil society organisations and political parties.

The conference addresses the topics of "Ecology in democratic modernity", "Conducting ecological struggle alongside the struggle against capitalism and colonialism", "Developing ecological agricultural culture as part of ending the occupation in Northern and Eastern Syria" and "Solidarity between institutions and organisations in Northern and Eastern Syria".

On the second day of the conference, Prof. Dr. Bengi Akbulut, Lecturer at the Department of Geography, Planning and Environment at Concordia University, made evaluations via Zoom about the ecological destruction experienced in Northern Kurdistan (South-East Turkey) after the AKP came to power.

Stating that the underground riches of Kurdistan were plundered, forests were burnt and ecological destruction is still continuing, Akbulut said that the occupying Turkish state aims to make the villages uninhabitable by cutting off the people's connection with the land in Kurdistan.

Pointing out that the Turkish state is carrying out a policy of genocide against the Kurdistan geography, Bengi Akbulut stated that there should be solidarity between the peoples at the international level.

Prof. Dr. Mehmûd Patîl, an international law expert, made evaluations on the ecological economy and the Democratic Modernity system presented by Kurdish Leader Abdullah Öcalan, who developed solutions to social, ecological and humanitarian problems against the policies of the capitalist system.

Mehmûd Patîl stated that the basis of Democratic Modernity is democracy as an alternative to nationalism. Remarking that capitalist modernity aggravates ecological problems, Mehmûd Patîl said, "As a result of the spread of capitalist modernity, the environment has been and continues to be destroyed. Democratic Modernity, on the other hand, protects ecology, the environment and stops migration. Therefore, the alternative to capitalist modernity is Democratic Modernity. On this basis, Leader Abdullah Öcalan clearly offers solutions."

Mehmûd Patîl said that the only solution against over-industrialisation is to spread ecology and agricultural society starting from the villages and added: "If the philosophy of Leader Abdullah Öcalan is put into practice, destruction can be prevented. Unemployment, poverty and hunger can also be prevented. If we overcome these obstacles, then we can create a politically and socially knowledgeable society in accordance with social norms. Then, the people will win."

Environmental Scientist Ercan Ayboğa said that the Turkish state uses nature as a tool in its attacks against the Kurdish people. Ayboğa stated that the Turkish state has signed many agreements and built many dams on big rivers such as Munzur and Zap, and prevented the water from reaching Syria and Iraq, causing a water crisis.

Dr Lena Eklund, an expert in geography, and Pınar Dink, a researcher in ecology, talked about how the nature of Kurdistan is being destroyed by the occupying Turkish state and how forests are being burned during military attacks.



Dr Marcin Skupiński, an expert in Humanities at the University of Warsaw, drew attention to climate change and its effects on people's lives in Northern and Eastern Syria, noting that the region has a very important paradigm for the future.

Marcin Skupiński drew attention to the fact that the Turkish state is destroying the infrastructure of North-East Syria, using water as a weapon against the people of the region. Skupiński noted that Turkey's attacks are linked to exploitation plans, and that its aim is to destroy the democratic nation project.

The conference continues with new agenda items.



# Human Rights Violations

## Ex officio investigation against Mardin Metropolitan Municipality

ANF - Mardin - 20 April 2024

The Turkish Ministry of Internal Affairs announced that a Civil Inspector had been appointed to investigate the allegation that the National Anthem was not sung at the first Assembly meeting of Mardin (Mêrdîn) Metropolitan Municipality after the 31 March local elections.

Mardin Chief Public Prosecutor's Office said that an investigation was launched on the same allegation.

In the statement, the Prosecutor's Office said: "Our Chief Public Prosecutor's Office has launched an *ex officio* investigation regarding the incident of not singing our National Anthem and not observing a minute's silence at the meeting of the Mardin Metropolitan Municipality.

### Ahmet Türk: defamation policy

Mardin Metropolitan Municipality co-mayor Ahmet Türk said: "I would like to say that the flag and religion should not be used as a tool for politics in Turkey, and that we always respect the common values of this country. We will continue to work for the future of our country, our city and our people."

### Inspectors assigned to Amed Metropolitan Municipality

The Turkish Ministry of Internal Affairs announced that Civil Inspectors were appointed for the allegation that the "Turkish flag was removed" at the opening of the Amed Metropolitan Municipality Council.



## Bakırhan: DEM Party has determined the election results and the course of the future in Turkey

ANF - Ankara - 20 April 2024

Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) Co-Chair Tuncer Bakırhan spoke at the opening of the Party Assembly (PM) meeting convened to evaluate the election results and determine the line of struggle for the coming period.

Bakırhan stated that they will evaluate the election results and the political process in the two-day PM meeting and referred to the 31 March local elections and stated that the elections were a new light and a new path for the peoples, workers, youth, women and Kurds.

Bakırhan continued: "The Kurdish people claimed their will on 31 March. They sent the trustee mentality and trustees away, voted for their party and stood by their party. The people of the region said no to rent, destruction and plunder. Against all kinds of schemes, lies and bribery, they came together under the roof of the DEM Party and won the municipalities again.

In the West, the oppressed, workers, women and youth have also had a say in local administrations under the DEM Party. This is very valuable and meaningful. We said at the beginning of the elections that we would win the municipalities ruled by trustees in the region. We stated that we would send the trustees away and that their will would be reflected in the governance wherever our peoples live in the west. Both of our strategies came to life successfully."

Bakırhan pointed out that: "The DEM Party has determined the election results and the future course in Turkey. The will of Kars, Şırnak, Bitlis and many districts and towns were usurped with fraudulent voters. In fact, Kars, Bitlis and Şırnak won. Those who stole the will of Kars, Şırnak and Iğdır with illegal voters lost. We send our greetings and love to our people living in all provinces and districts in Kars, Iğdır and Şırnak. Do not worry, you did not lose, they usurped your will that you had won."

DEM Party Co-Chair concluded: "Rest assured; we will work stronger there. We will organise stronger. In the coming elections, we will send the thieves back to the cities that were usurped with these illegal voters, and we will bring the will of our peoples back to the administration. We realised that we had mistakes and shortcomings in the places we lost. Of course, we will celebrate our success, but we are not holding these meetings to celebrate our success, but to discuss the reasons for our deficiencies, inadequacies and losses in the elections and to make efforts to eliminate them. Yes, there is an achievement, but this achievement belongs to our peoples, the deficiencies and inadequacies are ours. We come from such a tradition. With these meetings, we will identify these deficiencies and inadequacies and work to eliminate them."



## Today is Kurdish Journalism Day

ANF - 22 April 2024

While the Kurdistan press started its journey on 22 April 1898, the Free Press Tradition, which is perhaps its most important offspring, started its journey on 22 April 1990.

Mîqdad Mîdhed Bedirxan started the publication of Kurdistan Newspaper, the first Kurdish newspaper in Cairo, on 22 April 1898. Due to the oppressive and censorship practices of the Ottoman administration, the Kurdistan Newspaper, which was forced to be published in Geneva, Cairo and London, continues to be the source of inspiration for the Kurdish press today.”

Kurdish journalism began 126 years ago, while in exile in Cairo, and since then, has been faced with repression and pressure by successive regimes. The ‘90s were dark years in Kurdish society and Kurdish journalism became the voice of the painful truth and of what was going on in Turkey and Kurdistan. Many Kurdish journalists paid the price of telling the truth and exposing those crimes. They were murdered, jailed, harassed, wounded. We respectfully commemorate all press martyrs who have never ceased to be the voice of truth, despite their fundamental right, the right to life, being constantly violated.

From 1898 to the 1990s, from the 1990s to the present day, the repression and violence against the Kurdish press have been constant, and today is not different: journalists are arrested and imprisoned. After the 15 July [2015] coup attempt, the government is using the State of Emergency to arbitrarily prevent journalists from doing their job. They closed newspapers, magazines, news agencies, television channels and printing houses which are broadcasting in Kurdish and many journalists have been put in prison.

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## Kurdish artists in Europe: Today is the day to unite and resist

ANF - 22 April 2024

Kurdish Culture and Art people in Europe made a statement against the invasion attacks of the Turkish state in Kurdistan territory after the launch of yet another invasion campaign against the Metina region in the guerrilla-held Medya Defense Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

Recalling the defeat of the AKP-MHP government in the local elections on 31 March, the statement said, "The colonialist Turkish state has once again launched invasion attacks on Kurdistan."

"The invasion and annihilation attack against Southern Kurdistan reveals what kind of mentality the Turkish colonialism and its executive power, AKP-MHP fascism, have and how it has deepened in its Kurdish hostility. As Kurdish culture and art labourers, we do not accept this situation in any way."

The statement continued with the following call upon the Kurdish people, their friends and cultural and artistic institutions:

"Let us oppose these occupation and annihilation attacks of the colonialist Turkish state in every field we are in; let us stand by our people and our freedom fighters.

This is our call to our people in Bakur, Bashûr, Rojava, Rojhilat and all Kurdistanî forces:

Today is the day of unity and resistance against the invasion and annihilation attacks, the day to stand up in every field we are in against the colonialism that colonises our country and seeks to destroy our people with massacres, the day to ensure our national unity and move for freedom."

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## Police in Belgium storm studios of Stêrk TV and Medya Haber

ANF - Brussels - 23 April 2024

A police raid took place at the news center of Sterk TV and Medya Haber TV in Belgium at around 1.30 am this morning.

The Belgian police blockaded the news center and did not allow free press workers to enter.

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## Belgian police target Kurdish channels Stêrk TV and Medya Haber TV

ANF - Brussels - 23 April 2024

The timing couldn't be more telling. Parallel to the start of the new Turkish invasion in the Metina region and the trip of the Turkish regime leader Erdoğan to Southern Kurdistan and Iraq, the Belgian state is striking the Kurdish media.

During the night, the police stormed the studios of Stêrk TV and Medya Haber TV in Denderleeuw near Brussels. The studios were surrounded and employees were prohibited from entering the building. Police searched the premises between 2am and 6am. The channels were literally sabotaged. The police confiscated computers and technical equipment and destroyed many other technical systems. Apparently, to prevent further transmissions, cables were cut.

The door to the room from which the broadcasts are distributed was smashed, and the equipment inside was destroyed. Security guards at the television station were handcuffed and forced to lie on the ground. According to reports, police attacks have occurred again and again. After four hours, the police left again.

## Kurdish media: “On the streets against attacks on the press”

The television stations reacted immediately to the attacks and declared: “We call on the public to go to the locations of the raids and to stop this illegal action.” The media houses placed the raid in the context of a broad-based anti-Kurdish extermination operation and jointly declared: “The visits of Turkish government officials to the USA, Iraq and Iran, the agreements with the South Kurdish KDP and the visit of Turkish President Erdoğan to Iraq and the Barzani family are the latest attempts to realize this concept of annihilation. The invasion attack on Metina represents the military dimension of this annihilation operation.



## Scores of Free Press journalists taken into custody in Istanbul and Ankara

ANF - 23 April 2024

A police political operation was carried out against Free Press journalists in Istanbul and Ankara this morning. Mezopotamya Agency (MA) reporter Mehmet Aslan was detained during house raids in Ankara.

During the house raids in Istanbul, MA reporter Esra Solin Dal, Enes Sezgin and Saliha Aras from Yeni Yaşam Newspaper, and Özgür Press employee Yeşim Alici were detained.

The number of detentions may increase.



## Stêrk and Medya Haber TV Advisory Board condemns raids in Belgium

ANF - Brussels - 23 April 2024

Stêrk and Medya Haber TV Advisory Board made a statement regarding the raids on the two television channels early this morning.

The statement stated the following: "In recent times, the concept created by the Turkish state regarding the Kurdish genocide has been tried to be implemented.

Turkey's visits to the US, Iraq and Iran, the agreements made with the KDP, and Turkish President Erdoğan's visit to Iraq and Barzani are the latest attempts to implement this genocide concept. The invasion attack against Metina constitutes the military dimension of this genocide.

It is certain that this concept is an international attack concept. The raid on Medya Haber and Stêrk TV studios in Belgium at around 2am on 23 April is the most concrete evidence of this. Our televisions were occupied by hundreds of police officers. It is not possible for us to remain silent against the raid aimed at silencing the voice of the Kurdish people. We call on our people to go to the television stations to stop this unlawful and illegal raid."

— ★ —

## Police take 6 members of Drancy Democratic Kurdish Community Center into custody

ANF - Paris - 23 April 2024

According to the information received, simultaneous raids were carried out on the houses of members of the Democratic Kurdish Community Center in the Drancy suburb in the Paris region at around 6am in the morning.

While houses were plundered during the raids, 6 Kurds, whose names have not yet been learned, were taken into custody.

These raids took place at a time when Kurdish media organizations were being targeted in Belgium.

In recent weeks, France illegally handed over three Kurdish refugees to Turkey who were immediately arrested.

— ★ —

## Sterk and Medya News TV workers: No power will be able to silence us in this task

ANF - Denderleeuw - 23 April 2024

Belgian police raided the premises of the Sterk, Roj and Hevron public companies in Denderleeuw, Belgium at around 1:30 am on 23 April. The raid against Kurdish TV stations, carried out by the Belgian Federal Police, occurred without prior notification to lawyers and company officials. In the late hours of the night, when nobody was in the building, police forcibly entered the offices, destroying broadcasting tools and press materials, notably computers.

Sterk and Medya News TV workers made a press statement about the police operation, saying the following:

“We condemn this unlawful and anti-democratic attack, which targeted our Free Media institutions, representing the voice of the Kurdish people. The timing of the raid, coinciding with Kurdish Journalism Day and the 126th anniversary of the Kurdish media, is particularly significant, marking a continuation of organized attacks against the Kurdish press – particularly since the Turkish police raided the homes of Kurdish journalists in Turkey at the same time.

This is not the first time our studios have been targeted; Belgian police previously raided them in March 2010, seizing all our computers and hard drives. The investigations and lawsuits were inconclusive and our companies were not subjected to any sanctions, operating in compliance with Belgian law, as evidenced by the lack of outcome from prior raids on our offices.

We emphasize that this attack infringes upon the freedom of the Kurdish media and the Kurdish people's right to information. Despite hundreds of attempts by the Turkish state and its allies to suppress Kurdish media, we remain steadfast in our commitment to journalistic integrity and freedom of expression, and Turkey has been unable to achieve its goal of silencing the Turkish media. Turkey has murdered dozens of our colleagues over the years, but neither they nor any other actor can stop us from reporting freely on the situation in Kurdistan and Turkey.

We have no doubt that this attack was the result of clandestine relations with the Erdogan regime in Turkey. We therefore call upon the Belgian government to clarify the nature of its relations and negotiations with Turkey. We consider these raids, conducted without a warrant, to be a violation of the law, and our lawyers will immediately open proceedings against this unlawful incursion.

We would further like to extend an invitation to the Belgian media, non-governmental organizations and political parties; we are doing press activities here. Our work is public and transparent, and our studio doors are open to everyone. Anyone, especially the police, can come to our studios and offices at any time and follow our activities here. There is nothing secret or hidden here.

At the same time, we, as employees of the Kurdish media, will continue to be the voice of our people. No power will be able to silence us in this task.

We will conclude with this simple message – “we are here.” We see ourselves as responsible for informing the Kurdish people, and keeping our language and culture alive. In the face of all kinds of oppression, including deadly attacks against our colleagues, our pens will continue to write and our cameras will continue to capture the truth.

Kurdistan journalists have reported on the Turkish state's massacres, immolations, and summary executions, even at risk of their lives. It was the sacrifices made by the free Kurdish press which revealed the atrocities committed by ISIS to the world, as our colleagues lost their lives in pursuit of truth on behalf of the world. The world knows this, and we will accordingly continue to pursue truth, high ethical standards, and report on what is really happening in Kurdistan and the world.”

## Stêrk TV's lawyer: A dark raid!

ANF - Denderleeuw - 23 April 2024

Speaking at the press briefing in front of Stêrk TV and Medya Haber TV studios, lawyer Fien Schreurs said that these raids are "still dark and an enigma".

Lawyer Fien Schreurs questioned "why such a raid was carried out in such an ugly manner".

Stating that they do not yet understand why the attack was carried out, the lawyer said that they will investigate and inform.

Belgian police raided the premises of the Sterk, Roj and Hevron public companies in Denderleeuw, Belgium at around 1:30 am on 23 April.

"The raid against Kurdish TV stations, carried out by the Belgian Federal Police, occurred without prior notification to our lawyers and company officials. In the late hours of the night, when nobody was in the building, police forcibly entered the offices, destroying broadcasting tools and press materials, notably computers. We condemn this unlawful and anti-democratic attack, which targeted our Free Media institutions, representing the voice of the Kurdish people. The timing of the raid, coinciding with Kurdish Journalism Day and the 126th anniversary of the Kurdish media, is particularly significant, marking a continuation of organized attacks against the Kurdish press – particularly since the Turkish police raided the homes of Kurdish journalists in Turkey at the same time," said the Sterk and Medya News TV employees in a press statement about the police operation against the Kurdish press.

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## Belgian media: Raids on Kurdish media carried out at the request of France

ANF - 23 April 2024

In a report about the police raid on Kurdish TV studios in Denderleeuw, Belgian newspaper De Standart stated that the raid was confirmed by the federal prosecutor's office and carried out at the request of France.

The newspaper quoted the comments of Orhan Kılıç from the Kurdish association Navbel, saying that Belgium was trying to "criminalise" Kurdish TV channels.

"Such a raid has a connection with the Turkish state," Kılıç said, noting that independent Kurdish journalists were also detained in Turkey.

"We do not think that what happened here is separate from the police actions in Turkey," Kılıç said.



The newspaper also included the press statement made by Medya Haber TV and Stêrk TV during the day.

In recent months, France has escalated its arbitrary and illegal repression of Kurds. Three Kurds were detained in a piratical manner with their hands tied and handed over to Turkey. All three Kurds were arrested. Among them were Kurdish refugees who had no deportation order against them.

At the same time as the raids on Kurdish media in Belgium, French police raided the Democratic Kurdish Community Centre in the suburb of Drancy in the Paris region and detained 6 Kurds.

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## Number of detained journalists increases to 9

ANF - 23 April 2024

The number of those detained in the operations carried out against free press workers in Istanbul and Ankara this morning has increased.

Mesopotamia Agency (MA) reporter Esra Solin Dal, Enes Sezgin from Yeni Yaşam and free press workers Saliha Aras, Yeşim Alıcı, Beste Argat Balcı, Şirin Ermiş and journalist Erdoğan Alayumat were detained in house raids in Istanbul.

MA reporter Mehmet Aslan was detained in a house raid in Ankara and former MA reporter Doğan Kaynak was detained in a house raid in Urfa.

It is reported that there is a detention warrant for 3 other people, including 2 journalists.

The detained journalists are restricted from seeing their lawyers.

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## Police storm DEM Party building in Batman

ANF - Batman - 24 April 2024

Turkish police raided the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) Batman Provincial Organisation building on Wednesday.

While searches have been carried out in the blockaded party building, the reason for the raid could not be learned.

The raid took place at a time when the DEM Party has been systematically targeted by the Turkish ruling circles and media in recent days.

The party members warned the police that they could not conduct a search without lawyers and provincial co-chairs of the party. According to reports from the ground, the police responded that: "We will conduct the search, go and complain wherever you want". The police closed the entrances and exits of the building upon the reaction of the party members.

DEM Party Batman Provincial Organisation said, "AKP-MHP fascism, which was defeated in the elections, wants to postpone its inevitable end by attacking the Kurds and the Kurdish party! We are waiting for all our people in front of our provincial building to embrace their party! Batman, claim your will!"

Hundreds of people gathered in front of the party building and protested the raid with the slogans "We will win by resisting" and "Pressures cannot deter us".

People are still waiting outside the party office and the police continue to search inside.

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## Trade unions say they wont recognize governor ban of Taksim Square for 1 May celebration

ANF - Istanbul - 25 April 2024

The Istanbul governorship rejected the application of the Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions (DİSK) regarding the celebration of 1 May, Labor Day, in Taksim Square and banned the 1 May celebrations to be held in Taksim Square. Following the governor's ban, Energy Workers Union (Enerji-Sen), Private Sector Teachers' Union, Revolutionary Textile Workers' Union (Dev Tekstil), All Automotive and Metal Workers' Union (TOMİS) and Road Transport Workers' Union (KATAŞ-SEN) affiliated with DİSK, went to Taksim Square. Stating that they did not recognize the governor's ban, the unions called everyone to Taksim Square.

Union representatives were blockaded by the police but were able to issue their call.

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## Report on international election observation in Turkey published

ANF - 25 April 2024

The election observation delegation from Europe invited by the DEM Party has published a report on its impressions from Turkey and Northern Kurdistan. The report published on Tuesday comprises 14 pages. The introduction reads:

“Local elections were held in Turkey on the 31st of March 2024. The negative trends characterising the development: internationally criticised undermining of democracy, worsening economic conditions for the vast majority, illegal aggression and occupation of parts of Syria and Iraq, and increasing instability internationally, regionally and locally, described the background for the elections.

In the Kurdish-dominated areas in the Southeast, there has been the most negative situation inside Turkey. After the local elections in 2019, many democratically elected mayors, were deposed by the central authorities, and replaced with trustees. Many politicians and political activists were jailed and otherwise persecuted. All of this was criticised by European human rights authorities and organisations.

In the run-up to this year’s local elections, there were also allegations that there were preparations for illegitimate initiatives to undermine democracy by moving security forces, and registering Turks originally from the West of Turkey as local voters in the Southeast. DEM, the major pro-Kurdish party, therefore took the initiative to invite election observers from Europe as an attempt to counter and expose this and other undemocratic moves.

One hundred and twenty-five election observers came and attempted to observe the elections. This is a report of their findings.

## Summary

In the course of our election observation, almost all delegations had to contend with intimidation and access bans by the authorities. In addition to some irregular incidents and suspicions of election manipulation through bribery and extortion in several regions, we were able to identify two gross and widespread violations. Firstly, an excessive and intimidating police and military presence in almost all areas. In two regions (Van and Şırnak), repression against the population and the DEM party was also documented in the aftermath of the elections. Secondly, a new strategy to influence the election results through targeted voter transfers of 46.901 state employees, such as police officers and soldiers.

While in previous years the will of voters was undermined through targeted political repression, the imprisonment of elected mayors and the use of trustees, this time state employees such as police and military were now sent to the Kurdish regions to vote. In some cases, these people were registered in the regions over a period of 6 months. In other cases, the process was ad hoc. Masses of males between the ages of 20 and 30 were registered in government buildings such as police stations and spent the night in schools and universities specially cleared for this purpose in the days before the election. The use of security forces to reduce the voting power of the local Kurdish population, other local minorities and especially women can be seen as strategic, as these voter transfers were concentrated in regions where a close election result between the AKP, MHP or DEM party was expected, and the participation of thousands of soldiers could tilt the result.

In our view, this is a gross and deliberate attempt to manipulate the local elections against opposition parties. We would like to draw the attention of the international public to this and urge the official election observation institutions to check the voter registers of affected regions in order to get a final picture.”

## State terror in Kızıltepe: 30 people detained

ANF - Mardin - 25 April 2024

Turkish state forces terrorised the Kurdish population during house raids in the Kızıltepe district of Mardin this morning.

According to latest reports, as many as 30 people have been taken into custody.

It is learned that detentions were made on the arbitrary and systematic charge of "making propaganda for an illegal organisation", meaning the PKK.

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## Prosecutor seeks prison sentence for 10 journalists working for Free Press

ANF - Ankara - 25 April 2024

The trial of Mezopotamya Agency (MA) reporters Diren Yurtsever, Berivan Altan, Selman Güzelyüz, Hakan Yalçın, Emrullah Acar, Ceylan Şahinli, Zemo Ağgöz and Deniz Nazlım, JINNEWS reporters Habibe Eren and Öznur Değer and former MA intern Mehmet Günhan, who were arrested on 29 October 2022 through an Ankara based investigation and released on 16 May 2023, was held on Thursday. The hearing of the lawsuit filed on the charge of "illegal organisation membership" was held at Ankara 4th High Criminal Court.

Journalists Selman Güzelyüz and Deniz Nazlım, who are on trial without arrest, and their lawyers attended the hearing. Human Rights Association (IHD) Ankara Branch executives and lawyers from the Association of Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD) also attended the hearing.

In the final opinion submitted to the court, the prosecution demanded the journalists to be sentenced. The final statement was based on the testimony of secret witness "K8" and witness Kerem Gökalp. It was claimed that the journalists had conducted interviews with HDP and DEM Party representatives on "instructions". The prosecutor claimed that MA and JINNEWS "increased the morale and motivation of the organisation members".

The lawyers of the journalists requested additional time for the final opinion. Lawyer Resul Tamur said, "The prosecution's final opinion must be clear and understandable. There must be a connection between the evidence and the defendants. Otherwise, the Court of Cassation states that this is a violation of the right to defence." Temur emphasised that there is no causal link between the allegations and the journalists and demanded that the judicial control order on the journalists be lifted and the prosecution be made to explain the "causal link".

The court lifted the signature conviction against the journalists but decided to continue the ban on leaving the country.

The next hearing was adjourned to 3 July.

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## Co-chair of DEM Party Batman Provincial Organisation detained

ANF - Batman - 25 April 2024

The Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) Batman Provincial Organisation Co-Chair, Mustafa Mesut Tekik, was taken into custody.

Tekik, who was called to testify by the Security Directorate after his house was raided on Wednesday, was reportedly detained at the police headquarters.

Turkish police had also raided the provincial office of the DEM Party on Wednesday. The detention is allegedly related to this raid.

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## 30 people taken into custody in Kızıltepe released

ANF - Mardin - 26 April 2024

The security procedures of 30 people who were taken into custody following house raids carried out on Thursday morning in Kızıltepe (Qoser), in the province of Mardin (Mêrdîn) were completed.

Some of the 30 people who were detained on the grounds of the clothes they wore and the colorful shawls they carried during the Newroz celebration held in the district were released after security procedures. Some others were referred to the prosecutor's office and released after their statements were taken. They were accused of "making propaganda for an illegal organisation".

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## Kurdish journalists in custody asked why they write news

ANF - Istanbul - 26 April 2024

The police statements of 9 Kurdish journalists who were taken into custody in house raids in Istanbul, Ankara and Urfa on the morning of 23 April, have been completed.

The journalists are expected to be brought to the prosecutor's office today. Journalists were asked about their social media posts, the news they made, their news sources, and their telephone conversations with other journalists.

In the house raids carried out in Istanbul on 23 April, Mezopotamya Agency (MA) journalist Esra Solin Dal, Yeni Yaşam newspaper employee Enes Sezgin, Free Media workers Saliha Aras, Yeşim Alici, Beste Ar-gat Balcı, Şirin Ermiş and journalist Erdoğan Alayumat were taken into custody in Ankara. MA journalist Mehmet Aslan was taken into custody in a house raid in Urfa (Riha), as well as MA's former reporter Doğan Kaynak.

It was learned that journalist Erdoğan Alayumat was asked "why do you make political news" by showing him his news during the police interrogation.

According to the information received from lawyers, Alayumat was shown many of the news he wrote and asked why he wrote political news.

It was also learned that Alayumat was asked about the telephone conversations he had with news sources and other journalists.

Some of the phone calls shown as criminal elements are as follows:

- Are you coming to Newroz?

- Yes, I'm on my way, I'm coming

\*\*\*

-Where are you?

-I'm covering the protest on Istiklal Street

-Okay, see you

\*\*\*

It was learned that the journalists will be brought to the Istanbul Courthouse during the day and the prosecutor's office interrogations will begin.

## Police operation in Urfa, two DEM Party members taken into custody

ANF - Urfa - 26 April 2024

During house raids carried out in Urfa (Riha), Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) assembly member Muhsin Aydođdu and party's Youth Assembly member Ömer Kıstak were taken into custody.

The police did not inform Aydođdu's family about the investigation due to "confidentiality" reasons. The mobile phones used by Aydođdu's parents were also confiscated.

Aydođdu and Kıstak were taken to Provincial Police Department.

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## 'The execution of Kurdish businesspeople was carried out by the National Security Council decision'

ANF - Ankara - 26 April 2024

The secret National Security Council (MGK) Report, which was found in the house of former President Turgut Özal and later discovered in a bookshop, has become the subject of a parliamentary question.

Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) Van MP Pervin Buldan submitted a parliamentary question to Minister of Justice Yılmaz Tunç and Vice President Cevdet Yılmaz. Parvin Buldan also submitted a parliamentary research motion to the Presidency of the Parliament.

In the motions, it was recalled that the 1990s was one of the periods in Turkey when unsolved murders, extrajudicial operations, village evacuations and torture were the most common.

It was emphasised that in the "Psychological Activity Report" with the "secret" label, it was "officially" confirmed for the first time that the execution of Kurdish businesspeople was carried out by the decision of the National Security Council.

In the motion, Yılmaz and Tunç were asked to answer the following questions:

"\*Based on the fact that there is no statute of limitations for crimes against humanity, do you have any work to reveal and prosecute those responsible for the policies of unlawfulness, unsolved murders and torture by accepting as evidence the Psychological Activity Report, which has recently emerged and can be considered as an instruction document for gross human rights violations/crimes?"

\*Do you have any work on reopening the case files whose trials were dropped due to the statute of limitations and starting the trial process?"

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## At least 19 detained in Cizre, including children

ANF - Şırnak - 26 April 2024

Turkish state forces carried out house raids citing an investigation launched by the Şırnak Chief Public Prosecutor's Office.

At least 19 people, including children, were detained on the grounds of "making propaganda for an illegal organisation", an arbitrary and systematic accusation against Kurds.

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## Six of the journalists detained on Tuesday released

ANF - Istanbul - 26 April 2024

Six of the nine journalists detained in Istanbul, Ankara and Urfa on Tuesday have been released after questioning by the public prosecutor's office. The Istanbul public prosecutor's office has requested arrest warrants for MA correspondents Esra Solin Dal and Mehmet Aslan as well as Erdoğan Alayumat, apparently on charges of membership of a terrorist organisation. The specific grounds are unknown because the lawyers have not been allowed access to the file because of a confidentiality order.

During the interrogation, the journalists were questioned about their reporting, tapped telephone conversations with information sources and posts on social media.

Those released are Enes Sezgin from the daily Yeni Yaşam newspaper, free press employees Saliha Aras, Yeşim Alıcı, Beste Argat Balcı and Şirin Ermiş as well as Doğan Kaynak, a former employee of the MA agency, who was detained in Urfa and released after a video hearing. The other five journalists were welcomed in front of the Çağlayan Courthouse in Istanbul with the slogan "The free press cannot be silenced". They were welcomed by representatives of the Dicle-Firat Journalists' Association (DFG), Mesopotamian Women Journalists' Association (MGK), HDK (Peoples' Democratic Congress) spokesperson Esengül Demir and politicians from the DEM Party.

Saliha Demir, who works for the Yeni Yaşam newspaper, pointed out after her release that the detentions took place after the Day of Kurdish Journalism. "The government should know that the attempts to intimidate the free press make no sense," said the journalist. Lawyer Ferdi Yaman explained that the police detention of several days was ordered due to the journalistic work of those detained.

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## Book by Gültan Kışanak banned in Turkey

ANF - Ankara - 27 April 2024

Completely unnoticed by the public, the book “The Color Purple in Kurdish Politics” (original title “Kürt Siyasetinin Mor Rengi”), written by Gültan Kışanak while in prison, had been banned in Turkey for around a year and a half. As has only now become known, the work, which was published in 2018 by Dipnot Publishing in Ankara, was banned from bookstores in November 2022 by a court order in İzmir, for allegedly bearing the characteristics of “terrorist propaganda”. Neither Kışanak, who has been in prison for around eight years, nor the publisher were informed about the court decision. The incident only became known because the police confiscated a copy of the book during a search of Mezopotamya Agency (MA) journalist Mehmet Aslan, who was arrested a few days ago, as alleged "evidence" for terror charges.

Gültan Kışanak, who was mayor of the Kurdish metropolis of Amed until she was removed from office and replaced by a trustee appointed by the Turkish government, has published “The Color Purple in Kurdish Politics” which features texts by her fellow prisoners in Kandira jail. The texts in the book testify to the determined fight of Kurdish women against the patriarchal system of power in politics. The authors include women such as Aysel Tuğluk, Figen Yüksekdağ, Leyla Güven and Sebahat Tuncel, who are also in prison.

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## Three journalists sent to prison

ANF - Ankara - 27 April 2024

Mezopotamya Agency (MA) journalists Mehmet Aslan, Esra Solin Dal and free media worker Erdoğan Alayumat were detained in house raids on 23 April within the scope of the Istanbul-based operation.

The journalists, who were referred to the Criminal Court of Peace with a request for arrest after their statements to the prosecutor's office, were remanded in custody on the charge of "membership in a terrorist organization".

Esra Solin Dal would be taken to Bakırköy Women's Closed Prison, Erdoğan Alayumat to Metris Prison, and Mehmet Aslan to Sincan Prison.

Mezopotamya Agency journalist Mehmet Aslan announced his arrest on his social media account. In a post shared through his lawyers, Aslan wrote: "We have been remanded in custody. Our journey to truth is not daily, but lifelong. We will continue to write. Hope to meet you in the free days when we will come together again. Journalism is not a crime."

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# Interview

## Kalkan: Tayyip Erdoğan administration creates problems wherever it goes

ANF - Behdinan - 22 April 2024

In the first part of this interview, Duran Kalkan, member of the KCK Executive Council, spoke about the 'Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, a Political Solution to the Kurdish Question' campaign as well as the results of the municipal elections held on 31 March.

*Firstly, let us evaluate the international 'Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, a Political Solution to the Kurdish Question' campaign that has been ongoing for several months. What is your opinion on the latest actions and the campaign as a whole?*

Firstly, I would like to respectfully offer my greetings to Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] who is currently conducting a historic resistance on Imrali island. The aggravated solitary confinement and isolation being imposed on Rêber Apo continues. For thirty-seven months, over three years, we have not heard any news from Rêber Apo. We are entering a fourth year under these conditions. There has been no disclosure of information from the responsible institutions in regard to Imrali. All the hegemonic forces seem to approve of this situation and participate in it. A collaboration can clearly be ascertained.

Certain European institutions, particularly the Council of Europe, are responsible for the creation and management of the Imrali system. These institutions are the decision-makers in regard to Imrali. They try to portray themselves in a democratic light, yet it is undisputable that they are party to this undemocratic situation. There is a very deliberate misconduct aiming to delay, or prevent altogether, the re-evaluation of Rêber Apo's case after 25 years – the decision made by courts during his legal case. In this attempt, they are issuing constant 'disciplinary penalties' against Rêber Apo to ensure his case is not re-evaluated. This is why we emphasize the significance of the legal struggle.

In this respect, a conference in which various jurists participated was held at the European Parliament a few days ago; this is meaningful and important. We need to hold many such conferences. It has become clear that nothing in Imrali is proceeding according to the law. All kinds of rights violations are being carried out there. It is necessary to struggle more against this and to work harder on exposing the ongoing situation. As was reflected in the press, there will be a mass action in Strasbourg. There will be a protest in front of the institutions responsible for the Imrali system. I would like to congratulate the participants in advance and wish them all success.

This captivity of Rêber Apo should not be understood as something that only the Turkish state, the AKP, and the MHP are responsible for. Yes, they have a part in it, but there are other actors who hold the biggest share. In this respect, I want to emphasize the necessity of struggle. It is necessary to struggle every day. Every Kurd should be in action. What the enemy is trying to do is create the foundations that we ac-

cept to not receive any news from Rêber Apo. They hope to weaken or break our connection with Rêber Apo in this way. So, what we must do is grow closer to Rêber Apo. We must assume it our most fundamental duty to think, discuss, struggle, and take action for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo every day. All Kurds, wherever they are, men and women, young and old, should be in constant action. We must expand and spread our global campaign, which aims for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo and the solution to the Kurdish question. We must pave the way for gradual mass participation in the campaign. And there are important developments in this sense. There have been important actions and events in the last period. On March 8, the protests of women united with the goal of Rêber Apo's physical freedom. Indeed, it was predicted that the second phase of our freedom campaign would be the phase of mass unification; this was indeed the case. On Newroz, tens of millions of people were taking to the streets and uniting at the celebration venues. It was one of the most spectacular Newroz celebrations of all time. The celebrations were intertwined with the goal of Rêber Apo's physical freedom. Corresponding slogans were chanted everywhere. The Kurdish people demonstrated their stand. Almost like in a congress, they made a declaration of their will; that there will be no life without Rêber Apo, and that they demanded the physical freedom of Rêber Apo.

The outcome of all this was reflected in the March 31st election. This is the background against which the elections should be evaluated. In the municipal elections, this isolationist, fascist, colonialist, and genocidal mentality and politics suffered a fatal blow. The AKP was demoted from being a single-party, it lost its base and allies. This is an important situation.

This spirit prevailed all through the April 4th celebrations, and it's something that needs to be spread. Every day and every place must be utilized to advance the goals of the struggle. Every person must consider the possibilities and keep their focus on the struggle. May 1st is now ahead of us. On May 1st, we must reach a new peak. We must raise the bar in our fight for freedom. In the same way, it was important to voice the demand for Rêber Apo's physical independence at Newroz and on March 8, we must also make our voices heard on May 1st.

Just as Rêber Apo is the leader that revived Newroz and gave a new meaning to March 8, it is Rêber Apo that makes the greatest contribution to May 1st. Therefore, May 1st should be organized for Rêber Apo, and actions on this day should be taken for him. All Kurds, wherever they are, should take to the squares and streets on May 1st. They must lead the way, they must unite with workers and laborers everywhere, they must unite with the people; and they must really take the freedom campaign to a new peak, on a global level. This is important, especially since May 1st is an opportunity to achieve this. Let's make good use of this opportunity. Everyone should make preparations from now, establish relations, contact organizations, and do whatever it takes. It is important to add meaning to May 1st – redefine it as a day when all workers and laborers, all socialist left forces, all oppressed people, women, and youth, from all over the world, struggle for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo. Let's reach a new peak with our campaign on May 1st. This is our stance and our call. And we believe this will be the case. I congratulate our people, workers and laborers, and all oppressed peoples on May 1st, and I wish them all success.

*In relation to the municipal elections that took place on March 31 in Northern Kurdistan and Turkey, the results were a great success for the people and a heavy blow for the government. What conclusions should be drawn from the elections? And what will happen next with Erdoğan and the AKP?*

The first thing the AKP needs to do is step down. If there is even a tiny shred of democracy left in Turkey, Tayyip Erdoğan must step down. When it suits their interests, the Erdoğan regime attempts to imitate European culture by presenting themselves as Europeans. This is what they have been doing for a century. But when we think about it, any president, prime minister, or administration in Europe would have had to step down if they found themselves in the same predicament as Turkey has at the moment. Nothing in Turkey is the same. The phrase “end” was used by Tayyip Erdoğan in his post-election speech. Did he come to terms with his impending end? He had to have given it some thought, he knew it was over, but he was also aware that his close circles wouldn't pressure him to step down. He doesn't anticipate to be confronted, since he has censored any such attempt during his rule. In regards to the various political and social forces, uncertainty prevails. Will they force an early parliamentary election? Will they ask for Erdoğan's resignation? Its unclear. As the freedom movement, our reaction is to struggle. We will do this with or without elections. We are such a movement.

The Tayyip Erdoğan administration was boastful about how it had won every election since its establishment. It used this as grounds to gain support for the occupation operation it has been planning this entire winter. Thus, it was hoping for a favorable outcome during these elections. It held numerous meetings in this regard with the USA and NATO. They got support and acceptance in return for Sweden's NATO membership. Throughout the winter, they had been continuously active in Hewlêr [Erbil] and Baghdad. They continued their efforts and visited Iran too. Erdoğan is reportedly scheduled to visit Baghdad on April 22nd. After that, Erdoğan is scheduled to visit America, to find support. So, his hope and his plan was to be successful in the elections, and with the wind of this election and a little bit of legitimacy, he would further develop his genocidal occupation attacks, both towards the Medya Defense Zones and other areas. But after already suffering a heavy defeat in the war, Erdogan has also suffered a heavy defeat in this election. During the winter, the Kurdish freedom guerrilla struck blow after blow in the region of Zap. Erdoğan was defeated militarily, and now, after suffering a political defeat in the elections, his position has weakened even more. Militarily and politically, he had lost the initiative and suffered defeat. What could he do now? If he were a bit democratic, there would be no other choice than to resign. Since he is not, he will try to continue his way with the same methods. The only remedy he will resort to is war, aggression, more fascist oppression, and terror. With this, he will try to silence all opposition.

Based on this, the government will try to extend its life a little longer. There is no other alternative the Erdoğan administration see for themselves. They are in such a situation that Tayyip Erdoğan's government, in its current form, has been hit politically and militarily and has lost its power. It is not able to attack as it wishes, yet it desperately needs to attack. If it does not attack, if it does not escalate fascist terror, it seems that there is no route to survival for itself, there is no other way to prolong its life. It is in such a predicament. In fact, even if it attacks, it will not be able to free itself from this situation. Further attacking just means sinking deeper into a total deadlock. The reason for this is the policies which it is pursuing, its anti-Kurdish, occupying, and genocidal attack policies. Still, the Erdoğan administration is trying to save the situation a little bit and is trying to mitigate the defeats, to breathe a little bit, to continue its wars, and to create further deceptions for its forces. Erdoğan is going to go to Baghdad and America and wants to prepare his surroundings for the new attacks that he is going to carry out. This seems to be the case.

Is this a solution? Not at all in our eyes. But this is a struggle. We will see what the results will be. This government is actually experiencing its last days. If the AKP government does attack, then this will be its last attack. They always stated that this was their last fight. This slogan was the only one they so determinedly used, and now it has become their truth. This is going to be their last fight.

On this basis, it tries to find support again, but it is confronted with difficulties. Why would the Iraqi government, the forces of South Kurdistan, and similar forces support a power that has suffered such a political and military defeat? Why would they support an occupier, that is occupying their territory? The Tayyip Erdoğan administration creates problems wherever it goes. Thereby, the biggest problem is Tayyip Erdoğan, with his ideas and his political presence, himself. So far, he has stirred up trouble everywhere. By doing so, he has robbed, stolen and made himself and his relatives become some of the richest people in the world. Why should anyone support this? Erdoğan will probably want to take advantage of the vacuum, a result of the upcoming elections in the US.

In short, Erdoğan is in a weak position, he has been hit, but he is not gone yet, he will attack desperately. This needs to be seen and preparations need to be made accordingly. This is important. As a movement, we evaluate these, but everyone should evaluate this. All patriots, all our people, everyone should know this. Everyone needs to be prepared. We must succeed in strangling the AKP-MHP fascism in this last attack. This must be our goal. They will suffocate and collapse in their last attack. We must believe this and in order to achieve this, everyone must prepare and participate in this process of resistance and needs to mobilize.

*What does the success in these municipal elections mean for the social, democratic, and oppositional forces of the country?*

Let me first say that fascism was not tolerated in Kurdistan. As in all prior elections, the Kurdish people once again demonstrated their unwavering desire for freedom and democracy. The demands of the Kurdish people are clear: they want Turkey to become democratic and accept their freedom. The election results make this quite obvious and apparent. It has been reported that the AKP used various fraudulent strategies and coercion to win mayorships in many Kurdish cities. It was evident that there were blatant frauds. Many votes were shifted, frauds were committed, ballot boxes were rigged, and people were lined up like slaves, taken away, and forced to vote. In other words, the era of slavery has now taken the form of voting under AKP rule.

Aside from this, I want to commend and honor the Kurdish people for their advocacy of freedom and democracy. They demolished the appointment of trustees in Kurdistan with great determination. By taking ownership of their municipalities, they succeeded. By winning these elections, they were able to make the municipalities the home of the people. We consider this a very important aspect. With the spirit of success, the people began to rebuild their municipalities. This is how it should stay going forward. It is necessary to represent the people's will. These buildings should be used by the community to manage its affairs.

The elected co-mayors of the municipalities should be the ones to coordinate these works, to unite and integrate with the people on this basis. So much so that the municipalities should turn into spaces of organizing. Of course, the government is trying to usurp again. The example in Wan depicts this mentality, making it visible to everyone. This approach is not a one-off, it is not something that just happened. From

now on, there will be no more trustees, no more usurpation. The stance of the people of Wan and the democratic forces clearly showed this. What was done in Wan can be done everywhere.

Still, everyone must be ready for the attacks that will come from the AKP-MHP fascist administration. The people must be ready, and the co-chairs must be ready. They should be able to turn their municipalities into centers of organization and democracy – local democracy in particular. They must be prepared for all kinds of fascist, genocidal, and colonialist attacks. Nevertheless, there will be resistance. No place will just surrender with or without resistance. Moreover, the municipality symbolizes the organization of the people. It means for organized people to conduct their own work. If the people have decided on something, if a united and organized voice arises from this, the municipality work would truly find meaning. The services of the municipality is not limited to a building but rather the streets and everywhere else. This is how everyone should approach the municipality, which is an important part of local administration. This must be the fundamental approach in the new period.

On the other hand, the duty of democratizing Turkey withstands. We attach great importance to this factor as well. Let me express the following in this regard: Some circles were complaining that AKP-MHP fascism was very effective in various parts of Turkey, that there was a fascist lockdown, that people were completely brainwashed, that these regions were full of racist, nationalist, and chauvinist mentality, and that it was very difficult to change them. These elections have nullified such an approach. It has become clear that society in Turkey is open to change. It is not ossified or anything like that. Of course, there are such regions, but the fascist-dominated areas are a very small minority in Turkey. The vast majority are actually in search of democracy. They feel suffocated because of the economic crisis and the crisis that emerged as a result of the Kurdish hostility and war policies created by AKP-MHP fascism. They are hungry and are looking for perspectives and a solution. There is huge pressure, there is terror, and people cannot breathe. If a party is able to provide the people with that which they need, the people would be willing to organize in the name of democracy and freedom. Whether this was the Black Sea region or Central Anatolia, it would not matter. During the elections, positive results were achieved in places that were thought to be impossible. Therefore, the forces of democracy, the DEM Party, and the Labor and Freedom Alliance should develop a broad peace and democracy movement in Turkey. There is already a basis for this in Kurdistan. The people there run their own affairs. It is important to spread to new areas, to attract people with different views, to make appropriate propaganda and education, and to spread concepts of democracy and freedom.

In this respect, all political circles and parties in Turkey should regard this situation as an advantage. They must work on mobilization, propaganda, and organizing. The situation right now shows that there is potential for this to evolve. Indeed, such an effort would find supporters, bring down this government in the shortest possible time, and develop an alternative democratic administration.

I need to underline the following: a new process has started in Turkey. The democratization process, democratic consciousness, political organization, and action will develop. Fascism will be overthrown, all its effects will be erased, and democratization will prevail. Kurdish freedom is a fundamental pillar of this. No matter what was inflicted on the Kurdish people in the past, no matter how much pressure was put, the Kurdish people did not step-back. They are the motor force behind Turkey's democratization. They are standing upright and vivid. It is necessary to work in every part of Turkey, in every city, from Istanbul to Izmir, from Ankara to Çukurova, to the Black Sea, to the neighborhoods, reaching the workers, laborers, and women, young and old. It is necessary to reach people of all genders, colors, and beliefs. It is necessary

to explain this fascist, genocidal, colonialist mentality, politics, and system and ask them for democratization. The path to this is open and whoever walks it, wins. The tenet of patriotism brings a strive for democracy and a revolutionary mindset with it. On this basis, the democracy movement can develop strongly. They have won so many municipalities and are getting so many votes. If this work is properly conducted, the democratic bloc would gain as much as 20-30 percent and become the first party.

Following Kılıçdaroğlu's defeat, Özgür Özel's CHP introduced a new dynamic to the elections. It became the first party. Ecevit's CHP had made a similar breakthrough fifty years prior. But even with his greatest efforts, Ecevit failed to become the person to empower democracy because he was too ideologically entangled in the given politics and mentality to be able to innovate. This mindset is essentially a manifestation of cultural genocide articulated as enmity towards Kurds.

Coming back to today, could the current developments provide a new opportunity for the CHP? We don't know if the Özgür Özel administration can really change the current situation. Can it overcome the dominant mentality and politics? Although the CHP is credited with founding the republic, this does not imply that they are its emissaries. The CHP has always considered itself to be the protector of the republic. They really state this outright. Establishing a republic is one thing, establishing a democratic republic is another. For Turkey to become a republic, there needs to be a mental and political transformation. One must internalize the true meaning of the concept of the republic, carrying the sincere desire to democratize it. It is essential to be devoted to democratic ideals. Is it possible for them to present such a program?

They should remember that the Kurdish issue lies at the core of all of Turkey's issues if they are to propose an adequate democratic program. Be it a war, the economic crisis, or a political crisis; the isolation being imposed on İmralı is the cause. Can the CHP create new policies regarding these matters? Can the CHP adopt trustworthy steps that will widen the door to democracy and a democratic resolution of the Kurdish issue? We hope the CHP takes this action. We genuinely do.

Under the CHP, certain government officials are distorting historical events; they are not being truthful. They're attempting to portray the Kurds as people who are against the Republicans, as though the Kurds undermine the will of the republic. They wish to use this as the foundation for a century of anti-Kurdish sentiment, a new pretext for more massacres and genocides against Kurds. All they're doing is spreading false information. These are defamatory statements. It is imperative to examine the historical facts closely.

The Kurds were the ones who resisted against French and British occupation. The areas where the Kurds live were the only areas safeguarded from occupation. Again, in the example of Greek occupation, some Turkish chauvinists were encouraging people to flee saying that when the Greeks approached Eskişehir, Ankara should be left and the people should flee to Erzurum. All while, the Kurdish deputies were encouraging people to stay determined, saying that not even a step back would be taken. This is the true story of how Ankara was protected. Who can deny this? We all know this very well. The Kurds did the greatest service to the establishment of the Republic. Still, some individuals are trying to deceive society with lies.

The Republic did not protect the Kurds, it did not develop a democratic attitude. When they formed an alliance with the Kurds, they promised to implement the decisions they took. Supposedly, they were going to grant the Kurds autonomy. They made all kinds of promises, they put it in the constitution, but then they changed it all. When we look at the constitution's current form, it could be easily seen that many of its articles are based on the denial of Kurdish identity, even if this includes historical misrepresentation.

One article, in particular, states that: “Everyone who is bound to the Republic of Turkey by citizenship is a Turk.” This is what they define a Turk as. The Republic of Turkey has only existed for a hundred years. But were there no Turks in this world a hundred years ago? If the Turks are being reduced to a hundred-year-old society, they may as well not exist. The founding of the republic, represents only the founding of the republic. Not the founding of an entire society. This mentality which denies history, is unaware that it is also denying itself in the process. Even so, this article is given special status; it is unamendable. The name of this article cannot be changed, and its amendment cannot be discussed. The amendment of this article cannot be proposed, discussed, or requested – even asking for its amendment constitutes crime. The mentality behind such articles has become so abstract, so superficial, and so far from reality that it even denies itself. There is no need to elaborate further. Everyone knows, or should know, these obvious facts. The ruling circles and powers know history very well; they are conducting this policy to deliberately deceive.

So, will there really be some honesty and adherence today to the minimum democratic values? Actually, we would favor this and, of course, if this is achieved it will find support. Though, there must be a clear and transparent program regarding the CHP’s plans for the future. If this is the case, if the CHP can renew and democratize itself, it can really develop itself. It would be good if this happened.

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## Kalkan: Special war can be stopped with revolutionary war

ANF - Behdinan - 23 April 2024

In the second part of this interview, Duran Kalkan, a member of the KCK Executive Council, spoke about the role of guerrillas in successfully countering the special war carried out by Turkey.

*In recent months, the guerrilla forces of the HPG and YJA Star have been able to inflict heavy blows on the Turkish military. As a result, not only the government but also the army has been battered. How do you assess this situation, and what can you tell us about it?*

Firstly, I commemorate with respect, affection, and gratitude all the martyrs of the HPG and YJA Star and all the martyrs of the freedom struggle, particularly comrade Eser Warşîn, our most recently declared martyr in Dersim. April 16 marks the anniversary of the martyrdom of Hozan Sefkan and his comrades, and April 17 is the anniversary of the martyrdom of comrade Arab Aziz. I commemorate all our martyrs, and particularly all our Arab martyrs, with respect, love, and gratitude. It is also the anniversary of the Anfal Massacre. Therefore I would also like to commemorate those who were martyred in the attacks by Saddam Hussein’s dictatorship in South Kurdistan and all the Anfal martyrs in particular.

The current period has been greatly influenced by the guerrilla. The foundation for the current political climate was established with the revolutionary actions that were carried out by the guerrilla throughout the winter. The guerilla is the force which contributes the greatest to the freedom movement. The main reason the AKP-MHP fascism suffered such a defeat in the municipal elections on March 31, is the success of the guerrilla. The guerrilla’s military losses and blows against AKP-MHP fascism cleared the path for the party’s electoral defeat too. This should be known to all. These revolutionary efforts were effective, significant, and of the utmost importance. It was unlike anything that had ever been done before. Nobody



can fight like the HPG and YJA Star guerrillas, as we've already said. In the areas where the guerrillas are fighting, no other force could survive. Under the conditions that the HPG and YJA Star guerrillas faced, no other army could survive, let alone fight victoriously. With their networks of tunnels and teams, the guerrillas of Zap, Avashin, and Metina see the power in themselves to defeat any military force. The guerrillas have achieved successes that the US, Chinese, or Russian troops could not match. One could look at the situation of the Turkish army to understand this.

In the past, the Turkish army, as NATO's second-largest army, was regarded as the army that supposedly gave energy and spirit to NATO. Now we see what has become of it. This was reflected in the press the other day. They were discussing the impact of the defeat on the Turkish army, calling it the 'Mount Amediyê Syndrome'. In fact, the Turkish army has had its share of syndromes, whether in Zap, Nusaybin, or Kurdistan altogether. Generally speaking, they stumble from one syndrome to the next. For 40 years, the Turkish army has been suffering defeat after defeat. There is a Turkish idiom for this situation: "a defeated wrestler can never have enough of wrestling." This describes their situation the best. Over and over again, they carry out operations and promise to destroy the PKK and end 'terrorism'. Every summer, Tayyip Erdoğan says, 'This summer, I will bring the PKK to an end'. How many summers have passed? He has been in power for twenty-two years, twenty-two summers have passed. What have you done? Who still believes your words? No one does.

In fact, some of them went as far as to claim that Turkish soldiers wanted to come to fight on Mount Amediyê. But in reality, hundreds of them preferred to resign. Some even committed suicide and shot themselves. Others use illness as an excuse to not fight. Nevertheless, the Erdoğan government does not want to stop. This is clear. So, their soldiers became the unfortunate pawns of something which resembled a vivid war movie.

Who can stand against the guerrilla, a force so enthusiastic and determined? The insubordination of those Turkish soldiers is only natural. It is not those people who should be vilified but the ones who sent them there. They are responsible, they should come to fight themselves if they are so brave. Let Tayyip Erdoğan's children come. Most of them have not even completed their mandatory military service. Who are they fooling? They use money to buy individuals, then send them to kill others, which ends up with their deaths. Do they ever wonder what its like for those so-called soldiers? They really went through hell during the winter. Zap became a grave, a hell for fascism. This is the plain truth.

We had warned them that this would be the case. We told them not to bring the situation to this. But no one wanted to listen or understand. Now the guerrilla are fulfilling their duty. As a movement, we evaluated the past, learned our lessons, and adapted accordingly. We did not stop but continued working and preparing undisturbed. On the basis of the successes of this political-military struggle, an even greater enthusiasm, excitement, and energy has emerged. The initiative is in our hands, and we are ahead in our preparations.

I can state that we are currently engaged in the most critical phase of the struggle. The Erdoğan government has no other choice left, as we have previously stated. It will collapse even if it accomplishes this final war, though it will still fight with whatever it has left to be able to extend its existence. Erdoğan is behaving quite similar to Saddam. By looking at Saddam, Erdoğan sees how he himself will die, since this is the fate of all dictators. This makes him terrified, so he emphasizes the homicidal war against the Kurds, his

anti-Kurdish mentality, and fosters nationalism, racism, and chauvinism in Turkey in an attempt to bring about a fake unity between himself and the people.

I want to send a warning to the political circles in Turkey, especially to the CHP: they ought not to be a part of this war. They should not share the same fate as the AKP. What is the Turkish army doing in Iraq and Syria? They should ask these questions. Questioning this does not make them renegades or traitors. On the contrary, a patriot would not allow the children of their country to be sent here and there to be killed for the interests of one person. A true patriot would put an end to this situation, save these people from disaster.

Also, no one should be fooled by special warfare propaganda. Some people appear in the press claiming how victorious the Turkish army and war industry is. The truth is hidden in the battlefields. The HPG headquarters already shared the necessary information during Newroz. The world saw that the much-vaunted Turkish technology has no chance against the modern and capable guerrilla. Their so-called sophisticated technological equipment was shredded to pieces. It is a pity that the money and income of the people and laborers of Turkey is wasted like this. It is also incomprehensible and unacceptable that this is being done in order to kill Kurds, the same people who they call "one of us." Anyone who does not oppose this under the pretext of patriotism has fallen prey to nationalism.

In that respect, what comes next is more important. Everyone who is in favor of democracy, freedom, justice, and equality should approach this critical phase with caution. Everybody must participate actively in the duty to get rid of this fascist regime that has been hanging over Turkey like a nightmare for 20 years. This is the beginning of the end of fascism. Let's achieve this together under the leadership of the resistance of the guerrilla.

*Let's take one more look at Wan and what has happened there in recent weeks. Among your movement, how do you internally evaluate the situation there?*

Our leadership has evaluated the situation in Wan and described it as a new spirit, a new style. I agree. I agree on the basis of self-criticism: this should have emerged much earlier. In the face of such fascist, colonialist, genocidal special warfare attacks, this determination and spirit should have spread everywhere. That courage and sacrifice should have been encouraged before. Of course, fascism was always going to attack. But if you are organized and prepared, fascism is not omnipotent. The state, the power is not omnipotent. This was proved in Wan, it was proved in Sirnak. These places were insulted so many times, the special warfare attacks increased so much. All kinds of torture, injustice and disrespect were inflicted on these places. There is no dirty method left which this government has not already opted for. They even destroyed cemeteries, they even exhumed corpses, they built apartment buildings on cemeteries, they tied corpses to the back of their cars and drove like this through the streets, they banned funeral ceremonies. Under this fascist regime, neither the people nor the dead are at peace. They inflicted all the repression and pain they could.

Now Turkey's prisons are full. There was great resistance conducted in the prisons against this pressure and persecution from November 27 to April 4. This resistance now continues with new methods. Why this resistance? Both outside and within the prisons, there is great anger. There is no possibility for young people, women and children to live. They invented a concept called 'Torture and Child Abuse,' which they are inflicting on prisoners. Here, what they refer to as 'abuse' is in fact rape. They act too shamefully to use the

word 'rape'. Then why are they so shameless to do such things? They do such indescribable things and try to legitimize their crimes against humanity by playing with words and concepts. This is what is happening under the rule of the AKP. They force imprisoned Kurdish mothers under torture to say the following words about their daughters: 'It is better to become a prostitute than to go to the mountains'. Is there a bigger insult than this?

Our social culture and our principles of free life must be taken into account. That is why I say that it is unavoidable to react or to resist. Such attacks must be resisted everywhere and at all times. There is no power that can break the power of the people. There is no power greater than the people, the youth and women. The youth nullified the attackers in Wan and caught the experts of special warfare red-handed in Sirnak. They are like an organized army. Most military forces are equipped with money; they use all kinds of lies and deceit to fool people. With pressure, lies, and money, they deceive people and insult young people and children in all kinds of ways. We must never give them the opportunity.

On that note, the spirit created in Wan and Sirnak really is contagious. These people have shown a righteous, honorable, and patriotic attitude. This is the attitude that everyone must show at all times, everywhere. From now on, this attitude must be shown everywhere. Wherever there is the slightest attack, we must immediately demand that they hold its perpetrators to accountability. Nothing changes by just complaining. Some people complain, saying that the Turkish state puts pressure on them, tortures them, and so on. But the question is, what have you done against it? Why do you put yourself in such a miserable and helpless position? Don't you have a mind, hands, feet, and power? You too, can organize, become conscious, and be able to fight. While your opponent is organizing and attacking you, desiring so much to destroy you, why don't you resist? Why don't you feel responsible? Patriotism and democracy mean responsibility, consciousness, organization, and freedom. It means taking responsibility for your own life and ensuring your own defense and security in the face of any attack on your life. This is called the consciousness of self-defense. We practice this. Self-defense will only develop if it is conducted in an organized manner. Waiting for someone else to save you and always complaining will not work. The attitude of waiting and asking from others is the attitude of a slave, not a fighter, not a free person. A free person struggles and succeeds. They become the power they need. Rights are not given, they are taken. Everything is won through struggle. In that respect, we will struggle.

I would like to congratulate the people of Wan and of Sirnak. They have created a new situation. All the cities, towns, and neighborhoods of Kurdistan and Turkey should be inspired by this. The result is clear: only if one fights can one win. Anyone, anywhere, anytime, can do this. This is the reality. From now on, the right attitude to show in the face of all kinds of attacks from AKP-MHP fascism, is this attitude of resistance. Everyone must take to the streets, and the squares must be filled by people. Whoever is attacking must be confronted. We must confront with all our means; we must be organized. Of course, there should be no solo efforts. We must act carefully, plan, and be prepared. Like this, we can handle attacks.

At this point, our people know the reality of special warfare. But awareness of its remedy is still too weak. The youth wanted to act, but we said that the most appropriate response against special warfare is the revolutionary peoples' war. And what we see right now in Wan and Sirnak, is the revolutionary peoples' war. It is a people's war, the people's resistance. Everywhere, the people ought to resist and struggle. There is nothing that can impede the struggle of the people. For this, we should really renew ourselves based on strong self-criticism, especially regarding the approach of the youth and women. We must put aside those passive, submissive moods and attitudes. Whether it is the ideology of the petite bourgeoisie, the middle

class, or any class; we must let such understandings go. We must struggle for freedom with a Apoist consciousness and will.

On this basis, we will educate and organize. We will do this by living in a communal way and resisting all kinds of attacks. As Rêber Apo said, "Even if we have the power to defeat the world, we will never attack anyone, but even if the world unites and comes against us, we will never compromise our legitimate democratic rights." We will never give up the cause of free life. This is our philosophy. This is the philosophy of Kurdish women, young people, and free Kurdish people. From now on, we will work on stronger organizing and struggling according to this philosophy. There is nothing else that counts. It was these great resistances that reminded us of who we are. Once again, I would like to salute the spirit of resistance in Wan and Sirnak and call on everyone to internalize this spirit of resistance and to show such an attitude of resistance and victory against all kinds of special warfare attacks.

*The resistance of young people in northern Kurdistan has been particularly remarkable recently, but there are also problems. Many young people are fleeing and leaving their homeland. What can you tell us about this? How do you assess the attitude of the Kurdish youth in this period?*

The attitude of young people was good and positive during this period. The youth took an active part in the development of the freedom movement. Starting with the World Youth Conference in Europe. The youth played a leading role during demonstrations both in the diaspora and in the four provinces of Kurdistan. They developed effective actions by themselves, and especially during the month of March, they left their mark on their actions. On 8 March, young women were at the forefront. On Newroz, again, the youth were at the forefront. The will of the youth was also strongly demonstrated in the elections. The Kurdish youth showed that Kurdish society is a young society, that they are conscious, educated, insistent, and determined on a free life, on struggling, and being selfless. They are a Apoist youth. Therefore, no attack can stop them or break their will. They have revealed and demonstrated this. In the past, they did not struggle against special warfare attacks effectively. They failed to grasp organizational unity; they were not so resistant. Many young people were hit or abducted. We observed this in the press. But the youths have to reflect on themselves more. When one gets abducted by the enemy, why was he/she strolling around, alone, in the first place? If they have guns, why don't you? You live in a world where the enemy is armed and determined to destroy you. What do you expect? That's how to approach it.

Also, displacement is part of the enemy's special warfare policy. Special warfare is not always waged using the same methods. This differentiates depending on conditions. Those forces implementing special warfare are practicing genocide; they are changing the demographic structure. They commit massacres, cultural genocide, and assimilation. They attack with genocidal methods, from forcing migration and changing demographics to displacement from the motherland. One needs to be very aware of this: Why do so many Kurdish youths go abroad when there is such a great struggle for freedom in one's own country? We cannot reduce this to oppression, persecution, and fascist terror. If you are young, you have a duty to struggle. There are so many young people struggling and proving every day that this is possible. I call on the youth. Join the guerrilla, come to the mountains. Organize, organize secretly, and go underground. Do whatever may be necessary, but remain in your homeland and live in your country. If something small happens, if the police want to arrest you, this should not be a reason to immediately leave the country and run away. This is not the way; it is not legitimate.

We shouldn't expect too much from other places. There are claims that job opportunities are better in Europe, that so and so is better there. We all went to Europe. When I was there, I told my lawyer that if they had deeded all of Germany to me, I wouldn't stay for even a day. We shouldn't emulate those places so much. It is important to be able to return to one's own country. If the youth organize themselves a little bit better, they should be able to return to their country. If they are not working for the struggle for freedom in the places where they are, if they are not playing an important role, of course they should return to the country. If they are in prisons, they should join the struggle, join the guerrilla.

During our last interview, we drew attention to the fact that the German state was fighting the Turkish Republic's fight. We said that Germany was detaining and trying Kurdish people, later sending them to France or Sweden so they would be deported to Turkey. The Turkish state alone does not have the power to do such a thing, it requires the voluntary participation of the German state. After we said this during an interview, the German state directly deported someone to Turkey. If it is because of us, I cannot say anything.

More than ten years ago, they massacred Sakine in the middle of Paris. Two years ago, they massacred comrade Evîn in the middle of Paris. Everything could be expected from those who commit such massacres in plain sight. We will ensure our own security. We will be careful where we are. We will not entrust ourselves to others, hoping that they will protect us. We will not be comfortable and think that it is safe for us there. This needs to be emphasized.

Why were these massacres committed? Why were they never officially clarified? France is covering it all up. They are cooperating, they are a partner in interest and bargaining. They have turned politics into trade. Their reality must be exposed and fought against. We need to take our own precautions. They have been keeping Rêber Apo in a system of solitary confinement and torture for 26 years. They murdered Sakine in Paris in the middle of the day. Those who do this are ready to do anything. So we must understand what they are capable of and develop our own measures. Especially the Kurdish young people should be more sensitive, organized and know how to approach correctly.

*Finally, we want to look at the escalating situation in the Middle East. What do you have to say about the current situation, and what is your perspective?*

Iran has attacked Israel. Everyone says it was expected, since Iran had announced that it would retaliate. We are observing the situation, gathering information on it and based on this we evaluate and discuss. Our leadership announces the evaluation of our movement to the public when necessary. So that which we express, is our joint evaluation.

In light of the current circumstances, I would like to state briefly that it appears to be the start of a second Gaza War. This process of invading and massacring the people of Gaza was initiated through a variety of provocations and games. Both Tayyip Erdoğan and Hamas played a part in this. However, the USA and Israel are the ones responsible. We've said this before. The victims are the people of Gaza. Some of those third parties became involved in order to obstruct the energy route, while others did so in order to remove the obstacles that stood in the way of it. They therefore provoked one another. They therefore paved the way for Israel to invade Gaza, carry out these atrocities, and overthrow its government. It appears that the same thing is being attempted to be done now. Iran is now being used as a pretext, just as Tayyip Erdoğan

and Hamas were used back then. I believe that Israel is laying the groundwork for future assaults against specific elements in Gaza and other regions by indulging in tension and conflict with Iran.

Iran carried out the most recent strike, but the Israeli and Turkish governments have prepared a major provocation in an attempt to lure Iran into this conflict, which has lasted for more than six months. Iran was drawn into the war by the Turkish press, particularly that of Erdoğan's administration and the AKP press. The Israeli government has acted comparably. This was the extent of its most recent attack on the Syrian embassy. In fact, the Iranian leadership has been acting sensibly in response to all of these provocations in the recent past. Put otherwise, he wasn't too provoked.

Iran handled the consulate attack in Syria with this stance. It has already made it clear that it will retaliate. And it retaliated in the form of a show of force. It did not really matter what the results were in this retaliation attack. Nevertheless, Israel and Iran are now clashing. In this way, Iran is being drawn into the conflict. These parties generally conduct attacks externally, to gain strength internally. For example, the AKP administration, Tayyip Erdoğan, used all the Hamas and Palestine propaganda to gain votes during elections. He did it purely as a tool of domestic politics. Now the Netanyahu administration is trying to draw Iran into the conflict, to create the grounds for further attacks on Gaza. Iran's attack was a bit like that. It seems to be more about pleasing Iranian society or its supporters, giving them the gift of success, rather than striking a blow against the other side.

We are against this kind of war. We are against imperialist wars, colonialist, occupying, and genocidal wars. Problems cannot be solved on this basis. We believe that democratic politics is the solution to all social problems created and accumulated in the Middle East over the past five thousand years. We underline that the solution project is Democratic Confederalism based on Democratic Autonomy. Rêber Apo developed these concepts as a new paradigm and put it to the service of the people with the program he defined theoretically. He has produced an ideology, politics, project and program that will end all these wars and solve the problems. We want the peoples to develop their own will, to learn organization, to become conscious. Let them have more say in their own lives. Let them bring democracy to where they are. Let them not allow such monist states, nation-state dictatorships to exist and oppress them. Accordingly, it is necessary that the true solidarity of the peoples is established. Therefore, democratic people's administrations should emerge. On this basis a Democratic Middle East Confederalism should emerge. This is our solution project. It has become clear that all other approaches will lead to war, conflict, massacre and tears.

Our call is to all the peoples of the region. Let's face this reality, nationalism, bigotry and other similar concepts will not get us anywhere. Solidarity, a democratic attitude, Democratic Autonomy and Democratic Confederalism form the solution. We can all live in this beautiful region, in the Middle East, under democratic administrations and in solidarity. There is room for everyone to live in these lands where humanity stems from, and where sociality was developed – the place that was once called paradise. We need to get away from this ravenous hunger, this gluttony, this excessive exploitation. This is against the morals, culture and history of the people of the Middle East. So, we say let us turn to our history. Our call is on this basis. With all forces acting on this basis, we will struggle until the end to create the Democratic Middle East Confederalism, the democratic unity of the peoples of the Middle East. On this basis, we greet everyone who joins this struggle and wish them success.

## Hozat: Global campaign for Öcalan reached a very important level and now needs to develop further

ANF - Behdinan - 25 April 2024

Besê Hozat, co-chair of the KCK Executive Council, spoke about the struggle for the physical freedom of the Kurdish people's leader, Abdullah Öcalan, and the local elections in Turkey and North Kurdistan.

*Let us first take a look at the situation of the Kurdish people's leader, Abdullah Öcalan and, above all, at the struggle for his physical freedom. The global campaign that has been running since the end of last year has seen several highlights. Your movement is currently calling for a new phase and struggle on different levels. Can you explain this?*

The global campaign under the slogan 'Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, a Political Solution to the Kurdish Question' has reached a very important level, both in terms of societal resistance and in terms of legal, diplomatic, political, and ideological struggle. But it is necessary to develop the campaign even further. The main goal of the campaign is to ensure the physical freedom of Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan]. Safe-guarding his health, security, and freedom requires a much more comprehensive and much greater struggle than that which is currently being conducted.

Of course, political, diplomatic, and legal struggles are important. No law is being applied in İmralı, especially as national and international law is being violated in Turkey. There is a complete lack of conscience and morality against Rêber Apo; therefore, the legal struggle is crucial. Still, in order to achieve results in the named fields, a comprehensive struggle of the masses is necessary. Only when pressure is exerted on the Turkish state through social struggle and resistance, will it be possible to achieve results. Again, we need to exert serious social pressure on the Council of Europe (CoE), the 'European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment' (CPT), the European states as a whole, as well as the forces implementing the international conspiracy in order for them to make certain political, diplomatic, and legal improvements, take steps, and change their policies.

Because of their omission, the CPT and the CoE are partners to the Turkish State's policy of genocide. Turkey finds courage in their silence. For this reason, it is possible that the İmralı system of torture and solitary confinement still exists today. There has been no communication with Rêber Apo for almost three years, his relatives and attorneys have been forbidden to visit him. There has been no news regarding his condition. This is blatantly unconscientious, illegal, immoral, unethical, unpolitical, and inhumane. This silent consent on behalf of the CoE, puts it at odds with its own law.

*Despite being a signatory, Turkey is violating the International Convention on Human Rights. Turkey completely disregards, or fails to recognize, any international convention, as if it had taken Europe captive. Whether the Turkish state is blackmailing Europe using refugees as a threat or if there is a covert agreement, could it be possible that such an agreement would influence the policy towards İmralı?*

It is unclear if there is a covert deal based on Europe's refusal to accept refugees in exchange for them turning a blind eye to the brutal misconduct being carried out on İmralı. But what we see and what we know

is, that Europe is a partner in Turkey's crimes against humanity. In a way, Europe has become Turkey's hostage. Turkey does what it wants and violates international law as it pleases. By turning a blind eye, both the CoE and the CPT have violated international law. In other words, they have violated the law they themselves have created. They are complicit in Turkey's crimes of genocide and inhumanity. This is not a situation that should be taken lightly or accepted.

We have significantly broadened our struggle for the freedom of Rêber Apo through social, legal, political, diplomatic, and ideological struggle by spreading Rêber Apo's perspectives, ideas and his philosophy more universally. However, the stage we have reached is still not sufficient. It is necessary to draw hundreds of thousands, if not millions of people from diverse social groups and ethnicities – aside from Kurds – to this freedom campaign. By doing so, pressure can be exerted on the CoE, on the US, and on all the European states, among the other forces that gave rise to the international conspiracy. Everyone ought to be pushed to reevaluate and alter their approaches toward Turkey to bring an end to its policies of genocide, torture, and isolation in Imrali and to ensure Rêber Apo's physical freedom.

Kurds have spread all over the world; there is a very critical number of Kurdish population in Europe, America, and all over the world. We have gained many important international friends over the course of the 25-year struggle for the freedom of Rêber Apo but particularly since October 10, with the launch of the global freedom campaign. Through expanding their network and engaging the European community, our friends have made a significant contribution to the movement's internationalization. This could be strengthened by reaching more people and making even more friends and integrating European society in this campaign. Imagine tens of thousands of people organizing prolonged sit-ins in front of the CPT and the CoE. Because societal pressure is effective in Europe, these institutions would be pushed to review and possibly alter their dubious relationships of interest and policies with Turkey.

The Turkish pillar of this campaign is also very important. We saw during Newroz and the municipal elections on March 31 that the climate of fear in Kurdistan and Turkey has been broken, and the fascist government has suffered a very serious blow. It received a fatal wound. Opposition and objection are developing within society, along with the will and courage to resist. The societal pillar of this campaign needs to be developed intensively in North Kurdistan, and Turkey. Further isolation could be prevented if hundreds of thousands of people in North Kurdistan, and Turkey, rose up and marched to Imrali, the Ministry of Justice, and to Ankara. If tens or even hundreds of thousands of people rise up, like in the case of Newroz and the Wan resistance, the isolation will be broken, and the path cleared for Rêber Apo's physical freedom. This would pave the way for the democratic solution to the Kurdish question and the democratization of Turkey because the source of all the problems is the policy of genocide focused on Imrali. If the war of genocide against the Kurds had stopped, fascism would not exist anymore in Turkey. Turkey would not be as corrupt, lawless, and unfair anymore. The fascist government has abolished their own constitution in order to wage war and genocide against the Kurds. Injustice, unscrupulousness and pollution have never been so high. Politics has become polluted and is causing decay in society.

Now, for the democratization of Turkey as a whole, for justice, law, democratic politics, and a democratic system to develop, these policies of genocide must come to an end. The focus point of the system of torture and isolation is Imrali, so these policies must be abolished in Imrali first. Rêber Apo's freedom, security, and health must be safeguarded. If this happens, democracy, freedom, and justice will prevail in Turkey. In this regard, societal struggle plays a very important role. Turkey cannot escape fascism if the democratic forces of Turkey, along with all those in favor of democracy, law, justice, equality, and freedom, do



not participate strongly in the Kurdish struggle for freedom. If these circles do not struggle for the freedom of Rêber Apo and the democratic solution to the Kurdish question, and if they do not carry out this struggle in solidarity and unity, fascism will not be overcome.

In this respect, I would like to make a call to our people: if our people raise the societal struggle with the spirit of Wan, Shirnak, and Newroz, together with the democratic forces in Kurdistan and Turkey, the isolation in İmralı will be broken.

*The municipal elections of March 31 in North Kurdistan and Turkey mark the first time in 22 years that the Erdogan-led AKP has fallen from its first-party status. What are your evaluations in relation to the elections and the attitude of the people?*

The municipal elections on March 31st were crucial. It yielded political results which are much beyond the span of local level. The fascist regime has truly taken a significant hit and is now much weaker. The largest industrial and touristic cities in Turkey – that is, the locations where the country's capital is amassed – were all won by the CHP. The cities of Kurdistan were won by the DEM Party. In Kurdistan, the other system-parties have all but dissipated, most notably the AKP. The Kurdish and Turkish people – especially the labor force, women, and young people – were victorious in this election. Thus, democracy prevailed in Turkey's municipal elections. Society's aspirations for justice, freedom, and democracy prevailed. Naturally, this is a highly significant outcome. Ultimately, the fascist power was defeated. The fascist AKP, MHP, and Ergenekon regime were defeated.

Our comrades have already evaluated this, but again, this defeat suffered by the fascist regime will bring new consequences. In foreign politics, the fascist power will be reprimanded. This is an inevitable situation. Externally, every force will review its policies toward this collapsing administration, and this will have repercussions. In fact, this process has already started for the Turkish state. For example, there is currently a very serious upheaval within the AKP. Many have now started to question the relations between the MHP and the AKP, criticizing that the MHP-AKP alliance has brought the AKP to this point. People are analyzing the reasons behind this loss of power, saying that the AKP was manipulated by the MHP and that this had caused the AKP to lose. A rebellion has started within the AKP too. People may have disapproved in the past, yet this election marks the first time in which so many groups expressed their thoughts so boldly.

Erdoğan deliberately adopted an attitude of self-criticism in order to keep his own base. He had been very self-critical until he realized that this meant acceptance of defeat. He later returned to his custom policy of zero-tolerance towards criticism. He says “no one can criticize the AKP except for me”. He is a dictator. This is reflected in everything. If he is going to criticize, only he can criticize. If he wants to self-criticize, only he can criticize himself. He is doing the same thing internally within his party. In this way, he has blocked the way for criticism and self-criticism. Nevertheless, this does not change the fact that the AKP is in a state of turmoil and disintegration.

The AKP is really disintegrating. As a result of the AKP-MHP alliance, the AKP has become the MHP. They have evolved into a more racist, fascist, and anti-societal party. For many years, the last eight or nine years in particular, Erdoğan's AKP has been developing politics based on MHP mentality. Erdoğan's everyday language reflects the mentality of the MHP and Devlet Bahçeli. This mentality is then put into practice through state policies.

By turning to the MHP, the AKP turned to its own end. Now there is serious decay among the AKP base. The so-called Welfare Party only gained some results because of this shift in the AKP base. This also played a big role in the strengthening of DEM. A certain base of Kurds who broke away from the AKP are now supporting the DEM Party.

The AKP has caused serious polarization in Turkey; it has been playing the nationalist, racist card for years. Only now has it been understood that such policies and mentalities are meaningless. The 'çöktürme planı' [plan of forcing them to their knees] that has been going on for almost nine years has also collapsed. Therefore, these fascist, genocidal policies have failed. Fascism suffered a great defeat in these elections.

The participation of the Kurdish society in the elections was very strong. The DEM Party has gained eighty-two municipalities across North Kurdistan and Turkey. This is a very important success. The DEM Party has also gained first-party status in thirteen cities, four of them being major cities. In addition to Amed, Mardin and Wan, the DEM Party is the first party in the administration of Urfa too. Apart from that, places such as Kars, Bitlis, and Şırnak were usurped by the AKP. The AKP really did all in its power to seize and usurp the will of the Kurds. We saw this very clearly in Şırnak, Bitlis and Kars. We saw it very clearly in Hilvan and Beytüşşebap. Nevertheless, the DEM Party is still the first-party in many of these districts. This was a great success.

In fact, the DEM Party has gained greater support in Turkey as well as in Kurdistan. The Turkish press portrays this differently. It is claimed that DEM is the fourth party, which is untrue. In Turkey, the strategy of 'Urban Consensus' was successful. Kurds consciously and strategically cast their votes with the goal of overthrowing the fascist regime. It was not the aim of the Kurds to win for one specific party, but rather for democracy itself. This allowed the democratic forces to unite and serve fascism a heavy blow. Significant results were obtained. Naturally, society has become much more dynamic as a result of these outcomes. A spirit of social resistance, a spirit of struggle emerged. Parties have demonstrated their ability and willingness to engage in politics more.

It is imperative that the Kurdish and Turkish people, as well as the democratic forces, interpret the outcomes of the municipal elections correctly. Moving forward, policies should be more pro-society; this concerns particularly the DEM party. From time to time, various circles have criticized the DEM Party, but these criticisms do not reflect the reality. The DEM Party is a party of Turkey. It is the main opposition party that fights for radical democracy in its true meaning. Based on this fact, the DEM Party gained social and political ground in Turkey. Therefore, DEM must appeal to the people in Turkey's metropolises, cities, towns, and villages. It must correctly introduce itself to the society and peoples of Turkey, influence them, organize them, and gain members. This is very important. To ensure the democratization of Turkey, as the only truly democratic party, the DEM party must reach an extent where it gains municipalities in many Turkish cities too. It must create strong grounds for the organization of societies not only in Kurdistan, but also in Turkey. It must create a base for itself and develop and organize democratic alliances with a wide range of social segments, be it cultural, ethnic, religious, labor, women, or youth groups. At the moment, the grounds for this have been created. In that sense, the DEM party must move to a style, language, understanding and form of organization which appeals to all the societies in Turkey. This is extremely important.

A very important atmosphere has formed in terms of the organization and unity of the democratic forces. The 'Labor and Freedom Alliance' can be strengthened. Moving forward, it is necessary to make use of this

opportunity. The people are ready for this, as they demonstrated in the elections. Society in Turkey wants democracy; it wants democratic change, a democratic state of law, and a democratic republic. This is a tremendous opportunity for organizing and for working, though it requires mobilization. In this light, the democratic forces have important duties ahead of them; especially the DEM Party, which has acted as a pioneer of the democratic forces in the past elections. It is absolutely necessary to meet the expectations of the people.

One of our comrades, Duran Kalkan, made a very important call the other day. He said: “The peace and democracy movement must develop in Turkey.” And he added, that “at the moment, the political and social ground for this has already been laid.” This is absolutely true. These elections have demonstrated that the democratic forces have established an important social base. In actuality, there would have been much greater gains if the ‘Democratic Power Union’ (DGB) had come into these elections with a general policy. Although the democratic forces – especially the DEM Party – came together and supported these results, there would have been greater outcomes if there had been a shared unity of power. They could have gained many more districts and even several provinces in Turkey if the leftist, socialist, and democratic forces had united more thoroughly and formulated a common strategy, plan, and program.

We followed the situation in Dersim for months. Many parties discussed and negotiated the situation and, as a result, the DEM party decided to enter an electoral alliance in the region. Yet, this alliance policy did not work out very well. It appears that the election campaigns were not successfully conducted in the center of Dersim. The campaign workers either did not work well in this area, or they worked too little. Although the DEM Party was able to win the co-mayorship of the municipality, they were unable to gain a majority in the Dersim council. The alliances were not very successful in any district, except for the Hozat district. The other districts were taken either by the CHP or the AKP. Had DEM approached the area with a better understanding of an alliance policy, a united force, the necessary program and strategy, it would have easily gained the majority of the seats in central Dersim. The left-socialist alliance would have taken all the districts. Neither the CHP nor the AKP would have won. This is a very serious criticism on their part. But we see that they also criticize and self-criticize this themselves.

The same is true for Turkey. Had the DGB entered the elections in Turkey with a common program, I believe it would have won many seats. This is also the case in terms of social struggle. Wan is a very important example in this regard. A very strong position evolved against the fascist administration due to the resistance of the Kurds, the resistance, unity, and solidarity of the democratic forces in Turkey, as well as the support of the system’s opposition parties. The fascist administration had to step back. Therefore, democracy and the will of the people were victorious. In the example of Van, it was not only the Kurdish people who won, but it was also a success for the democratization of Turkey, the peoples of Turkey as a whole.

If the Labor and Freedom Alliance and the democratic forces of Kurdistan and Turkey work and struggle in the spirit of Wan, they can definitely play a decisive role in the democratization of Turkey, in the democratization of the republic. Though this necessitates a common understanding of the democratic unity of powers. If these united forces produce a movement of peace and democracy, if they walk this path in accordance with the great social resistance and struggle leaned on the experience of Wan, they will be successful.

*The CHP has gained first-party status in the 31 March municipality elections. Given the history of the CHP, why did the party gain such results? What impact will this have on the democratization of Turkey?*

We cannot leave the democratization of Turkey at the hands of the CHP. The CHP, being the party that founded this 100-year-old republic, still defends its initial ideology. It acts according to the codes of this ideology and carries out politics on this basis.

Many CHP leaders, Özgür Özel in particular, talked about the democratization of the republic. They claim that they built the republic, but even after 100 years, there is still no democracy in sight. They set out with the claim to democratize the country and atone for their past mistakes. If the CHP is able to interpret these elections correctly, it would understand that the democratic circles, along with the Kurdish and Turkish society, have expectations from the Republican Party. This was the main reason for their votes. They demand that the CHP plays a role in the democratization of the republic and changes its policies and codes. The peoples and societies of Turkey demand a change of mentality, they demand a change in understanding, program and policy from the CHP. It has to respond to this, otherwise it will bring upon its own end like it did before, only this time it may not find the opportunity to redeem itself.

The CHP needs to change its paradigm, abandon its official ideology, and give up on its İttihat Terakki policies. It needs to reject its 100-year republican policies which are based on the denial and annihilation of Kurds. The CHP needs to radically confront what the Republic has inflicted on the Kurds over these past 100 years, what the Turkish nation-state system has done. It needs to officially accept that it perpetrated the Sheikh Sait massacre, the genocides carried out in Dersim and Zilan and the massacres of Alevis.

The 100-year history of the Republic is a history of genocide. Will the CHP accept accountability for a 100-year genocide? Will it apologize? Will it make this apology by changing its policy, by changing its mentality? Will it do so by presenting the Kurdish people, Alevis and the peoples of Turkey a democratic program? This is how criticism and self-criticism work. Will the CHP oppose the ongoing war of genocide against the Kurds? The focus point of this war is the torture and isolation system being imposed in İmralı. Will the CHP oppose this system of torture and isolation in İmralı? Millions of people are saying that the source of all the lawlessness and injustice in Turkey is the torture and isolation system being imposed on İmralı. Will the CHP take a stance against this?

Justice, lawfulness, and democracy are what the CHP says it wants. The İmralı system is the root of all injustice and lawlessness. The CHP must then formulate its policies and attitudes if it is honest. It must oppose this genocide war. In order for the Kurdish, Turkish, and Alevis people to accept and believe in the CHP, it must demonstrate its worth. The CHP will not secure power until it does so. In fact, the CHP is embarking on an important responsibility by promising to democratize the republic after a century.

Turkish politics is a demagogy; all politicians in Turkey have become demagogues. They are good at demagoguery. Covering up the facts, distorting, lying, deceiving, saying beautiful words and doing the worst in practice. Nobody accepts this anymore. Neither the Kurds, nor the Alevis, nor the workers or laborers. As a whole, neither the democratic forces of Kurdistan and Turkey, nor the Kurdish and Turkish societies give credence to this. The people want to see fulfilled promises, they expect concrete steps. If the CHP achieves this, the people and democratic forces of Kurdistan and Turkey will support the CHP. But if the

CHP does not take such concrete steps, if it does not clearly change its program, strategy, policy, mentality and practice, and if it instead becomes an extension of the AKP again, it will not last as long as the AKP.

The previous leader of the CHP, Kemal Kilicdaroglu, became the sole reason the fascist AKP-MHP government survived so long. Despite being the leader of a so-called opposition party, he did not voice dissent once. He did whatever this fascist regime ordered him to. The AKP-MHP chanted fascist slogans while the CHP showed support. The lifting of the immunity of Kurdish members of parliament would not have occurred if the CHP had not given its approval. Selahattin Demirtas, Figen Yuksekdag, Sebahat Tuncel, Gul-tan Kisanak and thousands more would not be in prison today. All of this, and much more, was made possible by the support of the CHP. Without the CHP's support, such Ottomanist, occupationist, annexationist, colonialist and genocidal policies would not have been implemented in Syria or Iraq.

Will the CHP really stand by its word? I pose this question for the following reason; given that Erdoğan will only try to deepen his total annihilation policies against the Kurds in order to regain power, why has Erdoğan suddenly started referring to Özgür Özel as 'Sir' and 'dear'? Of course, Erdoğan would want to reconcile with the opposition to gain support for his anti-Kurdish policies, now that the CHP is emerging as a powerful party. But when Erdoğan says he is looking forward to his meeting with Özgür Özel, and that they will be discussing many things, what is to be expected from the CHP? When Erdoğan asks for the CHP's support for Kurdish genocide policies, will the CHP remember its promises?

Erdoğan wants to enact a genocidal, fascist, dictatorial constitution and he wants the CHP's support for this. He will wage war everywhere and ask the CHP to remain silent. When silence is no longer enough, he will demand active participation. Kilicdaroglu's CHP did this in the past. The fascist AKP-MHP government has been waging an all-out genocidal war against the Kurds, uninterruptedly for the past 8–9 years. In Turkey, fascism is in full force. What will the CHP do? This is of course a test for the CHP. Kurds, Alevis, workers and laborers, in other words the democratic society of Turkey, are watching the CHP with great attention. In fact, they are giving the CHP a chance, giving it time. This process is a historical one; it is a test for the CHP.

The elections were very important. This fascist government has done all kinds of evil to the societies of Turkey, it has flushed all the resources of society into war and has impoverished them as a result. It has brought people to the point of starvation, has left no democracy, freedom, equality, justice, or law. Because of these reasons, it is important that the fascist government has been brought to its knees, and that, however little it may be, a slight chance of democracy has emerged. Of course, all forces must put this opportunity to use.

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## Hozat: People should take a stand against Turkey genocidal policies

ANF - Behdinan - 26 April 2024

In the second part of this interview, Besê Hozat, co-chair of the KCK Executive Council, spoke about the vital self-defense of women worldwide, the role of youth in the struggle for democracy and freedom, and the escalation in the Middle East.

*As is known, the Turkish state has been intensively conducting diplomatic meetings with other states, looking for support and approval of Turkish war policies. Erdoğan is also expected to visit Iraq and the Kurdistan Region soon to seek approval of his policies. What are your evaluations in relation to these visits?*

For some time now, the AKP-MHP fascist government has been seeking to secure support internally and externally for an all-out genocidal war against the Kurds. Under the name of politics, the fascist government has been intensely conducting military diplomacy, seeking the support of both international powers and regional states. The KDP and the forces in Southern Kurdistan are also wanted to be actively involved in this war. The fascist Erdoğan regime is working intensively in order to achieve this. The talks in Iraq – there will be a meeting in Washington afterwards – are also aimed at providing support for this war of genocide. Erdoğan also says that he will go to Hewlêr [Erbil]; he is working to involve the KDP more actively in this war.

I would like to emphasize the following. The ‘Development Road’ project is a trap for Iraq. Turkey hides its neo-Ottomanist, occupying and expansionist policies under the name of that project. If Iraq plays Turkey’s game, it will lose. It would be putting its own land to the service of Turkey’s expansionist and occupationist dreams. Turkey definitely has expansionist ambitions in every project it develops in the region. Each and every one of these projects are a product of racist, chauvinist ideology. It is a product of neo-Ottoman policies; this is exactly what they aim for. They have no contribution or benefit to neither the peoples, nor the states of that region. Our comrades have warned Iraq on this issue, not to fall for this game. Turkey’s sole aim is to establish hegemony over Iraq. It is already trying to lay the groundwork for this in Kirkuk. It is mobilizing Turkmens in Kirkuk, Til Afer and Mosul. It has entered Iraq militarily, politically and economically. It is building companies everywhere to gain leverage. It also uses the Euphrates and Tigris water as blackmail. It is trying to achieve its expansionist, Neo-Ottomanist policies by taking advantage of Iraq’s weakness. Iraq should not fall for this game. Iraq is aware about the history. In fact, there is a Turkish idiom to describe how cunning and deceptive the Ottomans are. “The Ottomans have many tricks”, is what is being said. The AKP considers itself as the continuation of the Ottoman Empire, so it too has many tricks, conspiracies and traps. Iraq must not fall for those.

Whatever path Iraq decides to take, the Kurdish guerrilla and the people will resist. They will never accept these genocidal, colonialist occupation policies. These policies have not been accepted till now, they will not be accepted hereafter. The guerrilla are re-writing history with their resistance and skill. They put up a very splendid resistance and put the Turkish army in a quagmire. This will only gain strength moving forward. They will resist in the strongest, most determined, most assertive and strong-willed manner. The guerrilla selflessly defends the honor and freedom of the peoples. Until now, it has waged a selfless struggle and developed resistance. It will do so from now on too.

The guerrilla will resist, but our people, especially those in South Kurdistan, must also react very strongly against these attacks. While propagandizing about the importance of the status of southern Kurdistan, the KDP has opened an important part of the South to Turkish occupation. What status has the Turkish state left in South Kurdistan? The people there ought to rise up against this. There are very honorable people in the South. The KDP, in partnership with the Turkish state, is massacring these people who resist honor-

ably and take a stance against Turkish occupation. One example is our esteemed friend Server, who was murdered in the Bradost area the other day. Many patriots were massacred like this in Behdinan before. These attacks are being conducted everywhere; villages are being bombarded. Another patriot, a young man, was killed in Asos only recently. In order that villages are emptied, the Turkish state and KDP are constantly targeting villages and houses, killing patriots.

Our people ought to rebel against this, they must rise up everywhere. Had the South reacted to Turkish bombardments and occupation, the Turkish state would not be able to commit civilian massacres so easily. It wouldn't dare to do such a thing. The KDP is actively taking part in this war of genocide; the parties in the South must react to this. If hundreds of thousands rebelled everywhere, the Turkish state could not massacre these valuable patriots and honorable people. It would be impossible.

In this regard, I call on our people to take a stand against these genocidal, massacring policies. Turkey is developing a second Anfal against the people of the South. I call on our people to take a stand against this, to rise up.

*Recently, KJK published a much praised document in relation to women's self-defense and violence against women. What are your evaluations on this topic?*

Indeed, the coordination of the KJK did share an important statement recently in relation to women's self-defense against violence. They called for women to organize and strengthen their self-defense.

All over the world there is a very serious threat of genocide against women; violence against women has increased everywhere in the world with Turkey at almost first-place. Both state and male violence against women in Turkey has increased by 1,400 to 1,500 percent. This male-dominated system, the system of capitalist modernity and the nation-state system, are already fascist systems. All these systems constantly feed, produce, deepen and provoke the dominant ego in men and return to women in the form of violence and massacres.

In a world where wars are developing, violence and fascism are increasing, it could only be expected that more women are becoming the victims of violence because misogyny and sexism is what feeds wars. The system of capitalist modernity is in chaos; in many countries across the world, the governing powers are fascists. Their fascist policies are being directly absorbed by society and by men. The dominant man feeds off this violence and fuels his masculine, sexist, male-dominant mentality, understanding and behavior. By inflicting violence on women, the dominant man psychologically recharges his foul mindset and turns the woman into an object – a commodity that satisfies his own motives.

These policies effect the woman ten-fold, constantly returning to the *her* in the form of more violence. Women are under constant attack and particularly psychological attack by sexist culture and backward 'traditional value' judgments. Psychological violence, the most severe violence, is extensively being inflicted on women. While physical violence may kill a woman once, psychological violence kills her thousands of times a day, keeping her under constant psychological pressure.

In this sense, women cannot put their security in the hands of this system. Women cannot surrender themselves to the intentions of the dominant man. Women are being murdered everywhere; whether this is within their own homes, on the street, or at work. They are being murdered by their husbands, friends,

boyfriends, fathers, brothers. Women everywhere must raise awareness and organize themselves. An organized woman is the greatest power. An organized woman is a woman with self-defense. A woman's self-defense comes from her organization. If a woman is not organized, she cannot defend herself. If she cannot defend herself, she will be constantly be killed, she will constantly die and die in every form. Both the fragmentation of will and the fragmentation of personality are death.

There are many horrific examples within society. The woman gets married with the claim of loving the man. The man she married murders her in a very graphic, brutal way after three months. It does not even last three months in some cases. Women are subjected to rape 24 hours a day. Rêber Apo used to say that the home is no different from a brothel anymore. A weak, powerless woman will constantly be under the threat of rape, the fact that it occurs in her home does not change this reality.

Can a woman really fall in love in a world where men are so dominant, so misogynistic, so sexist? For example, can you fall in love with a man who is hostile to you, a man who dominates you, who controls you, who sees you as a slave, who sees you as less? How can this be called love and affection? This has nothing to do with love or affection. If this is the definition of love, then life itself has been lost.

Rêber Apo was saying "where love has been lost, live should not be sought." In a place where life has been lost, love has been lost. The excitement and the passion of life are linked closely to love; one cannot exist without the other. There can be no relationship, no love, or no affection when life itself has become so ugly. If you want to save love, then you will first save life. You will create a life you will fall in love with, you will create a man you will fall in love with. Only with a free man, a man who sees women as equal and free, who decides on a free, equal, democratic relationship with women, can love and life be shared. Only a life based on free women and free men, on a free moral and political society, can be loveable.

I really don't understand why women get married. They marry their murderer and go to their own death. The other day I watched the footage of a mother whose daughter had just gotten married and was murdered shortly after. I was very effected. The mother placed her daughter's wedding dress on the middle of a street, poured petrol on it and burnt it. In pain, she called out to young women. She said "don't get married, if you get married it will be your end". "Learn a lesson from my daughter," she said. Women must first fight to save life. With the given circumstances, there is neither a life to live nor a man to live it with. All that is left to do is struggle for a better world.

In this respect, women need to raise their consciousness, make themselves strong-willed, organize themselves, and develop their defense. They must struggle and save life itself. They need to establish a free, equal, and democratic system so that they can live freely. Unless this happens, the woman is always going to be under attack.

The Shirnak incident is important in this regard. There have been many cases of harassment and rape by Turkish soldiers in Kurdistan for a long time. The society was silent about these special warfare tactics, these policemen and soldiers. Recently, a policeman, a soldier attempted to harass a woman, he sexually assaulted her. The people and youth of Shirnak stood up and lynched that scoundrel. I wish they had killed him. They taught him a good lesson. This should happen everywhere. Where ever a man is caught saying something to a woman, a girl, or even a child, where ever he is looking at them with bad intentions, he should be lynched. Such people should not be given the right to life and this stance must develop everywhere. Therefore, women need to organize everywhere and ensure their own self-defense.



This is the only way the ‘Jin Jiyan Azadi’ movement can be realized, and only in this way can it be put into practice. In other words, ‘Jin Jiyan Azadi’ can be achieved by organizing, developing self-defense, struggling, creating a free and democratic life and system.

*The youth have been actively participating in the struggle, for the construction of a democratic system. Though, it is clear that the attacks against them are also intense. What are your evaluations in regards to this?*

A very strong stance, struggle and resistance was developed by young people across Kurdistan and Turkey all through Newroz, the 31 March municipal elections, when the will of Wan was usurped, in Sirnak, in Colemery, in Elih, and in Riha. I congratulate young people in this sense. They have put forward a very meaningful stance. The role of young people, particularly that of young women, was very important in achieving results in the Wan resistance. This same stance was demonstrated against the usurpation and occupation policies being imposed in Colemery, Sirnak and throughout Botan. We were watching carefully, and it was very meaningful. A young army has been formed in North Kurdistan and the cities of Turkey.

Young people are really the most dynamic forces of society. They are excited, enthusiastic, lively, daring, searching, and passionate. All these are the characteristics of young people. We all went through that process. We lived those. These are very important. The youth are the dynamism of the struggle. In a way, they are the hope of freedom. They are the guarantee of a free future.

Young people everywhere must show a very strong participation in the struggle for freedom. Those who can come to the mountains should come to the mountains. Young women and men should join the struggle. They should be a part of this resistance against the colonialist, genocidal enemy by putting forward a will and stance akin to that of the young fighters in Zap and Metina. Whether they are in South Kurdistan, or the North, those who are unable to come can assume the duty of protecting their country in their own places. We have seen this in Wan, Shirnak, Colemery and Elih. Young people can very well defend the country where they are. They can put forward a great will of resistance and struggle and defend their people, their future, and their values.

In this sense, young people must break every hand that reaches out against children, women, the elderly and our people as a whole. They must fight strongly against this colonialist, genocidal enemy. They must turn every place into areas of action, areas of rebellion. They must take the lead in mobilizing society. Who will do this if not the youth?

This colonialist-genocidal regime carries out genocide policies in thousands of ways; whether it is militarily, socially, culturally, economically, or ecologically. It also has a special policy against the youth. For example, drugs are a policy of genocide against the youth. There are drug dealers everywhere in Kurdistan, on every street. All police officers and soldiers are drug dealers. They even use some mullahs and civil servants in this way. They are all elements of special warfare. In Kurdistan, they lure Kurdish children, even the youngest ones, into drugs. They are trying to get young people addicted to drugs in order to break them away from the struggle, from their own values, culture and society. They break the will of these young people, break their personality, degenerate and corrupt them. With drugs, prostitution, rape, immigration... We need to stand against this.

It should be such that not a single policeman, not a single soldier, not a single special warfare officer, not a single drug dealer should dare to sell drugs on any street in Kurdistan. The youth must clean all the streets of Kurdistan from drug dealers and special warfare elements. All the streets, neighborhoods, towns, cities of Kurdistan must be cleared of rapists, special psychological warfare elements, drug barons, drug dealers. The youth must wage a very strong struggle against this. Young people must organize themselves. There is no need for someone to give instructions to the youth. There is no need for someone to manage the youth. Our youth are really the most political youth in the world. The youth of Kurdistan are the most political and conscious youth in the world.

They can organize very easily everywhere. They can establish committees, they can establish assemblies, they can form self-defense units, they can defend Kurdish society. They can defend Kurdish women against all kinds of attacks of the enemy. They can clean all the streets, cities and towns of Kurdistan from these special psychological warfare attacks. I believe that young people can achieve this and I call on them to do so.

*The conflict between Israel and Hamas, as well as Iran, continues and is constantly getting worse. What is the Turkish role in this, what interest is the Turkish state trying to assert through this crisis?*

It is as clear that Turkey was the force which provoked Hamas to attack, leading to the emergence of the war between Israel and Hamas. Turkey orchestrated this plot to disrupt the energy corridor that stretches from India to Israel and then via Greece to Europe. Israel was gradually restoring its ties with the Arab world during that period. It had also made agreements. The Turkish Republic was uncomfortable with this situation as this meant Turkey's exclusion from the trade route. Another factor which made Turkey uncomfortable is the fact that Iran was also gradually building strength, becoming a key player in the region. The plan of the hegemons was that the region was to be shaped through Israel. The energy route was also going to bring Israel a great economic income and add to its strength. This would have meant that Turkey's geostrategic position would lose importance. The fascist, the colonialist, genocidal Turkish regime could not bear this, and set Hamas against Israel however many lives this cost.

Currently, Turkey is playing a provocative role for the war to spread. Listening to the Turkish press, it is really evident how much the Turkish state desires the war between Israel and Iran. They broadcast this topic 24 hours a day, every day of the week. All of these are attempts of provocation. They hope to benefit from the spread of this war to weaken Iran which they see as a rival because of their historical contradictions. While they want Iran to enter war so it would lose strength, they also want Israel to be defeated so their own geopolitical position is not jeopardized. The Turkish state assumes that by weakening these actors, it will open up a space for itself in the region. Since they are already a NATO country, they think that NATO and America will fill future regional voids through Turkey.

Erdoğan thinks that America will give more importance to the East Pacific and Far Asia and that he will fill the void created by America in the region and form a coalition. In addition to this, if such a war spreads, he will grasp the opportunity to easily conduct his genocidal attacks in South Kurdistan, Syria and Rojava. Erdoğan also plans to carry out the same policy in the Caucasus where Iran is trying to create an energy route with Armenia. Now Erdoğan wants to develop an energy route with the Russians, the Turkic republics and Azerbaijan. It is in search of alternative routes. This Baghdad Development Road Project is a part of this. That is why Turkey wants this war to spread and plays a very provocative role in achieving this.

*There has been an exchange of attacks between Iran and Israel after Israel killed some of Iran's leading commanders. What are the possibilities of a full-scale war erupting between the two forces?*

Iran is not in a strong enough position to conduct this war. There have been multi-faceted embargoes on Iran for years. Be it economically, arms, or diplomatically. In this sense, it is experiencing a serious economic crisis. It is economically very instable. Also, the opposition has been rebelling against the Iranian state for years. The social opposition has become very strong because there is a lot of discomfort. The people want democratic administration. Iranian peoples and societies want democratic politics and reform. In recent years, the 'Jin Jiyan Azadi' demonstrations have also created a very serious demand for change, transformation and democratization. Therefore, there is also distrust and discomfort towards the current government. All of this social pressure is causing strain on the government. Therefore, when it all adds up, Iran does not want war under these conditions so it tries to be very careful. It is not in favor of the spread of war.

Israel, on the other hand, has indeed waged a war of genocide against the Palestinians, but it has also suffered great damage. Israel collapsed economically and militarily. At the moment, Israel is also very weak. Without the support of America and the West, Israel would not be able to survive. On its own, Israel could not have waged the war in Gaza. This is a fact. Therefore, Israel is trying to secure the support of America and the West by increasing tensions with Iran though it is not in a position to wage a comprehensive war with Iran in the current situation. Should America join this war, Israel would play an active role. But as far as we can see, America is also approaching cautiously. It is not rushing. America is trying to hide its intentions a little bit.

The currently situation between Israel and Iran is a low-intensity war, there is a situation of conflict. But neither side wants to turn this into an open, widespread, comprehensive war at this stage. There is a careful approach in this regard. Israel and America are pursuing a policy aimed at wearing down, weakening and capitulating Iran. This low-intensity war is a part of this policy. But Turkey really wants this war to spread. It hopes to benefit from this. It thinks that it has an interest in this. It plays such an ominous role.

As a movement, we are against war. Our struggle is a struggle for legitimate self-defense. In this sense, we see more bloodshed and the spread of war in the region neither in the interest of the Kurds nor the peoples of the region. The ones who lose in war are societies, and these lands seen enough blood. Therefore, we are against war. Our strategy everywhere is democracy, the solution of problems in accordance with the understanding of a democratic, confederal system. It is to solve the problems on a democratic basis, through democratic political negotiations. War has no benefit for anyone except for the imperialists and colonialists. We are a movement of the people and the people do not need more war.

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