

# THE İMRALI POST

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

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## Contents

<b>Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan.....</b>	<b>2</b>
What did CPT respond to ANF about isolation in İmralı?.....	2
Öcalan banned from family visits for another three months.....	4
Lawyers submit another application to meet with their clients in İmralı.....	5
Lawyer Öztürk: CPT's statements on İmralı are contradictory.....	6
Mürşide Oltan: Stand up against isolation, occupation and betrayal.....	7
69 Nobel Prize winners call for freedom for Abdullah Öcalan.....	8
Nobel Laureates sign open letter expressing concern about the detention conditions of Öcalan.....	9
<b>Prisons in Turkey.....</b>	<b>11</b>
Kurdish women Kaya, Bölek and Kaya mistreated in prison.....	11
Political prisoner Güneş released after 32 years in prison.....	12
Ill prisoner released after 31 years in jail.....	13
TJK-E calls for joint struggle against the misogynist Iranian state.....	13
<b>Military aggression and occupation.....</b>	<b>14</b>
Nine years ago the Suruç Massacre.....	14
KCK commemorates 33 Suruç dream travelers: Let's grow the united struggle.....	15
Akça Cupolo: We must ensure our self-defense in a country where there is no law.....	17
HPG: 5 soldiers killed and 2 positions destroyed.....	17
HPG pays tribute to guerrillas Aram, Ednan and Serhed.....	18
YPJ calls for action against ISIS attacks and Turkish occupation.....	19
Three YRK guerrillas martyred in Turkish air strike.....	22
The Black Stadium: A tale of youthful victory against terrorism.....	23
HPG reports 4 aerial actions against the Turkish army in Zap.....	24
Turkish state takes action to build new bases in Bradost.....	24
Manbij Military Council foils infiltration attempts by Turkish-backed mercenaries.....	25
1,512 people benefit from the general amnesty in North-East Syria.....	25
HPG pays tribute to YJA Star guerrillas Ronahî Dilxwîn and Arîn Tolhildan.....	26
Iraqi Parliament to discuss Turkish occupation.....	27
Ethnic cleansing continues in Afrin: Kidnapping, extortion, bombardment.....	27
Turkish army launches new operation in Duhok.....	28
Turkish army bombs a village in Duhok, starting a fire.....	29
HRE: 10 invaders were killed in Mare and Azaz.....	29
Guerrillas: We will not give up our resistance until we live in a free Kurdistan.....	30
HPG: Three Turkish soldiers killed by guerrillas in South Kurdistan.....	31
Turkish state continues to send soldiers to South Kurdistan.....	32
Turkey bombs 15 villages in Afrin-Shehba.....	33
HPG pays tribute to guerrillas Newal Mêrdîn, Jiyan Rêdûr and Dijwar Keleş.....	33

Turkey and KDP establish joint checkpoint at Duhok border.....	34
Turkish warplanes shell 7 areas in Bradost.....	35
<b>Femicide.....</b>	<b>35</b>
Women in North-East Syria work selflessly for their safety.....	35
Sebahat Tuncel: We will achieve a free life through struggle.....	37
Iraqi Women's Conference: Let's enhance the resistance.....	39
<b>Ecocide.....</b>	<b>41</b>
Environmental organizations to meet in Şırnak on 28 July.....	41
Zeki Irmez: Nature is being destroyed in Şırnak with the cooperation of the state and private sector.....	42
25 thousand trees burnt as occupation forces set fire to fields in villages of Afrin.....	45
<b>Human Rights Violations.....</b>	<b>46</b>
Lawyer and DEM party provincial co-chair Özperçin taken into custody in Adıyaman.....	46
Police take 3 people into custody in Van.....	47
Court decision on extradition of Kurdish journalist Serdar Karakoç postponed.....	47
MPs removed from the Foreign Affairs Commission meeting.....	48
<b>Interview.....</b>	<b>49</b>
Besê Hozat: We reject using President Öcalan as a bargaining chip.....	49
Besê Hozat: Turkey is waging a war of annexation not occupation.....	52
<b>Opinion.....</b>	<b>60</b>
A fighter from Girê Cûdî: I feel alive when with my comrades.....	60
What is happening in Kirkuk?.....	61



# Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

## What did CPT respond to ANF about isolation in Imrali?

SERKAN DEMIREL | STRASBOURG | 22 JULY 2024

The CPT, which was at the center of reactions due to its responsibility for the absolute isolation of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan, answered questions for the first time. It said that isolation was unacceptable but sidestepped its own responsibility and left two questions unanswered.

The Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT), which accepted that the continuous blocking of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan's right to visit family and lawyer is unacceptable and clearly contrary to international standards, ignored its responsibility and chose to pass the ball to Turkey.

ANF wanted to talk about the Imrali isolation, which concerns millions of people, especially the Kurdish people, with the CPT, which is the addressee of the issue and also the focus of criticism.

Our request for a face-to-face meeting dated 9 July with CPT Deputy Chairman Hans Wolff, who was among the delegation that last visited İmralı, or any official was rejected, saying, "Since the report on the last visit to İmralı has not been published yet, such a meeting will not be possible."

Upon ANF insistence, it was accepted that our questions would be answered in writing. We are publishing our questions and the answers given in writing by the CPT Executive Secretary Hugh Chetwynd.

*Is the CPT, which last visited İmralı prison in September 2022, still not publishing its report just because it could not get Turkey's approval?*

The ECPT Convention is based on the twin pillars of cooperation and confidentiality. As a result, the Convention only allows the CPT to publish a report with the authorization of the State Party.

*The lack of news from the prisoners in İmralı has caused deep concern in the public. Is the CPT working on this issue?*

The Committee is in constant dialogue with the Turkish authorities, but this dialogue remains confidential. However, it is important to stress that, in 2019 and as during previous visits, the delegation received no allegations of ill-treatment of prisoners by prison officers at İmralı Prison. On the contrary, all prisoners indicated that they were treated correctly by staff.

*Is the CPT planning to visit İmralı Prison again in case of lack of news?*

The CPT has visited İmralı 9 times, each time as an ad hoc visit, in 1999, 2001, 2003, 2007, 2010, 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2022. The CPT may decide, if it considers it necessary, to carry out a further visit to the site.

*The lawyers of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan and the three other prisoners in İmralı point out that there has been no communication with their clients for more than three years. Does the CPT have any knowledge of this state of absolute lack of communication? What is he doing to overcome this?*

The CPT follows the situation of Abdullah Öcalan and the three other prisoners very closely. In addition to the ongoing dialogue with the national authorities, the CPT is also in regular contact with Abdullah Öcalan lawyers.

*Are the prisoners in İmralı under absolute isolation?*

The CPT stressed in the 2019 visit report that all prisoners were being held in solitary confinement for most of the time (i.e. 159 hours out of 168 hours per week, including 24 hours per day at weekends). In the CPT's view, such a state of affairs is not acceptable.

*How does the CPT, which fights against torture and ill-treatment, view prisoners being deprived of the right to meet with their families and lawyers for long periods of time? Isn't this a violation of the Agreement?*

The issue of contact with the outside world of prisoners held at İmralı Prison has always been a subject of a long-standing intense dialogue between the CPT and the Turkish authorities. The CPT repeatedly stressed in its dialogue with the Turkish authorities that the continuous denial of visits by lawyers and family members is not acceptable and clearly contravenes various relevant international human rights instruments and standards.

*In its previous reports, the CPT had made a number of recommendations to the Turkish authorities to improve the conditions in İmralı Prison. Did Turkey take these recommendations of the CPT into consideration?*

The CPT systematically requests a response from the national authorities of each State Party to the report it addresses to them. This response must set out the measures taken by the government to remedy the situations raised. The Turkish Government's response to the recommendations cited in the 2019 report can be consulted on the Committee's website. No information other than that contained in the authorities' response can be given.

### *The questions left unanswered*

Two questions were left unanswered. We reproduce them here for completeness.

The first was: *The CPT recently made a public statement against Azerbaijan (under Article 10(2) of the Convention). Does it intend to make such a statement about Turkey as well?*

The second was: *Former CPT presidents Mauro Palma and Marc Neve, whom ANF has interviewed before and who visited İmralı many times, said that İmralı was not a suitable location for a prison and that CPT should be more active against the conditions of Abdullah Öcalan. They pointed out that he could play a role. Is İmralı Island Prison suitable for a penal institution according to the CPT? Is the CPT considering taking a more active role in the face of Abdullah Öcalan's conditions?*



## Öcalan banned from family visits for another three months

ANF | ISTANBUL | 22 JULY 2024

Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan is held under absolute isolation in İmralı Island Prison and completely cut off from the outside world. While there is no response to requests for meetings, in some cases, months later, his lawyers are presented with a justification of disciplinary penalties.

From 27 July 2011 to date, only 5 lawyer visits were allowed between May and August 2019. The last of these five meetings was on 7 August 2019. Only 5 family visits have been granted since 2014. The last

face-to-face meeting was with Öcalan's brother was on 3 March 2020. Öcalan has only been able to make two phone calls since the first day (on 27 April 2020 and 25 March 2021). The last phone call on 25 March 2021 was interrupted after a very short time and there has been no news from him since that day.

Öcalan and his fellow prisoners have been subject to a renewed 3-month ban on family visits.

Responding to the application of lawyers for family visits, Bursa Execution Judgeship stated that a new 'disciplinary punishment' was given to Abdullah Öcalan and fellow prisoners by the Disciplinary Board Presidency on 4 July.

While the reason for the 'disciplinary punishment' was not specified in the decision, lawyers' request for information and documents regarding the file were rejected. The lawyers will appeal to Bursa Heavy Penal Court against the 'disciplinary punishment'.



## Lawyers submit another application to meet with their clients in İmralı

ANF | ISTANBUL | 23 JULY 2024

Asrın Law Office lawyers Suzan Akipa, İbrahim Bilmez, Cengiz Yürekli and Emran Emekçi filed an application to Bursa Chief Public Prosecutor's Office and İmralı Penal Institution Directorate to be allowed a visit to their clients Abdullah Öcalan, Ömer Hayri Konar, Hamili Yıldırım and Veysi Aktaş, who are kept under severe isolation conditions in İmralı F Type High Security Prison and have not been heard from for 40 months.

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

According to Asrın Law Office, "From 27 July 2011 to date, only 5 lawyer visits were allowed between May and August 2019. The last of these five meetings was on 7 August 2019. Only 5 family visits have been granted since 2014. The last face-to-face meeting was with Öcalan's brother was on 3 March 2020. Öcalan has only been able to make two phone calls since the first day (on 27 April 2020 and 25 March 2021). The last phone call on 25 March 2021 was interrupted after a very short time and there has been no news from him since that day."



## Lawyer Öztürk: CPT's statements on Imrali are contradictory

ANF | 24 JULY 2024

On Monday, ANF published the answers of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) to questions about the situation in the Turkish prison island of Imrali, where Abdullah Öcalan, Ömer Hayri Konar, Hamili Yıldırım and Veysi Aktaş are kept in total isolation. Lawyer Raziye Öztürk spoke to ANF about the CPT's statements.

"The CPT has unmasked its own double standards" Öztürk said, criticizing the Council of Europe's anti-torture committee for its silence regarding the situation on Imrali.

"On July 3, the CPT publicly reprimanded Azerbaijan for its lack of cooperation and initiated proceedings. Such a procedure is also necessary with regard to Turkey," said lawyer Öztürk, adding: "Since the Turkish government is not complying with the [CPT] recommendations, the CPT could initiate proceedings. However, it is failing to do so. It is acting as if there is no article for this, but the decision on Azerbaijan reveals once again the committee's double standards towards the Turkish government. The CPT is unmasking itself."

### Interview shows success of the protests

Öztürk said: "The CPT has maintained its old stance, as we had learned from personal discussions. But I think the fact that there was an interview is due to the protests and the sit-ins in front of the CPT. It is a success of the *Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan and a political solution to the Kurdish question* campaign."

### The CPT's statements contradict the ECHR rulings

Öztürk stressed that the CPT is acting as if there was no ill-treatment at Imrali. She said: "The CPT has taken the position that there is no ill-treatment by the prison administration or prison staff. It only criticises the point about lawyer and family visits. However, this point contradicts the CPT's previous recommendations and findings and the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). Because the point of bad treatment or ill-treatment cannot only refer to the behaviour of the staff towards our clients. There has been no sign of life from our clients for 40 months. Cutting off all communication is a violation of humanity itself."

### Not even the aggravated execution regime rules are applied to our clients

The lawyer also pointed out contradictions in the CPT's argument, saying: "The CPT had previously stated that the situation there did not comply with international human rights standards. If we look at Imrali, it is an island prison in which an aggravated execution regime rules applies. Yet, it is necessary to note that even that system is applied only in name. In reality, our clients do not even have the rights that they would be entitled to under those very rules. Because even under aggravated execution, there is the right to visits by family and lawyers. There is no mention of a restriction of these rights. There is at least a connection to the outside world in a certain sense. But in the prison island of Imrali, there is none of that. So it is clear that this is not just mistreatment, but torture. The aggravated execution regime has been defined as

torture. It is stated that this violates Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights. But the situation here goes far beyond that."

## **Connections with the outside world are completely cut off**

On the social dimension of the conditions on Imrali, Öztürk said: "We have to look at this issue as a whole. We are talking about our clients being completely cut off from the outside world. This means that the relatives, the people we talk to and especially the Kurdish people as a whole have become victims of this curtailment of rights. Due to Abdullah Öcalan's position as a representative of the Kurdish people, the entire Kurdish society is affected by this isolation."

## **The CPT is passing the ball to Turkey**

As for the CPT's statement that it could not publish its report without Turkey's consent, Raziye Öztürk said: "We have raised this situation many times. Yes, that may be the case due to procedures. But the Turkish government is adamant that it will not implement the CPT's suggestions and recommendations. In its 2019 report, the CPT found that preventing lawyer visits is not lawful. It stated that visits must be carried out at regular intervals. However, at this stage, we see that this has not happened. The situation is instead worsening. Therefore, the CPT could initiate proceedings against Turkey for non-compliance with the recommendations. However, it fails to do so. It pretends that there is no article here, but the decision on Azerbaijan once again reveals the CPT's double standards towards the Turkish government. The CPT un-masks itself."

The lawyer noted that Turkey is not on the CPT's 2025 inspection list and said: "Unfortunately, we see that despite all the bad practices, the CPT is trying to remove Imrali from its agenda."

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## **Mürşide Oltan: Stand up against isolation, occupation and betrayal**

ANF | STRASBOURG | 24 JULY 2024

The Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan Vigil was launched on 25 June 2012, to eliminate the Imrali torture system and ensure the physical freedom of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan.

The vigil has entered its 629th week, and is organized by groups of Kurds living in Europe every week, at the common point where European institutions meet in Strasbourg. The vigil is on 7 days a week between 7.30 and 16.30.

Activists exposed the crimes against humanity committed against the Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan as well as the complicity and silence of the European institutions in these crimes.

The vigil this week was taken over by the Oltan family from Darmstad. The group that took over the vigil on behalf of the Democratic Kurdish Community Center included Mürşide Oltan, her husband Selim Oltan and their eight-year-old daughter Sara.

Mürşide Oltan said: "Even if the Leader is not with us physically, he is always with us." She added that Öcalan showed the way to freedom, especially to Kurdish women.

Oltan added: "We do not accept the aggravated isolation imposed on our Leader. This isolation is aimed at all of us, especially women and young people. We see that this isolation is also fed by betrayal today. The occupying fascist Turkish state has been trying to eliminate the will of the Kurdish people with dirty methods for 3 years. The will of the Kurdish people is our Leader and the guerrilla." She called on all Kurdish people, especially women, young people and the people of South Kurdistan, to stand up against occupation and betrayal.

Mürşide Oltan added: "Kurdistan Freedom Guerillas are the children of all four parts of Kurdistan. Wherever there is an attack, the guerrillas are there. When there is an attack on Rojava, the guerrillas run; when there is an attack on South Kurdistan, the guerrillas fight back. I call on all Kurdish people to stand by our leader, our guerrillas, our friends in prison."



## 69 Nobel Prize winners call for freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

ANF | 25 JULY 2024

The Austrian daily newspaper Der Standard wrote that 69 Nobel laureates called for the freedom of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan.

In his article, journalist Michael Völker wrote: "69 Nobel Prize winners from different disciplines called for the release of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan and the peaceful resolution to the conflict with the Kurds in the letter they sent to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan."

The article added that "the 2004 Austrian Nobel Prize in Literature Elfriede Jelinek was among the signatories of the letter. The first signatory was human rights activist Jody Williams, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997 for her work against landmines."

The article included information about the isolation of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan, and underlined that the Kurdish People's Leader "is considered a key figure in the solution of the Kurdish problem."

The article said, "Öcalan is still seen today as a figure in the Kurds' struggle for autonomy and freedom and is respected as their leader by many Kurds outside Turkey. From prison, he repeatedly called for a peaceful resolution of the conflict with Turkey and announced a ceasefire later called by Kurdish guerrilla fighters. In July 2015, Erdoğan officially declared the end of the peace process, and Turkey began to crack



down on the PKK and Kurdish parties and organizations it suspected of having close ties to the PKK. Attacks against Kurds also take place in Iraq and Syria."

The news drew attention to the fight of PKK fighters against ISIS mercenaries in Syria and Iraq, and pointed out that the US, some European countries and the Turkish state still describe the PKK as a "terrorist organization".

The newspaper said: "In their letter to Erdoğan, the 69 Nobel Prize academics wrote that 'in a world increasingly plagued with violence, death, destruction and war, including the terrifying Russian threats to use nuclear weapons as a result of their invasion of Ukraine, all life on this planet is facing an extremely unclear future. [...] It is in this context that we are appealing to you, President Erdoğan, to again pursue a path of peace.'"

The letter argues that peace is possible and that Turkey should include Öcalan in these efforts and "end his isolation on Imrali Island."



## Nobel Laureates sign open letter expressing concern about the detention conditions of Öcalan

ANF | 26 JULY 2024

69 Nobel laureates wrote a letter to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, the European Court of Human Rights, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and the UN Human Rights Committee. In the letter, the relevant institutions were asked to fulfil their obligations to protect the rights of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan.

The letter was addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Gabrielius Landsbergi, President of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, Dr Alan Mitchell, President of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) and Marko Bošnjak, President of the European Court of Human Rights of the Council of Europe and President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan for urgent consideration.

The letter calling for immediate action for Öcalan reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned Nobel Laureates, write to express our ongoing and deepening concern about the conditions under which Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan, despite the persistent attempts of his family, his attorneys, and others, has been held during his 25 years of imprisonment on Turkey's Imrali Island. Those conditions have only worsened since his last communication with the outside world on March 25, 2021, described below.

As European and international entities charged with promoting and protecting human rights and preventing torture, his decades of imprisonment and the various violations of his rights by the Turkish government throughout his imprisonment are not new to you. Nor is this the first time that Nobel Laureates have written about Mr. Öcalan's imprisonment and that of other political prisoners in Turkey.

In January of 2019, at the time of hunger strikes in prisons across Turkey, led by imprisoned Kurdish MP Leyla Güven, 50 Nobel Laureates signed letters in support of the hunger strikers and calling for the end of the isolation of Öcalan. The various letters we signed then were addressed to the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the European Commission, the Council of Europe, and President Erdogan.

We write again because although Öcalan's lawyers were finally able to meet with him five times in 2019 likely due to the hunger strikes and international pressure, they were the first such meetings since 2011 and his attorneys have not been allowed to see him since. Until recently, as noted above, his last known outside contact was a phone call with his brother on March 25, 2021. As he was objecting to the reduction of his rights to communicate and said that "the law should be enforced" and his lawyers should be allowed to meet with him, the call was disconnected. It had lasted only two minutes.

The concern of the Nobel Laureates who have signed this open letter - and of others throughout the international community - arises not only from his isolation and the continuous violations of his rights but also from the apparent lack of meaningful efforts taken by the European entities addressed here as well as the UN Human Rights Committee on his behalf. While his rights are guaranteed under the Turkish constitution and domestic legislation, under statutes and regulations of the European Union, and through international law, none of that seems to matter.

In an attempt to end Öcalan's incommunicado detention, his lawyers appealed to the United Nations Human Rights Committee (OHCHR) on July 29, 2022, as a last resort due to the exhaustion of domestic remedies, including the Turkish Constitutional Court (AYM). They also requested an injunction against the restriction preventing any type of communication with Mr. Öcalan. The OHCHR urged Turkey to end the incommunicado detention and allow him immediate and unrestricted access his lawyers. Instead of complying with the injunction, the Turkish government defended these prohibitions with no legal grounds in its responses to the Committee. No further steps have been taken on his behalf by OHCHR.

Of the three European bodies addressed here, the CPT has had the most access to İmralı Prison and its prisoners and has written 30 reports about its visits there. Despite this, it is unclear what impact its visits and reports have had on the treatment of Öcalan. For example, while the CPT announced that it had visited the prison in September 2022, in a subsequent meeting with his lawyers, it refused to provide them with any information at all about the visit.

But as a result of increasing international pressure, in a press release dated February 23, 2024, the CPT finally confirmed that its members had seen and interviewed Mr. Öcalan and three other prisoners held there during its visit in 2022. Although it had finished a report about that visit in the summer of 2023, the Turkish government did not approve its release to the public. Over the 25 years of Mr. Öcalan's isolation at İmralı, only three of 30 CPT reports on have not been permitted to be released.

The fact that Turkey withheld permission to release this latest report is particularly worrying because in its previous report, the CPT had nothing positive to say about treatment of prisoners at İmralı. Additionally, the CPT is entitled to initiate a procedure to make its observations public without government approval. It can also initiate action against states that do not comply with its recommendations on conditions and treatment of prisoners. Yet the Committee has not taken these steps. All of that begs the question of who is the CPT protecting? The state itself or the people whose rights it is the CPT's duty to defend?

The same might be asked of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) which stated that the aggravated life sentence given to Mr. Öcalan in 2014 is against the prohibition of torture and that some changes should be made to the law. The Committee of Ministers is meant to monitor and ensure the implementation of ECHR decisions. Turkey has not implemented this decision, yet the Committee of Ministers only put this issue on its agenda in 2021, seven years after the fact and so far, has taken no effective action on its implementation.

We call upon all of these bodies to fulfill their obligations regarding protecting the rights of Abdullah Öcalan.

President Erdoğan has himself recognized that the only way forward to peace between the Turkish and the Kurdish people is through dialogue and negotiation with Abdullah Öcalan, as was demonstrated with during the Oslo talks (2009-2011) and the İmralı process (2013-2015). While the negotiations did not bear fruit at that time, that they took place is the clear recognition negotiations are the way forward and they must take place with Mr. Öcalan. We call for his release from İmralı and for the suspended negotiations to be resumed.

The people of the world want peace and a secure future, we join them in that desire."

You can look at the name list of the signatories from this link: <https://anfenglishmobile.com/news/nobel-laureates-sign-open-letter-expressing-concern-about-the-detention-conditions-of-Ocalan-74467>

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## Prisons in Turkey

### Kurdish women Kaya, Bölek and Kaya mistreated in prison

ANF | BATMAN | 20 JULY 2024

In the district of Gercüş (Kercews) in the province of Batman (Êlih), a military operation against the guerrillas took place from 22 June to 6 July. The village of Bilêxşê was besieged for days and finally stormed by soldiers. The residents had to report to the mosque, after which their houses were searched. Eleven people were beaten and taken into custody in the village, and three were also sent to prison in Batman. The arrested were initially released after interrogation, but at the request of the Attorney General's Office, three

days later, on 13 July, an arrest warrant was issued against nine villagers for supporting an illegal organization. According to their lawyer, Yunus Bağış, the file does not contain a single concrete piece of evidence for the accusation.

The Kurds sent to prison are Emine Kaya (54), Nezete Bölek (58), Sare Kaya (59), Zübeyir Şimşek (41), Habib Kaya (61), İsa Gitmez (60), Nedim Kaya (62), Yusuf Bölek (68) and Murat Gelir (24) – the latter is the head of the Bilêxşê community.

## Women abused in prison

The three arrested women, Emine Kaya, Nezete Bölek and Sare Kaya, were abused when they were admitted to the Batman prison, according to the DEM party's women's council. The DEM women's council said that the women resisted a degrading strip search and were held in a temporary ward ever since. On the first day, they were only given dry bread to eat, and the blankets and foam mattresses they were given were dirty and were only replaced days later. Their cell was overheated and their request for a fan was refused.

A written request had to be made for all necessities, but the three women could neither read nor write. On 16 July, their cell was searched and ransacked twice by guards at two-hour intervals. During the measure, the women were locked in the courtyard for hours in scorching heat. The guards repeatedly hit the cell door with hard objects to keep the women in peace. They were also forced to line up in military formation for a census. The women's council of the DEM party described the treatment of the three women as a measure of enemy criminal law and demanded their release.

## Thirty years of oppression

The story of 59-year-old Sare Kaya is typical of the lives of many Kurdish women in Turkey. In the 1990s, Bilêxşê, like thousands of other villages, was burned down by the Turkish state. She and her family moved to Nusaybin (Nisêbîn), where her brothers Mecit and Hemdin were murdered by paramilitaries. One of her husband's brothers was murdered by Hizbülkontra in Batman. One of her children joined the PKK. Because the family continued to face repression in Nusaybin, they initially moved to Batman in the early 2000s.

Four years ago, the family built a new house in Bilêxşê and returned to the village. Since the last military operation and the arrests, Bilêxşê has been empty again, the animals are unattended and so are the gardens and fields are.



## Political prisoner Güneş released after 32 years in prison

ANF | 22 JULY 2024

Political prisoner Hulki Güneş has been released after 32 years in Turkish prisons and returned to his home village of Sazlica (Qerqerût) in Varto (Gimgim).

The sixty-year-old Kurd was greeted with applause by a large crowd. Among those celebrating was his 98-year-old mother Zekiye Güneş. The reception resembled a Kurdish wedding, with people dancing for hours.

For the past 32 years, Hulki Güneş has been incarcerated in prisons in Muş, Amed, Tekirdağ and most recently in Izmir-Aliğa, from where he was released on Friday.

His release had been postponed several times due to disciplinary sanctions. In Turkey, people sentenced to life imprisonment are usually released after thirty years. Release is decided by so-called monitoring committees of the respective prisons. These committees are made up of employees who have no legal expertise but can nevertheless decide on deprivation of liberty measures.

In the case of political prisoners, release is in many cases made dependent on an expression of remorse. In the case of Hulki Güneş, the fight for his release went through several legal instances until the Constitutional Court finally granted an application by his defense attorney Sedat Akbal. Güneş' brother, Yakup Güneş, was released last year after spending thirty years in prison.

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## Ill prisoner released after 31 years in jail

ANF | **ŞIRNAK** | 26 JULY 2024

Ill prisoner Ahmet Zenger (63) was detained in the village of Xirabaşeref in Idil (Hezex), in the province of Şirnak in 1993. He was tried at the State Security Court (DGM) and sentenced to life imprisonment for allegedly disrupting the "unity and integrity of the State". He was released after 31 years on Thursday.

Zenger's family and friends welcomed him in front of Giresun Espiye L Type Closed Prison.

Ahmet Zenger's release was rejected 4 times because he did not accept to admit "regret" as the Administration and Observation Board wanted him to do.

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## TJK-E calls for joint struggle against the misogynist Iranian state

ANF | 26 JULY 2024

The Kurdish Women's Movement in Europe (TJK-E) released a statement strongly reacting to the death sentences against two female activists in Iran. Women's rights defender Pakhshan Azizi was sentenced to death on 23 July and Sherife Muhammadi on 4 July. Both were subjected to severe torture and inhuman treatment during weeks of detention.

“Throughout history, hegemonic powers have tried to suppress the Kurdish people's struggle for freedom, which has been created with great cost and labour for years, through oppression, displacement, torture, massacres and assimilation. No matter how opposed they are to each other, when it comes to the Kurdish people and their gains, the local powers in the region have also come to an arrangement and allied with the enemy in genocidal policies in line with their interests. Barzani and his family's servitude to this policy despite the reactions of the peoples living in the region shows us how deep a betrayal they are in,” said the TJK-E statement on Friday, which further included the following:

“The arrests, massacres, femicide, ecocide, migration and military operations carried out by the Turkish fascist state in Bashur (South Kurdistan) with psychological and special warfare techniques as in Bakur (North Kurdistan), as well as its use of internationally banned chemical weapons against the Kurdish freedom movement remain fresh in our memory. Of course, these forces, which aim to take over the entire *raison d'être* of the Kurdish people through genocide policies in Bashur, Bakur, Rojava (West Kurdistan) and Rojhilat (East Kurdistan), are not alone in doing so. The partnership of the USA, Russia and other NATO countries corresponds to the policy of the local forces.

Efforts are being made to implement the same policies against the Kurdish people in Rojhilat today. The Iranian state's attempt to crush the struggle for freedom with oppression, just like the fascist Turkish Republic, has revealed the spirit of popular uprisings and resistance that started with the killing of Jina Mahsa Amini in 2022. The women's stance against the oppressive Mullah regime has become vitalised with the philosophy of ‘Jin, Jiyan, Azadi’ [Woman, Life, Freedom] and inspired women's movements around the world. Women who are resisting the invaders' oppression of societies through women in the region and in the four parts of Kurdistan, have today raised the struggle even more and shouted out that they will not submit to the enemy and masculine mentalities.

We condemn the regime in Rojhilat that sentenced women's rights defender and journalist Pakshan Azizi and Sherife Muhammadi to death after severe torture. We call on all our women's organisations to stand in solidarity to raise the common struggle against the misogynist Iranian regime.”

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## Military aggression and occupation

### Nine years ago the Suruç Massacre

ANF | 20 JULY 2024

On 20 July 2015, 33 mainly young people were killed by an ISIS suicide bomb attack under police surveillance, and 104 others were injured, some seriously.

The attack in the Suruç district of Urfa occurred when around 300 volunteers had gathered at the Amara cultural center at the request of the Federation of Socialist Youth Associations (SGDF) to hold a press con-

ference before leaving for Kobanê. The planned trip to northern Syria was intended to be an act of solidarity. The young people wanted to bring toys and humanitarian aid to the city destroyed by ISIS.

One and a half months before that attack, on 5 June, another attack targeted an HDP rally in Diyarbakır, and many of our people were killed in this attack carried out by paramilitary groups.

## The trial

The only defendant who was under arrest in the Suruç massacre case has been sentenced to aggravated life imprisonment 34 times, as well as 1,890 years in prison.

The 21st and final hearing of the case was held on 22 October 2022 at the Urfa 5th Heavy Penal Court.

The court sentenced Yakup Şahin to aggravated life imprisonment 34 times for "attempting to overthrow the constitutional order," "being a member of an armed terrorist organization," "murder by premeditation or bombing."

The defendant was separately sentenced to 1,890 years in prison for attempting to commit this crime. He was also sentenced to 10 years in prison and fined 40,000 lira for possessing explosives.

The court also ruled that the fugitive defendants İlhami Bali and Deniz Büyükçelebi should be separated.

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## KCK commemorates 33 Suruç dream travelers: Let's grow the united struggle

ANF | BEHDINAN | 20 JULY 2024

The Co-Presidency of the KCK Executive Council issued a statement to commemorate the martyrs of the Suruç (Pirsus) massacre its 9th anniversary.

The KCK said: "On 20 July 2015, 33 members of the socialist youth movement of Turkey, who stood in solidarity with the Rojava Revolution and who came to Pirsus (Suruç) for the reconstruction of Kobane, were killed in an attack.

On the 9th anniversary of this massacre, we once again condemn this dastardly attack with all anger and, at the same time, commemorate with great respect the 33 precious friends who were martyred in the attack. By commemorating them with respect and gratitude, we want to commemorate all the martyrs of revolution and democracy, and we bow with respect in front of their precious memories."

The statement added: "The attitude and struggle of the socialist, revolutionary and democratic forces in solidarity with the Kurdish people and the Rojava Revolution has played a very important role in the development of a united struggle against exploitation, reaction and fascism. This struggle has frustrated the

fascist order that want to dominate in Turkey, Kurdistan and the Middle East. The martyrs of Pirsus are the symbol of this struggle. Their struggle is the continuation of the struggle that was developed by Deniz Gezmiş, Mahir Cayan, İbrahim Kaypakkaya, and Hikmet Kivılcımlı. Deniz Gezmiş expressed the importance of this by shouting that "the unity of peoples and the revolutionary struggle shall live long," as he was taken to execution. Rêber Apo highly valued this attitude and developed the Kurdish freedom struggle in this spirit. The Rojava Revolution is a united common revolution of the peoples that emerged from this line. On this basis, defending the Rojava Revolution is the most correct revolutionary attitude. This is definitely the most correct attitude of loyalty to the martyrs of Pirsus."

The statement continued: "The efforts and struggle of the socialist revolutionary movements on behalf of the people of northern Kurdistan and the peoples of Turkey have been a determining factor in the breaking of ISIS attacks and liberating Kobane. This struggle and the results of this struggle created a break in the reactionary, fascist, and colonialist system and smashed the plans of the fascist AKP-MHP government. The liberation of Kobane has been one of the most important turning points in history. Because it was aimed at building a reactionary, racist, and fascist regime through ISIS that would spread all over the Middle East after the fall of Kobane. The attacks carried out by the AKP-MHP government, especially the Pirsus Massacre, are the result of the defeat of this project. The attacks and massacres carried out in northern Kurdistan and Turkey after this date were aimed at activating this project again. The attacks of the AKP-MHP government that continue today are still within this scope."

The statement underlined that "the united struggle of the Kurdish people and the peoples of Turkey, which developed in memory of the martyrs of Pirsus, has brought the AKP-MHP fascism to the brink of destruction. The fascist power is in shock and obstruction. It has entered a process of decay and disintegration. But it is trying to get out of this situation by making new plans, increasing its genocidal attacks and trying to achieve its fascist, reactionary and colonialist projects. The intensifying occupation attacks against southern Kurdistan need to be seen in this context. Again, the policy of appointing trustees and the absolute isolation of Rêber Apo in İmralı is within this scope. On the other hand, new plans are being made for Syria and Rojava. It is for this purpose that fascist chief Tayyip Erdoğan wants to establish relations with the Syrian state.

It is the most correct revolutionary attitude to develop a united struggle against these policies developed by the AKP-MHP government which intends to achieve its fascist, racist and reactionary projects in new versions. All revolutionary, democratic, socialist and libertarian forces should act with this historical responsibility and further develop the united anti-fascist struggle. We call on everyone to further raise the struggle on this basis."



## Akça Cupolo: We must ensure our self-defense in a country where there is no law

ANF | AMED | 20 JULY 2024

In Amed, supporters of Hûda Par are becoming increasingly violent. The Islamist party, which entered the Turkish parliament last year on the AKP list with four MPs, has links to the Kurdish Hezbollah, which committed murders in Kurdistan in the 1990s as a paramilitary organization (Hizbalkontra) on behalf of the state.

In June this year, a cultural event in a park in Amed was attacked by a mob shouting "Allahu Akbar". The attackers were released after being questioned. Last week, three masked men fired shots at cafes in the old town district of Sûr. In the last two months, a total of five incidents have been reported in which the way of life of women in particular has been attacked.

The fact that the Kurdish-Islamist movement is being supported by the Turkish government is confirmed by DEM politician Ceylan Akça Cupolo. The Amed MP told ANF that what former Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu had announced as a "strategic step and sociological offensive" had been seen in the city over the last 45 days. Akça Cupolo said: "In our opinion, these are not individual actions or isolated cases. This is poison cooked up by the police and secret service to lure the people of Kurdistan. It is quite obvious that Hizbalkontra has also joined the AKP-MHP coalition."

Akça Cupolo added: "The state wants to fight the Kurdish freedom movement with a "military-political structure similar to ISIS," and has revived Hizbullah, which had been temporarily put on hold, for this purpose. The first target of attacks are women, because women's liberation is the central theme of the Kurdish movement and is what makes it strong. The attacks are intended to exclude women from social life and push them out of public spaces."

For this reason, it is not to be expected that the judiciary will take action against the perpetrators, warned the DEM MP, who said: "Against this historical and current background, we have no choice but to stand up for our shared living spaces ourselves and to ensure our defense. In a country where law and security have collapsed, no other solution is apparent."

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## HPG: 5 soldiers killed and 2 positions destroyed

ANF | BEHDINAN | 20 JULY 2024

The Press Centre of the People's Defence Forces (HPG) issued a statement providing latest information about the war in Kurdistan.

According to the statement, guerrillas struck positions of the Turkish invasion forces in the Dergelê region in Metîna on Friday evening. The guerrillas used light and semi-automatic weapons and initially destroyed two positions. When the Turkish army tried to intervene from other positions, the guerrillas struck again and destroyed two more positions. Four soldiers were killed during the course of the action.

In the western Zap region, a soldier was shot dead by a sniper from the Free Women's Troops (YJA Star) when a Turkish unit tried to replace a surveillance camera destroyed by guerrillas in the Girê Cûdî region on Thursday. An attempted advance by the Turkish army in the Girê Bahar area was repulsed on Friday evening by an attack with semi-automatic weapons.

In Gever (Yüksekova) district of Hakkari, the guerrillas destroyed three surveillance cameras installed by the Turkish army in the areas of Gundê Civyan, Şargulata and Gundê Sêgûza on 17 July.

Regarding the latest attacks by the Turkish army on the guerrilla-held Medya Defence Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq), HPG said that banned explosives were used twice against a guerrilla tunnel in the resistance area of Girê FM on 18 July. The tunnel facility on the western front of the Zap region has been under siege by the Turkish army for two and a half months and has repeatedly been attacked with chemical weapons and other banned weapons.

In addition, HPG reported 25 airstrikes with fighter jets in the past two days. The bombed areas were Lolan, Kolît and Şehîd Şerîf in Xakurke, Avtehlê, Deşta Kafya, Sipîndarê, Kanî Gûzê, Girgaşê and Mijê in Gare as well as Girê Bahar and Girê Amêdîyê in Zap. Girê Bahar was also shelled by attack helicopters today.



## HPG pays tribute to guerrillas Aram, Ednan and Serhed

ANF | BEHDINAN | 21 JULY 2024

Guerrillas Zarîn Aram, Dilgeş Ednan and Sîdar Serhed fell as martyrs in the resistance against the Turkish invasion in the Zap region. The press center of the People's Defense Forces (HPG) said in a statement that, the guerrillas were killed in various attacks. The HPG expressed their condolences to the families of the martyrs as well as to the Kurdish and Arab people.

The HPG provided the following information about the identity of the three fighters:

Code name: Zarîn Aram

First and last name: Delal Xezal Akıl

Place of birth: Şirnex

Names of mother and father: Zeynep – Idris

Date and place of death: May 3, 2024 / Zap

Code name: Dilgeş Ednan

First and last name: Hemze Muhammed Saqîr

Place of birth: Deir ez-Zor

Names of mother and father: Sara – Muhammed

Date and place of death: June 25, 2024 / Zap

Code name: Sîdar Serhed

First and last name: Metin Dağcı

Place of birth: Agirî

Names of mother and father: Aynur – Ahmet

Date and place of death: July 4, 2024 / Zap

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## YPJ calls for action against ISIS attacks and Turkish occupation

ANF | 21 JULY 2024

The General Command of the Women's Protection Units (YPJ) released a statement calling on all international institutions and forces to stand against ISIS attacks and Turkish occupation fascism and demand the expulsion of these occupying forces from the lands of southern Kurdistan, warning: "Otherwise, ISIS terrorism will return and spread everywhere again."

The YPJ statement on Sunday includes the following:

"Today, our regions, and indeed the entire world, are facing violent attacks of denial and genocide. Humanity is in a significant crisis. We often see that a broad front of genocide, rape, and violence has been opened against women and peoples demanding freedom, justice, and democracy.

The massacres committed by ISIS in Syria, Iraq, Sinjar, Kurdistan, and across European countries remain vivid in the conscience of society and global public opinion. Arab, Kurdish, Christian, Yazidi people, and all nationalities are under attack, facing assimilation and extermination.

As the Women's Protection Units (YPJ), we fought and resisted the brutality of ISIS mercenaries with great bravery and sacrifice. Despite losing thousands of our comrades as martyrs, we fought and resisted with determination and persistence until we managed to defeat ISIS and achieve security and stability for the people of the region.

Unfortunately, we now see that the occupying Turkish state, which attacks our regions and southern Kurdistan daily, has opened the way for ISIS to settle in the areas of Zakho, Dohuk, and Amadiya to fight the guerrilla forces in the mountains of Zap and Metina and all regions of southern Kurdistan. In this way, the Turkish state tries to annex and occupy the lands of southern Kurdistan. Just as the Turkish state occupied Rojava, northern Syria, and annexed it to its territories, it now aims to annex and occupy the lands of southern Kurdistan as well. The Turkish state is attempting to occupy the lands of southern Kurdistan through ISIS mercenaries and the collaboration of the treacherous Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and its mercenaries, Zeravan and Golan.

ISIS mercenaries, who committed great massacres against peoples, attacked women with extreme brutality, and sold them in slave markets, are now based in our occupied regions in Afrin, Azaz, Al-Bab, Tel Abyad, and Sari Kani. They are equipped and funded by the Turkish state. From there, these mercenaries are directed to Kurdistan, the Middle East, and various parts of Europe, Africa, and Asia. We must realize that the relocation of ISIS mercenaries to southern Kurdistan and Iraq is for the purpose of annexation, occupation, and committing new massacres.

The whole world knows that the guerrilla forces protected Sinjar, Kirkuk, Makhmour, Erbil, and the entire Iraqi people from ISIS terrorism. How, then, is ISIS being moved to these areas to fight against the freedom guerrillas? The people of southern Kurdistan and Iraq know well that Barzani himself called the guerrilla forces to protect Erbil from the brutality of ISIS. Therefore, how can Barzani allow ISIS mercenaries to move into southern Kurdistan and fight the guerrilla forces?

The Peshmerga of dignity fought against Saddam's fascism and dictatorship for many years to protect their lands. They must realize that today's war is waged with the same aim, and accordingly, they should not accept Barzani's and the KDP's partnership, which opens its arms to ISIS mercenaries. In Kobani, we fought side by side with the dignified Peshmerga who came from southern Kurdistan and international revolutionaries against ISIS and managed to defeat it. Therefore, we must unite in the spirit of Kobani and protect all of Kurdistan, Iraq, and the entire Middle East.

Undoubtedly, dozens of political parties in southern Kurdistan and Iraq have condemned this occupation, and the Arab tribes in Iraq have shown a valuable stance against it. However, this stance must turn into a large organization to stop this Turkish occupation and prevent the resurgence of ISIS. The central Iraqi government and the southern Kurdistan regional government must not be partners in this human crime and must immediately expel ISIS mercenaries and the occupying Turkish army from those sacred lands.

The whole world must see this danger and understand that the massacres committed in Iran, Russia, Paris, Germany, Africa, and Europe are orchestrated from the center in Ankara, directed by Erdoğan and Turkish

intelligence. The Turkish state's policy based on genocide and occupation is evidence that Erdoğan's mentality is the mentality of ISIS. Erdoğan exploits ISIS terrorism as a dangerous front against all the peoples of the Middle East and the world. Therefore, the entire world must stand by the Kurdish guerrilla forces and take a firm stance against this global crime. The guerrilla forces stood against ISIS in Sinjar, Rojava, Kirkuk, Makhmour, and Erbil and prevented it from committing new massacres in the region. Remaining silent in this war means agreeing to new massacres and genocides in the Middle East and the world.

Therefore, we emphasize and say:

The people of southern Kurdistan and all of Iraq must jointly show their stance against ISIS mercenaries and strongly resist to expel Turkish fascism from their lands.

We also call on all honorable and dignified Peshmerga forces to stand against ISIS massacres and Turkish occupation and to take their place in the fronts of resistance and struggle.

We also call on the central Iraqi government and the southern Kurdistan regional government to stop this occupation immediately.

All the peoples of the region, especially the Arab, Kurdish, and Turkmen peoples living together in these lands, must stand with great will and resist against Erdoğan's Ottoman ambitions.

The entire world, east and west, must fulfill its humanitarian duties, stand against ISIS terrorism and Erdoğan's fascism, and take a firm stance.

All international institutions and forces must stand against ISIS attacks and Turkish occupation fascism and demand the expulsion of these occupying forces from the lands of southern Kurdistan. Otherwise, ISIS terrorism will return and spread everywhere again.

The women's front, which is the fundamental constructive force of life, must be the strongest against these attacks. Therefore, we call on the women of southern Kurdistan and Iraq in particular, and all the women of the world, to stand united and with one voice against all forms of occupation and genocide.

In the end, as the YPJ forces who fought ISIS for many years until we defeated it, we will not allow ISIS mercenaries to return to these lands and kill humanity again. We will also take our stance in due time against these annexation and occupation attacks and reject the re-establishment of ISIS in the region in any form. As the Women's Protection Units, with our Kurdish, Arab, Assyrian, Syriac, Turkmen, Chaldean, and Circassian members, alongside our international fighters who came from various parts of the world to Rojava and together ended the ISIS occupation, we will protect all women and peoples with the spirit of the July 19th revolution, which is the revolution of women and all humanity. We are also ready to protect our people in southern Kurdistan and Iraq if necessary. Wherever ISIS terrorism exists, we will be on the front lines of resistance and struggle."

## Three YRK guerrillas martyred in Turkish air strike

ANF | 21 JULY 2024

The East Kurdistan Defence Units (YRK) Command announced the identities of three guerrillas who were martyred in an air raid carried out by the occupying Turkish state on 14 July.

The statement released by the YRK Command on Sunday includes the following:

"In the current process of the 3rd world war in the Middle East, the Kurdish people are passing through a historic threshold. Our resilient people are waging an unprecedented struggle in the four parts of Kurdistan and abroad. Undoubtedly, we are going through a period when we are closer to success than ever before.

The victory of the peoples of Kurdistan will be the defeat of the invaders and betrayers. As Leader Apo's [Abdullah Öcalan's] paradigm spreads and becomes universal, it produces solutions to the problems of the world and humanity. Leader Apo's power of thought strikes fear into the conspiratorial, occupying and treacherous forces. In order to prevent the ideas and philosophy of Leader Apo from becoming widespread and a solution for humanity, these dark forces keep Leader Apo in absolute isolation and torture conditions.

An aggravated torture system has been applied against Leader Apo for 25 years. Especially for the last three years, no information can be received from Leader Apo, who has been subject to absolute isolation. Leader Apo is putting up historic resistance against absolute isolation. The Kurdish people and the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla, fuelled by the resistance of Leader Apo, are raising the struggle in his footsteps.

Today, Turkey wants to take advantage of the conflicts in the Middle East to realise its Neo-Ottoman plan, that is, its dreams of Misak-ı Milli [The 'National Pact' adopted 104 years ago that takes all Kurdistan, that is, the region including northern Iraq and northern Syria, within the borders of the Turkish state]. Especially in the last 10 years, it has carried out massacres everywhere under the pretext of the PKK to destroy the Kurdish people within the scope of the Kurdish genocide concept.

The occupying Turkish state launched a comprehensive invasion attack on the Metîna region in 2024 with the betrayal of the Barzanis. Finally, on 3 July, a new stage was reached with the attacks on Metîna, Sergele, Amêdîyê, Dêraluk and Şêladize regions.

Especially with the invasion attacks launched against the Metîna region in the last two years, reconnaissance planes have started to move continuously in the regions affiliated to the forces of East Kurdistan. Reconnaissance planes belonging to the Turkish occupation are constantly hovering in Pênciwên and have carried out 5 air strikes in the region. Similarly, the Asos region was the target of missiles launched by the occupying Turkish state. Our region was also bombed by warplanes 3 times.

Our patriotic people witnessed these bombardments and as a result of these attacks, many vineyards and gardens belonging to the local people were burnt. Again, with these attacks, the nature of Kurdistan was destroyed and our geography was almost plundered.

In recent days, there has been very intense reconnaissance aircraft activity over the Pênciwên region. On 14 July, warplanes bombed the area 3 times between 18:00 and 18:30. One of our units was targeted by these bombardments while carrying out its revolutionary duty and 3 of our comrades were martyred.

We express our condolences to the families of our heroic martyrs and to all the people of Kurdistan. We promise once again that we will walk on the path of the martyrs and fight until the last drop of our blood until the dreams of our comrades are realised.”

The identity information of the fallen guerrillas is as follows:

First-Last Name: Hidayet Resûlî

Nom de Guerre: Cengawer Mikayîl

Date and Place of Participation: 2020-Merîwan

Date and Place of Martyrdom: 14-7-2024 -Pênciwên

First-Last Name: Ömer Fîrat

Nom de Guerre: Andok Tolhildan

Date and Place of Participation: 2020-Fransa

Date and Place of Martyrdom: 14-7-2024 -Pênciwên

First-Last Name: Îrfan Zendî

Nom de Guerre: Raman Rênas

Date and Place of Participation: 2022-Bane

Date and Place of Martyrdom: 14-7-2024 –Pênciwên.

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## The Black Stadium: A tale of youthful victory against terrorism

ANF | 21 JULY 2024

Residents of Raqqa named the municipal stadium the Black Stadium after its black stands. No one expected that blackness would one day become a terrifying part of the memory of the place.

In 2013, young people were deprived of sports and the shouts of fans shouting on the stands of the municipal stadium in Raqqa subsided, and the stadium became military headquarters for various extremist and rival factions.

With ISIS taking control of Raqqa, the stadium turned into one of the largest prisons in the city and was known as Point 11. ISIS has turned stadium halls into rooms for torturing innocent civilians, and the halls have been turned into places for carrying out almost daily executions. At that time, the cries and groans of the oppressed replaced the joy and shouts of the fans.

On October 20, 2017, the stadium witnessed an exceptional event. The heroes of the Syria Democratic Forces rallied there, declaring the liberation of the city of Raqqa from the oppression of the terrorist organization ISIS.

Thanks to the sacrifices of the martyrs, the Municipal Stadium once again opened its doors to young men and women. Its sports halls were refurbished, and the stadium was revitalized to once again host sporting events and community gatherings. Each year, the stadium serves as a poignant reminder of the city's resilience and the triumph of good over evil. The Liberation Day commemoration, an annual event held at the stadium, brings together the people of Raqqa alongside the SDF heroes. It stands as a testament to the unwavering spirit of the people and the unwavering resolve of the youth to overcome the darkness of oppression. The Black Stadium, once a symbol of oppression, now stands as a beacon of hope, a testament to the indomitable spirit of the people of Raqqa. Their resilience in the face of adversity serves as an inspiration to all who strive for freedom and justice.

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## HPG reports 4 aerial actions against the Turkish army in Zap

ANF | BEHDINAN | 22 JULY 2024

The Şehîd Dogan Zinar Unit struck the bases of the occupying Turkish troops in Zap 4 times from the air.

HPG Press Liaison Centre said: "Between 14-16 July, the bases of the occupying Turkish army in Şehîd Delîl Western Zap region were targeted by aircraft. The invaders in Sergelê Resistance Area were hit from the air 4 times. The number of invaders punished and injured in these actions could not be clarified exactly, but heavy casualties were inflicted on the positions and bases of the invaders."

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## Turkish state takes action to build new bases in Bradost

ANF | 22 JULY 2024

The Turkish state, which has been expanding its occupation attacks in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq) in recent months with the support and complicity of the ruling KDP, is trying to identify locations to build new military bases.

New images published by RojNews show that the occupying state is trying to determine the location for new bases in the Bradost area.

The Turkish state has escalated its attacks on civilian settlements in southern Kurdistan in recent weeks. While tens of villages have been evacuated, hundreds of them are subjected to threats and bombardments seeking to depopulate the region.





## Manbij Military Council foils infiltration attempts by Turkish-backed mercenaries

ANF | MANBIJ | 22 JULY 2024

Gangs affiliated to the occupying Turkish state attempted to infiltrate the villages of Jarad, Ereb Hesên, Ewn Dadat and Toxara Mezin in Manbij Canton last night.

The infiltration attempts started around 23.00 local time in the village of Jarad, facing response from the fighters of Manbij Military Council. After 15 minutes of clashes, the gangs were repelled.

The gangs, who tried to infiltrate in Ereb Hesên village at 02.10, also faced the intervention of Manbij Military Council fighters. The ensuing fighting lasted 20 minutes. The gangs suffered casualties, but the numbers couldn't be clarified.

Similar infiltration attempts were prevented in the villages of Ewn Dadat and Toxara Mezin.

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



## 1,512 people benefit from the general amnesty in North-East Syria

ANF | 22 JULY 2024

The Peoples' Democratic Assembly of North and East Syria declared a general amnesty on 17 July. The amnesty is aimed at implementing the decisions taken at the second workshop of the National Unity of Syrian Tribes and Components, held in Hesekê in the Cizre Canton on 25 May.

Hisên Osman, Co-Chair of the Executive Council of the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (DAANES), spoke to ANHA about the number of people who benefited from the amnesty, the purposes and the stages of the release of prisoners.

Osman said that a number of meetings were held between the organisations of the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, which led to the issuance of an amnesty for those who did not take part in the massacre of Syrians.

Osman continued: "According to the anti-terrorism law and the general penal code, this amnesty is the first of its kind in North and East Syria. People who were not involved in massacres have been released."

Osman said that 1,512 people, including 60 women, benefited from the amnesty and that they will be released in 2 stages.

Stating that 1,112 prisoners will be released in groups in the first stage, Osman said, "Firstly, the prisoners in Raqqa Prison will be released, then the prisoners in the Cizîr Canton will be released, and finally the prisoners in the Euphrates and Manbij cantons."

Regarding the second stage, Osman said, "In this stage, 400 detainees who have served half of their sentences will be released. These detainees will be released later on."

Drawing attention to the purpose and reasons for the amnesty, Osman stated that the aim is to give the released the opportunity to be active in society and play their role.



## HPG pays tribute to YJA Star guerrillas Ronahî Dilxwîn and Arîn Tolhildan

ANF | BEHDINAN | 23 JULY 2024

YJA Star Guerrillas Ronahî Dilxwîn and Arîn Tolhildan were killed in an attack by the Turkish army on the Medya Defense Areas. The Press Office of the People's Defense Forces (HPG) said in a statement that the deadly attack was reportedly carried out in mid-June. The HPG provided the following information about the guerrillas' personal data:

Code name: Ronahî Dilxwîn

First and last name: Vesile Duran

Place of birth: Wan

Names of mother and father: Dilber - Bişar

Date and place of death: 16/06/2024 Medya Defense Areas

Code name: Arîn Tolhildan

First and last name: Dilan Öklü

Place of birth: Wan

Names of mother and father: Saadet - Hasan

Date and place of death: 16/06/2024 Medya Defense Areas

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## Iraqi Parliament to discuss Turkish occupation

ANF | BAGHDAD | 23 JULY 2024

According to RojNews, Fatin Qerexoli, a member of the Iraqi Parliament's Transport Committee, told the Iraqi daily Sabah that they had previously visited Sulaymaniyah Airport and discussed the blockade of the airport with the Iraqi Prime Minister.

Fatin Qerexoli stated that the Turkish embargo on Sulaymaniyah Airport is a violation of Iraqi sovereignty and that Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' Al Sudani called for a diplomatic solution to the problem.

According to the report, Mohammad Shameri, a member of the Iraqi Parliament's Security and Defence Committee, announced that the parliament will also seriously discuss the Turkish invasion campaign in different parts of Duhok province.

'The Iraqi parliament will take a clear stance on this issue,' Shameri said, according to the daily Sabah.

The newspaper did not provide any information on when the parliamentary session would be held.

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## Ethnic cleansing continues in Afrin: Kidnapping, extortion, bombardment

ANF | 23 JULY 2024

As part of the policies to change the demography of Afrin, migrants settled in the region continue to illegally sell the seized properties of displaced Afrin citizens.

Most recently, a person named Ehmed El Heci, who settled in Mehmudiyê neighbourhood of Afrin, sold the house belonging to İsmet Henan to another migrant named Mihemed Mirî for 1,500 dollars. Ehmed al-Haji had seized this house in 2018 when the Turkish state and its affiliated gangs occupied Afrin.

Human rights violations in Afrin, which are not limited to the seizure of properties, continue with ransom demands and kidnappings. A member of the gang group ‘Makhawir al-Sharqiye’ demanded 4 thousand dollars from a citizen named Cemal Hemîd in exchange for returning his house on Dêrsim Hospital Street.

Similarly, the gangs of the ‘112th Division’ under the command of the occupying Turkish state kidnapped a citizen named Menna Miho Mamo Nasan who was returning home in Dimili village of Mabeta district and demanded a ransom from his family for his release.

On the same day, 60-year-old Sibhî Ebdo Şêxo was also kidnapped in Mehmudiyê neighbourhood and his family was threatened that he would be killed if the ransom was not paid.

The occupying Turkish state and its gangs continue their bombardments against different parts of Afrin, in addition to property seizures and kidnappings.

On the other hand, the villages of Tinib and Bêne in Şêrawa district were shelled with howitzers. There is no information yet about possible damage and casualties as a result of these attacks.

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## Turkish army launches new operation in Duhok

ANF | 24 JULY 2024

The Turkish army launched a new operation against the Kurdistan Freedom Guerrillas in Dêrelök, in Duhok, under the supervision of the KDP, at around 2 pm on Tuesday.

The images received by Rojnews confirmed the information that the Turkish state launched an operation with the support of KDP.

In addition, the annexation and occupation attacks carried out by the Turkish state continue in the Behdinan region. With the support of the KDP, the Turkish state carried out armored vehicle patrols and identity checks in Behdinan.

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## Turkish army bombs a village in Duhok, starting a fire

ANF | 24 JULY 2024

According to ROJNEWS news, warplanes belonging to the Turkish state bombed the village of Kanî in Amêdiyê, in the province of Duhok.

It was reported that a large fire broke out in the village after the bombardment. An unmanned aerial vehicle belonging to the Turkish state had previously crashed in the same area.

### **The occupation is expanding, civilians are targeted**

While the Turkish state has been expanding its occupation attacks in South Kurdistan with the complicity of the KDP in recent months, it is threatening to evacuate hundreds of villages. Civilian residential areas are systematically bombed. Dozens of villages have been evacuated and according to local sources, more than 600 villages are threatened with evacuation.

Community Peacemaker Teams (CPT) reported that the Turkish state expanded its air strikes to the Çoman district of Hewlêr and that the region was bombed twice in a week.

According to CPT data, 19 civilians were martyred and 2 citizens were injured as a result of the attacks carried out by the Turkish state against South Kurdistan since the beginning of the year.

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## HRE: 10 invaders were killed in Mare and Azaz

ANF | 24 JULY 2024

The Afrin Liberation Forces (HRE) reported that at least 10 invaders were killed in two separate raids against the gangs of the occupying Turkish state in Marê and Azaz.

In a written statement on Wednesday, HRE stated that the raids were carried out on 19 and 20 July.

In Marê, HRE fighters infiltrated the bases used by the gangs and captured many armouries on 19 July. The fronts used by the gangs were rendered unusable.

According to HRE, 4 invaders, including a commander, were killed during the action, and 4 others were injured. A DShK-laden vehicle was also damaged.

In another action, HRE fighters raided a point of the Turkish-backed gangs in Azaz on 20 July. HRE fighters infiltrated the positions used by the gangs and captured their armouries.

"The positions were rendered unusable and heavy blows were dealt to the invaders. 6 invaders were killed, 3 others injured and 2 military vehicles destroyed during the action. In addition, 3 AK-47 rifles, 2 military bandoliers, 11 AK-47 magazines, a telephone, a communication device, a military bag, thermal batteries and many AK-47 bullets were seized," said the HRE statement.

HRE stated that the occupying Turkish state and its gangs attacked civilians after their actions, bombing civilian areas in the countryside of Shehba and Afrin with heavy weapons.

"As a result of these immoral attacks, a citizen was injured and material damage was caused to the property of many people," the statement added.

HRE vowed that: "Our retaliatory actions against the enemy will continue".



## Guerrillas: We will not give up our resistance until we live in a free Kurdistan

RUSTEM KURTALAN | BEHDINAN | 24 JULY 2024

The Turkish army is currently carrying out a massive attack on the guerrilla-held Medya Defence Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq), particularly in the region west of Zap. The Turkish army is being supported by the KDP, the ruling party of the Barzanis, in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. However, the guerrillas are repeatedly beating back the invading troops and going on the offensive with effective actions on the ground and in the air. Sergelê and the Bahar hill have become known for their fierce resistance in recent days and weeks. The guerrillas have repelled several major attacks by the Turkish army there and carried out dozens of attacks from the air and on the ground. Guerrillas from the YJA Star (Free Women's Troops) and the HPG (People's Defence Forces) involved in the resistance spoke to ANF.

### 'We deal effective blows to the enemy'

**YJA-Star guerrilla Tekoşîn Adil:** "First of all, we would like to commemorate our comrades Canfeda Efrîn and Canfeda Soro who died after the invasion attack began on 3 July. The invasion attack of the Turkish state on southern Kurdistan creates a dangerous situation not only for Kurdistan but for the whole world. The aim of the invading forces is to occupy and colonise the entire Middle East. We can see the most concrete example of this in Kurdistan. Since the beginning of the invasion operation, many villages have been burnt down and destroyed. Not only the villages are being destroyed, but entire areas of Kurdistan are being burnt down. As our martyrs said, we will turn the Kurdistan lands into a grave for the Turkish occupying state, so much so that they will no longer be able to set foot on Kurdistan soil. Our comrades have already encircled and surrounded the enemy with guerrilla tactics. Despite all the difficulties, we continue to inflict further blows on the enemy with our willpower because we are waging this war on the basis of an idea and a philosophy. We have a conviction and a goal, and we believe that we will achieve victory with it. This is also our appeal to our people. All those who consider themselves patriotic must join the resis-

tance with this sense of responsibility. If you join this resistance, we will destroy the Turkish occupying state together with the dirty mentality it has created.”

### **‘We will achieve victory together with our people’**

**YJA-Star guerrilla Berçem Soran:** “The Turkish state's aggression on South Kurdistan has made its intentions clear. The aim of the occupation is to force the people of South Kurdistan to flee and to plunder their land. This is made clear by their actions in the Sergelê region. The Turkish state is bombing and burning down villages. The people of South Kurdistan are expressing their reactions, but they should resist and not allow the occupiers to cross into their country. This land belongs to the Kurds. The people should not remain silent in the face of the invading forces who move freely in the villages and their gangs who displace the villagers. This is our land. We will not allow the invaders to occupy Kurdistan. Another point is that the KDP is presenting South Kurdistan to the Turkish state. As freedom guerrillas, our stance against occupation is clear. We will not allow the invaders or treason triumph. Of course, we will do this together with our people. Our people should know that the freedom guerrillas are always at their side. And we are convinced that we will achieve victory together.”

### **‘Every place you set foot in Kurdistan will become your grave’**

**HPG guerrilla Erdal Qendîl:** “With their guerrilla tactics and forms of guerrilla warfare, our comrades have dealt a heavy blow to the operation that the Turkish occupation state launched in Sergelê on the evening of 3 July between 8 and 9 pm with the support of the KDP. The Turkish troops are in a state of shock. The guerrilla resistance sent the following message to the invaders: Every place you set foot in Kurdistan will become your grave. But the KDP, which is willingly handing over Kurdistan land to the invading forces, must also be stopped. The Kurdish people must resist the treachery of the KDP. As freedom guerrillas, we will not let the invaders remain on this land, no matter what. The hard-hit invaders are venting their anger by burning down the villages and bombing forest areas in Kurdistan. We promise our people: we will not give up our resistance until we live in a free Kurdistan.”



## **HPG: Three Turkish soldiers killed by guerrillas in South Kurdistan**

ANF | 25 JULY 2024

The Press Center of the People's Defense Forces (HPG) has issued a statement about the guerrilla resistance against the Turkish invasion of South Kurdistan and the recent attacks by the Turkish army on the Medya Defense Areas.

According to the report, three Turkish soldiers were killed on Wednesday by Free Women's Units (YJA Star) and HPG guerrillas. Meanwhile, air strikes by Turkish fighter jets have caused fires to break out in several places.

The HPG provided the following information on the details of the war on 22 and 23 July:

### **“Guerrilla resistance in Metîna**

An attempted advance by the Turkish army in Golka was stopped on Wednesday by a targeted attack with semi-automatic weapons. In the Şêlazê area, the guerrillas intervened on Tuesday night against attack helicopters, which then disappeared from the airspace.

### **Western Zap region and Gare**

The Turkish occupation troops in the Girê Cûdî area were attacked with heavy weapons on Tuesday. On Wednesday, two soldiers were killed by a female guerrilla in the area. Another soldier was killed in by guerrilla in Girê Amêdî. On Tuesday, the guerrillas carried out a sabotage operation against the Turkish army in Girê Amêdî. In Girê Bahar and Heftebax in the Gare region, helicopters were shot at and driven away on Wednesday evening.

### **Attacks by the Turkish army**

The Turkish army used prohibited explosives against a guerrilla tunnel in Girê Amêdî on Tuesday. Fires broke out in several places within the Medya Defense Areas after the air strikes.

The HPG reports a total of 16 air strikes with fighter jets on the areas of Şehîd Şerîf, Lolan, Sinînê and Berbizina in Xakure, Deşta Kafya, Zengil and Kanî Sarkê in Gare, Girê Bahar in Zap, Levcê and Girê Hîwa in Qendîl and Bêşîlî in Metîna. Areas in the Gare, Xakurke, Metîna and Zap regions have been bombed by attack helicopters.”



## **Turkish state continues to send soldiers to South Kurdistan**

ANF | 25 JULY 2024

The Turkish state sent 100 more soldiers to the Dêrelök checkpoint in Duhok's Amêdîye district. From here, the soldiers were directed to other military points and bases. Additionally, a convoy consisting of 25-35 armored vehicles was sent first to Çelê district and then to Serzêrê.

A local source told Rojnews about the military shipment on the Amêdîyê and Dêrelök border. The source, who requested anonymity, said that the Turkish army continues its military preparations in the region in cooperation with the KDP.

The source shared the following information about the shipments: "On Wednesday night, the invading Turkish army sent 100 soldiers to the checkpoint in Dêrelök of Duhok's Amêdîyê district. These soldiers were taken to Geliyê Reşave on foot and transferred from there to other military bases."



Mentioning another military activity, the source said: "After Dêrelök, 100 more soldiers were sent to other bases and occupation points in South Kurdistan. During the night, approximately 25-30 armored vehicles were first sent to Çelê and then to Serzêrê. These vehicles were distributed from Serzêrê to the bases in Amêdiyê and Dêrelök."

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## Turkey bombs 15 villages in Afrin-Shehba

ANF | 26 JULY 2024

The Turkish state and its mercenaries bombed the villages of Şewarxe, Merenaz, Malikiyê, Tat Mereş, Minix, Eyn Deqnê, Bêlûniyê, Şêx Îsa, Hirbil, Um Hoş, Til Medîq, Til Çaçan, Şeala and Til Rehal in the Afrin-Shehba region throughout Thursday night.

Reconnaissance planes were also spotted in the region. The bombardment of the villages continued through the morning in some places.

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## HPG pays tribute to guerrillas Newal Mêrdîn, Jiyan Rêdûr and Dijwar Keleş

ANF | BEHDINAN | 26 JULY 2024

The Press Center of the People's Defense Forces (HPG) has published the names of three fallen guerrillas. Newal Mêrdîn, Jiyan Rêdûr and Dijwar Keleş fell as martyrs in an attack by the Turkish army in Serê Metîna on 30 June. The HPG had already reported on the deadly attack, and on Thursd announced the identities of the martyrs. The HPG expressed its condolences to the relatives and the people of Kurdistan and provided the following information about the lives of the fallen guerrillas:

Code name: Newal Mêrdîn

First and last name: Nûdem Kurt

Place of birth: Izmir

Names of mother and father: Feyruze – Şakir

Date and place of death: 30 June 2024 / Metîna

Code name: Dijwar Keleş

First and last name: Serdar Düşerge

Place of birth: Amed

Names of mother and father: Bahriye – Fahri

Date and place of death: 30 June 2024 / Metîna

Code name: Jiyan Rêdûr

First and last name: Darşîn Musa

Place of birth: Damascus

Names of mother and father: Fatma – Mihemed Elî

Date and place of death: 30 June 2024 / Metîna

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## Turkey and KDP establish joint checkpoint at Duhok border

ANF | DUHOK | 26 JULY 2024

Parastin, the intelligence agency of the KDP, the ruling party in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and Turkish National Intelligence Service (MIT) established a new checkpoint last night between the centre of Duhok and the Qentara Valley in the Zawête town of Amadiya.

According to reports, the KDP and the Turkish state are working jointly at the checkpoint which was established under the name of Parastin.

It is reported that the computers at the checkpoint contain information on Kurdish patriots, revolutionaries and activists and checks are conducted by the Turkish MIT.

In addition, food and goods belonging to the civilian population are confiscated at the checkpoint on the grounds that they are sent to the guerrilla forces.

While Rojnews published images of the checkpoint, local sources report that citizens' identity information is questioned at the checkpoints held by Turkish forces. Those who pass through the checkpoint are warned by Turkish soldiers saying, "This is a territory of Turkey, take your identity cards and passports with you when you travel."

In recent months, the Turkish state has been expanding its occupation, establishing checkpoints and threatening the Kurds on their own territory. Villages in the countryside are also being systematically shelled. Civil society organisations report that dozens of villages have been forcibly evacuated and hundreds more are under threat. In addition, since the beginning of the year, many civilians have lost their lives in the attacks of the invaders. The Turkish state relies on the KDP, the party of the Barzani family, in its occupation operations.

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## Turkish warplanes shell 7 areas in Bradost

ANF | BEHDINAN | 26 JULY 2024

Warplanes of the occupying Turkish state bombarded the areas of Berbizina, Panekeşk, Sinîn, Tarisa, Çiyayê Robê, Lêtan and Binqeratê in Bradost region on Friday.

The bombardment which lasted two hours caused destruction of nature and started a fire.

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## Feminicide

### Women in North-East Syria work selflessly for their safety

NUJIYAN ADAR | RAQQA | 20 JULY 2024

Women's Internal Security Forces in North-East Syria serve with dedication and determination as the guarantee of social security. In the challenging period since its establishment, women who have fought a great struggle by leaving their homes and taking on the defence of society and themselves have achieved significant successes. The Hîra Wan Academy, which focuses on developing women's self-defence skills, and the conferences organised aim to build a strong women's solidarity and a conscious society. In addition to ensuring the security of the public, women also undertake an important mission by making efforts to promote gender equality, women's rights and public awareness.

Helîme Mehmud, member of the General Command of the Internal Security Forces of North and East Syria, spoke to ANF about the establishment and activities of the Women's Internal Security Forces in North and East Syria.

## **Established by 2 women in the Enteriyê neighbourhood of Qamişlo**

Helîme Mehmud, stated that the Women's Internal Security Forces were officially established on 30 June 2014 by 2 women in the Enteriyê neighbourhood of Qamişlo, describing those times as follows: "It was a difficult period. Society did not accept women taking part in internal security forces. It was not accepted for women to leave their homes and provide their own and the community's defence in military clothes. The struggle of women, who were referred to as the woman of the house, the woman of the man, the mother of the child, has not reached today in a comfortable way. Defence was considered a man's job. Such an atmosphere prevailed. The women who established the Internal Security Forces were women from within this society. Women had decided to provide their own self-defence within the society. They had taken matters into their own hands. As a result, they came to such a decision. During the first periods of organisation, we were frequently visiting families and establishing dialogue with women. During these visits, we were sometimes subjected to physical and verbal violence, and there were times when doors were closed in our faces. This atmosphere could be overcome by educating society and women."

## **Now organised in 7 cantons**

Stating that the Women's Internal Security Forces were established in the Cizir, Euphrates and Afrin Canton of the time in line with the people's demand after the great struggles of women, Helîme Mehmud said: "Now we are organised in 7 cantons. Women take part in Hawari, HAT and Operational Forces. They ensure the security of checkpoints inside and outside the cities and the border lines in North and East Syria. There are also women in the Traffic Police, who are responsible for maintaining traffic order and supervising the implementation of traffic rules."

## **The 4th conference to be organised this year**

Helîme Mehmud noted that the first conference of the Women's Internal Security Forces was held on 25 October 2016 and added: "In this conference, the duties and responsibilities of women, the mechanism of organisation and self-governance were among the issues discussed in depth. With the 2nd conference, a change and transformation were made in the bylaws in order to create a more organised power. We have been carrying out our activities with this regulation until today. This year, we will organise our 4th conference."

## **Hîra Wan Academy focuses on developing women's defence, strategy and skills**

Regarding the Hîra Wan Academy of the Women's Internal Security Forces, which was opened on 4 April 2019 in order to make women stronger in the intellectual dimension, Helîme Mehmud said: "The academy curriculum, which consists of military and ideological training, focuses on developing women's defence, strategy and skills. Topics that touch every part of life, such as the struggle and lives of women who played their role in history, communication with society, the importance of proper communication with society, and special war policies, are also covered."

## The aim is to create a conscious society and women

Referring to the duties and responsibilities of the Women Internal Security Forces, Helîme Mehmed concluded: "Our priority is to ensure public safety and prevent crimes, to intervene in incidents and conduct investigations in accordance with the law, to raise awareness about gender equality and women's rights in society, to prevent special war policies such as drugs and prostitution, violence against women and to ensure the safety of women. It also aims to create a conscious society and women by organising activities such as education and awareness raising."

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## Sebahat Tuncel: We will achieve a free life through struggle

ANF | VAN | 20 JULY 2024

The '2025-2029 Women's Strategic Planning Workshop' organised by the Van Metropolitan Municipality at a hotel in the city continued with sessions. Women participating in the workshop emphasised the importance of managing the city from a female perspective.

Speaking at the workshop, Refika Sönmez, Head of Women's Policies Department of Van Metropolitan Municipality, stated that gender inequality permeates all areas of life and said: "An approach that will end gender inequality should be a priority in urban planning, urban policies and all the services to be carried out. Although 50 percent of city dwellers are women, their representation and employment rate are quite low. Women's participation in urban management, active participation in the restructuring of the city and the creation of social spaces is extremely important to ensure gender equality."

Emphasising that women should take part in strategic planning, Refika Sönmez continued: "It is imperative that our municipality's policies, vision and universal public services for women are implemented in a healthy way. In this context, we need to reveal the needs map of the strategic plan. In addition, it is important for the construction of a brand city that all processes to be carried out within our department are communicated to citizens and non-governmental organisations through various communication methods in accordance with the principle of transparency. All women should be included in the 5-year strategic plan through democratic participation. At this point, it should be known that strategic planning is a long-term approach and requires a change in individual and institutional mindset."

Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) Muş MP Sümeyye Boz said: "As the Kurdish women's movement, we have taken part in local governments in the last 25 years or even longer in our struggle that has existed for centuries, and we have proven a serious experience. The Kurdish women's movement is not a movement that exists on the basis of propaganda or its position. It is a structure that aims to institutionalise and socialise. In this sense, local governments are the most accessible place to achieve the desired socialisation."

Sümeyye Boz said that the 'women's libertarian, democratic and ecological' paradigm is essential for them and stated that women can exist in society and in all areas of life with this paradigm. Pointing out that the

realisation of women's policies in local governments is important for the city, Sümeyye Boz said. "Our women's work was the first target of the trustees. Many women's organisations were closed down by the trustees. The destruction of the trustees left all cities dysfunctional. These strategic plans will add strength to the power of women."

Politician Sebahat Tuncel pointed out that it is not easy for women to take part in politics and said: "It is very important that women dare and say 'I am here too'. One feels proud in the face of this scene. In the past, there were not so many women around the table. Now it is very important that they exist with their own colour, language, identity and culture. We have a male-dominated capitalist system in front of us, but we also have a system that defends a democratic, ecological and women's libertarian paradigm."

The male-dominated system first devalued women's labour. Doing so, it also devalued women. Five thousand years of male-dominated system has squandered all the values created by women. It carried out its attacks against the woman who rules and builds the values of society. The first sexual rupture was precisely the period when all the roles of women were stolen and they were locked in the house. Of course, ruling is an art. Politics is an art. If you do it well, you will lead society to a good point, if you manage it badly, you will become a despot. As women, why do we reject the male style, the hierarchical, tyrant approach? Because women adopt a style in which they understand each other through negotiation, dialogue and include each other in management."

Underlining that a government without women would not be democratic, Sebahat Tuncel said that they have been struggling against the mentality that ignores and excludes half of the society for years and as a result they have gained a place in the governments. Tuncel continued: "We discussed co-presidency based on the example of Germany. We signed a petition to the Parliament on the basis of 'equal administration'. It was de facto implemented during the period of Aysel Tuğluk and Ahmet Türk. We had a lot of problems even when it was being implemented de facto. We still have not overcome this mentality. Because men see themselves as the owner of that seat. As a result of struggles, the co-presidency system was widely accepted by the society."

Sebahat Tuncel reminded Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan's words 'Society cannot be liberated without the liberation of women' and added: "We have a paradigm against the mentality that ignores and excludes the women's liberation struggle, and with this paradigm we are taking a place in the administrations. As our President said, we cannot bring a society into being without the liberation of women. If there are no women, there are no decisions. As women, we have been struggling for this for years. As long as we unite on this path, this path will lead us to very good points. Believing is half of success, so we believe that a free life will exist, and we are fighting for it. There is only one thing I know; if there is movement, there is life, if there is hope, there is victory."

## Iraqi Women's Conference: Let's enhance the resistance

ANF | BAGHDAD | 25 JULY 2024

The 3rd Iraqi Women's Conference, organised under the slogan 'Be the Voice of Self-Defence against Femicide through Joint Struggle', is taking place today in Baghdad's Qesr El-Sedîr Hall with the participation of a large number of women, days before the anniversary of the ISIS genocide against Shengal on 3 August 2014. The opening speech of the conference organised under the leadership of the Free Yazidi Women's Movement (TAJÊ) and the Iraqi Women's Foundation was made by TAJÊ Women's Diplomacy Member Ferîde Şengalî.

Ferîde Şengalî commemorated victims of the ISIS genocide and said: "We are on the 10th anniversary of the genocide perpetrated against the Yazidi community on 3 August 2014. First of all, we commemorate the victims of the 74th genocide with respect. The Yazidi community has a culture, religion and an ancient belief of a thousand years that preserves the religion of Yazidism. Yazidi women have always had a meaningful struggle and resistance. Since the Yazidi community is a peace-loving community, it has never attacked another folk or nation. However, the ruling system has always wanted to destroy the roots of humanity, culture and the ancient beliefs of nations. The Yazidi community was not the only victim of this massacre and genocide. At the same time, Arab, Christian, Kurdish, Kakayî and Armenian peoples all suffered massacres."

Ferîde Şengalî said that the fate of thousands of Yazidi women who were abducted in the 74th genocide is uncertain and continued: "The Yazidi community has experienced 74 genocides throughout history. Most of the ideas against our community were created by the Ottomans. The last genocide of the 21st century was perpetrated on 3 August 2014 by ISIS and their partners in front of the eyes of the world. Many women and children became victims of this genocide. In the person of Yazidi women, the Yazidi community was subjected to genocide. As of 3 August 2014, thousands of Yazidi girls, women, children and people were captured by ISIS. Thousands of Yazidi women, children and people are still held captive by ISIS and their fate is still not clear. Thousands were tortured and murdered. Yazidi women were sold in markets, raped and forced to change their religion and beliefs by ISIS. Yazidi children were forcibly recruited. In addition, tens of thousands of Yazidis were expelled from their homes and regions and Shengal was razed to the ground. ISIS fulfilled the order because the Yazidi community belonged to a different religion. ISIS blew up the sacred places and domes of Yazidis in Shengal. They blew up the holy places of the Christian community. There are dozens of mass graves after the massacre, dozens of them have been opened and dozens more are still waiting to be opened. It is known that a mass grave containing nearly two thousand corpses has been opened in Til Efer recently."

Drawing attention to the resistance of women, Ferîde Şengalî said: "Everyone knows who did not protect Shengal but fled and left the Yazidi community in the hands of ISIS gangs. The forces that ruled Shengal at that time sold Shengal to ISIS. Yazidi women who stood against the attacks of ISIS resisted by ending their lives. Dozens of Yazidi women ended their lives by throwing themselves from the rocks and cutting the veins in their wrists. Martyr Cîlan and martyr Zêrê... There are also women like Dayê Gulê who fought against ISIS and became a symbol of resistance. On 6 June 2016, 19 Yazidi who did not change their beliefs were burnt alive in iron cages women in Mosul during Ramadan."

Ferîde Şengalî drew attention to the organisation of Yazidi women and the importance of the conference and concluded: "The genocide should not be repeated again, women should not be subjected to genocide, and they should be able to protect themselves. After the 74th genocide, Yazidi women and the Yazidi community organised in every field. Today, at this conference, we share the pain experienced by women and the Yazidi community. The pain of our women is the same. Attacks against women, wherever they are, are due to the same purpose and patriarchal mentality. Today, women all over the world are subjected to attacks, violence and harassment every day. For this reason, the 3rd Iraqi Women's Conference, organised under the slogan 'Be the Voice of Self-Defence against Femicide through Common Struggle' on the 10th anniversary of the genocide of 3 August 2014, is of great importance in terms of the construction of a free and democratic society. We believe that the unity and common struggle of women will prevent femicide. We women will hold ISIS and its partners to account through our unity and organisation. Finally, we welcome you once again and thank the distinguished guests who participate in this conference."

The conference continued with the reading of the messages. The message of Feylî Kurds was read by Newal Wehab, the spokesperson of Feylî Kurds. Speaking on behalf of the Feylî Kurds, Newal Wehab stated that their presence at the conference was in support of all Yazidi women and said: "Today we have come to show our support for all victimised Yazidi women. Our common struggle is not just a slogan, but a humanitarian and moral duty. We owe a debt to all Yazidi women whose rights are violated and whose lives are threatened. We need to be a strong and effective voice for the protection of Yazidi women and work to change laws and policies that perpetuate violence and discrimination. We need to support organisations and associations that work tirelessly to protect and help survivors. We need to raise awareness about the rights of Yazidi women and the importance of respecting them."

Newal Wehab called for a common struggle and said: "The problems we face are many, but we can make a difference with our common will. We need to work together as men and women, governmental and non-governmental organisations to build a world where the rights of Yazidi women are protected, and their lives are safe. Finally, we would like to thank all those who have participated in this struggle and dedicated their work, time and resources to supporting and protecting Yazidi women. Let us continue to work together, be a voice against injustice and achieve the justice and equality we all seek."

After the speeches, a video message sent by the Women's Protection Units (YPJ) was watched. Speaking in the video message, YPJ General Command Member Sozdar Dêrik said: "As the YPJ, I greet all our women friends who attended the conference. We, as a people and as women in our region, have faced many difficulties. We also condemn the massacres against women by the governments and the system in the last 10 years. We state that we will continue our work and struggle in the coming period and that we will stand strong against all forms of occupation against our people, the people of the region and all women, especially young people. If women in all societies form common solidarity and carry out their struggle in an organised manner, they will achieve their goals and succeed in creating lasting peace all over the world."

Highlighting the unity and common struggle of women, Sozdar Dêrik said: "It is the unity of women who will struggle the most, who will protect their culture and existence. As YPJ, we will continue to protect for women as we have protected them in the past. Hundreds of women and girls who fell into the hands of ISIS have been rescued by our units from the captivity of the gangs in the past 10 years. The Turkish state and ISIS have been carrying out attacks not only in North-Eastern Syria, but also in Syria and Iraq. We are determined to stand against all forms of violence in the Middle East and the world and to build our solidarity with women. On this basis, as YPJ, we call upon all women to be careful, to wage a strong strug-



gle against all kinds of attacks and to form a great unity.’, “Long Live Women's Unity, Long Live People's Resistance Against All Occupations, Long Live Leader Öcalan, Long Live Jin, Jiyan, Azadi.”

Speaking on behalf of Arab women, Lûma Mihdî said: “We condemn the massacre of the Yazidi community, in which women were made the target of mass slaughter because they play a big role in society. We reject and condemn violence against women. We are always ready for the brotherhood of peoples and we stand by everyone.”

The organisation Common Struggle for Germany presented a song about Yazidi women to the conference. At the same time, a film about 2014 and the 10-year struggle of Yazidi women was shown.

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## Ecocide

### Environmental organizations to meet in Şirnak on 28 July

ANF | 21 JULY 2024

The tree cutting started in Gabar, Cûdî, Çilenimêja and Komatê regions of Şirnak (Şirnex) continues uninterruptedly. Environmental organizations will meet in the city on 28 July to expose and condemn the destruction of nature.

The Mesopotamia Ecology Movement will organize the meeting with the message "Stop the massacre of nature".

Adnan Şenbayram, spokesperson of Şirnak Ecology Movement, said: "Environment destruction has been going on in Şirnak for years. This destruction is increasing significantly, especially in Cudî, Gabar, Besta and in the Komatê region of Beytüşşebap. This destruction continues with tree cutting. We know that Şirnak was chosen specifically and systematically. We call to the public opinion, peoples, nature and life defenders to get together and attend the press conference we will make in Şirnak on 28 July. Let's fight together against the anti-environment government policies."

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## Zeki Irmez: Nature is being destroyed in Şırnak with the cooperation of the state and private sector

ANF | ŞIRNAK | 22 JULY 2024

Zeki Irmez, a DEM party MP, spoke about the massive ecological destruction that is being carried out by the Turkish state and the private sector in North Kurdish, and said this as an expression of "colonialism".

The formerly crystal-clear water in the Nerdüş Gorge in the northern Kurdish province of Şırnak (Şirnex) is black and contains lumps of coal, and the forests in the Beytüşşebap (Elkê) district there are being cut down by paramilitaries. The destruction of Şırnak's unique nature is in full swing, particularly in the "temporary military exclusion zones". While the population living or working there is not allowed to enter the areas, illegal mining and oil exploration is taking place.

In this interview with ANF, Zeki Irmez, the DEM party's MP for the province of Şırnak, answered questions about the situation.

*The images of the black water in the Nerdüş Gorge and the lumps of coal coming out of the taps went viral on social media. What is going on in Nerdüş?*

The Nerdüş stream was actually clean enough to drink from. People could drink the water, give it to their animals, irrigate their vineyards and gardens with it. All of this is no longer possible today. The Nerdüş flows through many villages until it reaches the Tigris. It was the source of life for everyone. As to how we got to this situation, there is an area we call 6 Ocak. This area belongs to Bölünmez Holding. The wastewater from many quarries is pumped into the Nerdüş through a pumping system. The water reservoir into which the river flows belongs to the municipality of Şırnak. The municipality would have to build a sewage treatment plant there or set up a coal mine filtration system. Inspections should be carried out. Of course, the trustees did not do that. Since the water comes from the coal mines, it is contaminated with chemicals and is black. It cannot be used for anything. No living creature can live in this water. Yet this dirty water is being sent to Şırnak. The Bahçelievler neighborhood is fed by this water. The same is true of the Maden settlement. We have seen footage taken by residents. The water from the tap is black, muddy and contains coal particles. In response to a parliamentary question, we received a response from the ministry saying that fines had been imposed. So many fines for this company, so many fines for that company... The fines imposed were as high as the revenue from these coal mines in a few hours. There is no deterrence and the same thing keeps happening.

### Colonial law prevails

*Şırnak has faced multi-faceted ecological destruction in recent years. What role does coal mining play in this?*

The coal mines were under the control of the Turkish Coal Company (TKİ) until 2001. Then the TKİ was closed. After that, the coal mines were fully transferred to the Provincial Special Administration through royalties (contracts that regulate the transfer of part or all of the operating rights of mining license areas to

third parties), which then awarded them to companies through tenders. There were also companies that came from outside to mine the coal, but mostly local companies in Şırnak received the operating licenses. In this system, the Special Administration receives a certain percentage. The Cûdî region is being plundered in this way. There are holes everywhere. After 2016, the operating licenses of almost all coal mines in Şırnak were awarded to Süleyman Bölünmez, of Bölünmez Holding. Some mines are also operated by subcontractors. The mines operate on an open system. There are no rails. They open the coal mine and use dynamite. The mines are very deep. The workers work in an environment where there is no safety at work and there have already been deaths. The way they work violates the Mining Act and the law as a whole. When we look at all this, of course the coal mines play a very big role in ecological destruction. Not a single step is being taken by the ministries against it. The law that is being applied here is colonial law. This must be made known.

*The deforestation and destruction of forest areas has also become a topic of discussion in recent days. What is the situation in this regard?*

Some places are classified as village hamlets, others as inherited land belonging to private individuals. Some of the places are also defined as state property, but in general they are village hamlets. Even if they have no title deed. Regardless of the nature and ownership of the land, forested areas are destroyed. This is clearly in violation of the law. Of course, excuses are found doing this. Two years ago, trees were felled in an area that we owned. We contacted both the Provincial Directorate of Forestry and the Regional Directorate in Urfa (Riha) to stop the deforestation. The Provincial Directorate of Forestry gave us a very absurd answer. They said that they were carrying out rejuvenation of the forest structure in the forest area. There can be no such justification. Forest areas are being cut down against the consent of the owners and a very small amount, alms, is paid as compensation. Two years ago, the rightful owners were paid an amount of 400-500 TL per trailer. However, when the trees are sold, the price is set based on tons. At that time, a ton of trees cost 1500-2000 lira. A tractor can transport two to three tons of trees. So it is the most terrible exploitation.

### **The role of the village guards**

*The deforestation in Botan is taking place with the help of the village guards. What can you say about this?*

The pictures of the trees being cut down and loaded onto tractors are from Komate. The felling took place in the forest area adjacent to the village of Andaç. Just above the road to Beytüşşebap, there is an area we call Xabur 2, it is near there. When I went to the village of Andaç on the eve of the Eid al-Fitr, the villagers told me that the village guards had come and met with them. The people said that they now want their forest area to be destroyed. They said it was their habitat, as well as their economic livelihood. They feed their animals from it. Despite all these objections, the village guards said to the villagers that they will cut down these trees whether they agree or not, and that they will give them the money. They said that the state had given them a direct order on this matter. After that, the villagers supervised the clearing so that when the cutting was mandatory, at least some of us were there and there was no complete looting. Unfortunately, a real massacre of the forest is now taking place there. Our MP, Newroz Uysal, also recorded a video. There was a dispute between the clearing workers. The village guards have been directly or indirectly involved in these clearings for years. A nature massacre is taking place in the region under the guise of "security" policies. The role of the village guards in this cycle is not surprising. Each fulfills his own part of this mission.

## Depopulation in an ecological sense

*You mentioned that environmental destruction and “security” policies have merged into a profit network. Could you explain this in more detail?*

After 2016, the AKP-MHP government introduced a new “security” policy for the region. There is a concept of occupation and depopulation in relation to the region. This approach has not only a social and economic component, but also an ecological one. This is especially true for Şırnak. We see this very clearly. There is a real massacre of nature. Both in Cûdî, Gabar and Besta. The places where the trees are cut down change from time to time. At the moment, most of the trees are cut down in Beytüşşebap, but one or two years ago the area around Besta was the focus of deforestation. The Mezopotamya news agency published satellite images of the area. It was very clear to see the extent of the overexploitation. Last year the focus was on Gabar. This year, it is the side of the Cûdî that falls towards Silopi (Silopya), the area we call Bilika, as well as Komate in Beytüşşebap.

The AKP-MHP government is aiming at the military, political, social and psychological collapse of the region. Unfortunately, ecological destruction is also a part of this subjugation plan. Of course, this does not only apply to Şırnak. Bitlis (Bedlîs), Bingöl (Çewlîg), Dersim, Mardin (Mêrdîn) and Amed are also affected by complete deforestation. This is justified by the destruction of hiding places and refuges. The state itself says that the places that cannot be deforested must be burned down. So the policy is clearly going in this direction. This is one of the main reasons for the burning of the forests in Şırnex. It is summer. We know very well that the areas that have not been cleared are being burned, but unfortunately that no longer surprises us. This has been the practice for a long time.

## The region is being dug up for oil exploration

*Could you say a few words about the oil exploration work?*

Yes, of course. There is currently heavy exploitation on the Gabar line. Both the clearing of forest areas and the construction of roads to the sites of overexploitation are linked. The villagers report that, for example, the water sources have dried up in some places. They say that they can no longer water their gardens because of the drilling. Cûdî is riddled on both sides by coal mines and oil exploration activities. In Besta, especially on the Dihê (Eruh) side, on the Herekol side, forest areas are being cleared. These areas have been declared “special security zones”, i.e. military restricted areas that cannot be entered or left. This is the status of all areas. It is not allowed to enter the area. But if we look at who is prohibited from entering the areas, then the background becomes clear. Because for those who cut down the trees, for example, it is not prohibited. Oil exploration companies can also easily go to these areas, drill and do their work. MTA employees can enter the region quite comfortably. So there is no ban on them. But for nomads, it is a restricted area. They are also restricted areas for people who want to travel to their villages or water their gardens. For example, if you want to go to Cûdî, I am talking specifically about the region on the Şırnak side, you cannot take a step without permission. Who issues the permission? The military police. They do not give permission to everyone. Even in the 90s, there was no such policy. There were many protests. Last year a march was organized by civil society organizations and environmentalists from the West. As for the legal dimension, the Şırnak Bar Association filed criminal charges on all these issues. Individuals have filed criminal complaints. But there are no consequences. There is an order not to investigate. You cannot

achieve a result on a legal, political or social level. That is why we say that colonial law is being applied here. Both against nature and against society, against everything that belongs to this geography. This situation is, of course, linked to the Kurdish question. As long as the Kurdish question is not fully resolved, we will unfortunately be faced with such practices.

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## 25 thousand trees burnt as occupation forces set fire to fields in villages of Afrin

ANF | 24 JULY 2024

According to an ANHA report based on local sources, the occupying Turkish state forces and allied gangs set fire to the lands and fields in the villages of Edamo, Elbîskê and Bilîlko in the Rajo district of Afrin on 23 July.

The report says that the citizens tried to extinguish the fire with their own means but the fire could not be brought under control and spread rapidly towards Xililko village in Bilbilê district.

It was stated that nearly 25 thousand olive, cherry, walnut and pine trees have been burnt so far.

The local people reported that they asked for help from civilian organisations such as ‘Komên Spî’ and ‘Defence of Syrian Civilians’ in order to bring the fire under control, but the organisations did not intervene on the grounds that ‘they could not control the fire’.

The locals noted that as the fire spread, they heard the sounds of mines exploding in the fields, so they could not control the fire as they could not enter the affected area. The locals said they believed that the fire was started deliberately.

According to the Syria-Afrin Human Rights Organisation, 391 thousand trees were burnt in Afrin in the last six years of the Turkish occupation.

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# Human Rights Violations

## Lawyer and DEM party provincial co-chair Özperçin taken into custody in Adıyaman

ANF | ADIYAMAN | 21 JULY 2024

Kurdish lawyer Yusuf Özperçin has been taken into custody in Adıyaman (Semsûr). The lawyer, who is also co-chair of the provincial DEM party, is accused of "propaganda for a terrorist organization."

The ÖHD lawyers' association, of which Özperçin is a member, said on Saturday that the Adıyaman public prosecutor's office also accuse the lawyer of "statements detrimental to the state."

The ÖHD board described the accusations against Özperçin as groundless, as they were linked to criticism of the ongoing occupation operation of the Turkish army in South Kurdistan. The organization condemned the imprisonment of the lawyer and politician and said: "Peaceful and free expression of opinion against the state's war policy must not be considered a criminal offense. Our colleague must be released immediately."

Lawyer Özperçin was taken to a prison in Adıyaman, and according to the ÖHD, it is still unclear whether and when charges will be brought.

The ÖHD has been victim of repression for years. The association is known for its fight for human and civil rights and mainly takes on political mandates, especially in the Kurdish provinces of the country. Lawyer Özperçin also made a name for himself as a renowned human rights defender. He represents politically active people who are persecuted because of their opposition to the government, as well as tobacco farmers who have lost their livelihood due to a law in favor of the foreign tobacco industry.

### Criminal charges filed after earthquake

Özperçin is also committed to supporting the victims and relatives of the earthquake that hit the Turkish-Syrian border region in February 2023. He has filed several criminal charges for intentional and negligent homicide against government members and officials, including governors, ministers and construction companies. Like many other legal entities and organizations, Özperçin accuses the government of bearing considerable responsibility for the high number of victims. This is primarily about building safety, in which the administration of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan plays an inglorious role.

According to government figures, around 53,000 people in Turkey died in the earthquake. Yet, according to analyses by various organizations and professional associations such as the Turkish Doctors' Association TTB, three times as many people actually died as a result of the earthquake than officially reported.



## Police take 3 people into custody in Van

ANF | VAN | 22 JULY 2024

On Monday night, the police raided a two-storey house in the Bostaniçi District of Van's Ipekyolu (Rêya Armûşê) district.

The police broke the door of the house during the raid. While there was no one at home, Fendi Uğurlu, who lived on the upper floor, and 2 people whose names could

Not been established were taken into custody.



## Court decision on extradition of Kurdish journalist Serdar Karakoç postponed

ANF | AMSTERDAM | 24 JULY 2024

A court hearing took place today in Amsterdam in the extradition hearing against Serdar Karakoç. The Kurdish journalist was arrested at his home in the Netherlands on 23 May at the request of Germany. On 14 June he was provisionally released on bail of 5000 euros. His passport was confiscated, he is not allowed to leave the country and has to sign in at the police station once a week. The 64-year-old journalist is being investigated in Germany under Law 129b for alleged membership of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

Dozens of media professionals and activists, some of whom travelled from other countries for the hearing, gathered in front of the court building in Amsterdam. The 'Freedom for Serdar Karakoç' initiative called for solidarity with the journalist and protest against Germany's criminalisation policy. Only a small group was able to observe the trial.

At the beginning of the hearing, the court explained that the Dutch judiciary was only examining the extradition request and was not dealing with the German allegations. Germany is accusing Karakoç of working for a terrorist organisation, an accusation that is not made in the Netherlands.

Serdar Karakoç's lawyers stated that their client was only accused of journalistic and political activities in Germany, underlining that this work could not be linked to terrorism. The lawyers pointed out the close connection between Germany and Turkey and expressed the assumption that the German criminal proceedings were opened at Turkey's request.

The lawyers demanded that Germany's request for the handover of Serdar Karakoç be rejected.

Speaking after, Karakoç said that he had initially worked as a journalist in Turkey and then also in Europe after his escape. “I have lived in the Netherlands for over twenty years. During this time, I often travelled to Germany, France and other countries, including during the alleged period of the crime from 2017 to 2018 and afterwards. The main reason for my travels was my journalistic work. I also have relatives living in Germany. Although my work is open to the public, the German state is trying me under Law 129b, i.e. for membership of a terrorist organisation.”

Stating that the concept of terrorism should be well explained, journalist Karakoç said that even Turkey associates the concept of terrorism with violence. He emphasised that there was no act of violence in the case in which he stood trial in Germany and that he was doing journalism. He stated that according to German law, he should not be tried under Law 129b.

Karakoç reminded of the decisions by different European courts in 2014 and 2018 stating that ‘the PKK is not a terrorist organisation’ and underlined that the PKK is not a banned organisation.

Referring to the content of the Law 129b in Germany, which criminalises the democratic activities of the Kurdish community, Serdar Karakoç stated that Germany is trying to portray the entire Kurdish people as terrorists by using their democratic and legal activities as an excuse. He said that journalistic activities are also dealt with within the scope of Law 129b and that this is unacceptable.

Pointing to Turkish intelligence service MİT's organisation in Europe, Karakoç recalled the two massacres in Paris and the assassination attempts against Kurdish politicians in Brussels.

Pointing to MİT's activities in Germany, Karakoç said, ‘According to the previous official reports of Germany, 6 thousand MİT members are active in Germany. These people have repeatedly threatened Kurdish, opposition figures, politicians and journalists. I have been in Germany many times to investigate this situation and to make interviews with the threatened people. There were also German MPs who were threatened, I also interviewed them. Therefore, it is certain that the Turkish State has a hand in the case against me.’

After Serdar Karakoç's defence, the court decided to continue judicial control conditions. The court announced that it will make a final decision on whether to extradite him to Germany on 7 August.



## MPs removed from the Foreign Affairs Commission meeting

ANF | ANKARA | 25 JULY 2024

DEM Party MP Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu and DEVA Party MPs Mehmet Emin Ekmen and Burak Dalgın were removed from the Foreign Affairs Committee meeting.

Gergerlioğlu described the removal as a ‘coup and scandal’ and emphasised that this was a first in the history of the Parliament.



Gergerlioğlu said: "It is written on the wall 'Sovereignty belongs to the nation unconditionally', but MPs are being taken out. In the General Assembly, all MPs can attend secret sessions, but here, in the commission, we were asked to leave by citing an internal regulation article. This is against the principles of the constitution."

Gergerlioğlu criticised the action, saying, "This scandal also took place in the parliament of this nation. While we could attend the secret session in the General Assembly, we were not asked to attend here. What kind of a scandal is this?"

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## Interview

### Besê Hozat: We reject using President Öcalan as a bargaining chip

ANF | BEHDINAN | 20 JULY 2024

KCK Executive Council co-chair Besê Hozat said in this interview that the Turkish state wanted concessions in exchange to an end of the isolation imposed on the Kurdish People's Leader and added: "We reject this attitude. Our Leader cannot be a bargaining chip."

*I would like to start with the situation of Kurdish peoples leader Abdullah Öcalan, which determines the struggle of the Kurdish people and your freedom movement. In previous programs you have widely evaluated the global campaign for his physical freedom and the attitude of international institutions that ignore this struggle. Based on the recent developments, how do you evaluate the current level of the campaign and what are your goals for the next phase of the movement?*

For 26 years, our leader, Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] has been developing a great resistance in the face of a genocidal system. There is a truly glorious peoples, guerrilla, and prison resistance developing around him. For 26 years, our leader has been held as a hostage in the hands of the Turkish state which is conducting a hostage policy. There is some information that has reached us in these last few days that we consider important to share with the public.

According to information from reliable sources, some authorized people from Erdogan's administration said that under some conditions, they would let Rêber Apo see his brother and, afterwards, his lawyers. But in order for them to allow these visitations, they have conditions. In other words, they want us to make concessions. That is what they said. The source of this information is reliable, we know the groups and individuals who have disclosed this information. We also know the policy they these groups have been conducting with Erdogan for years. This is a very important situation, we wanted the public to know about it.

Indeed, a very despicable policy is being carried out against Rêber Apo. He once stated that he was a hostage in the hands of the Turkish state. We have always pointed out that such approaches have existed for years. We have always said that the Turkish state is conducting a policy based on blackmail and bargaining in regards to the situation of our leader. Now this is an example that confirms this once again. Rêber Apo is being treated as a bargaining chip. This is extremely despicable, extremely ugly, and dirty; they really know no moral or legal boundaries.

Of course, we strongly reject and condemn such dirty and disgusting approaches and policies. Let us state this clearly. Under no circumstances can our leader be made a bargaining chip. We will never accept this. It is even written in the Turkish laws that the right of the leader to consult his lawyers and to see his family, as well as the right to communicate with the outside world, is the most natural, legitimate, and legal right. This is also written in international law. Turkey has signed these international laws and conventions. To take the most natural, legitimate, and legal right of our leader and make it a subject of bargaining, is despicable.

The rights –legal, human, natural, and legitimate rights– of our leader cannot be made the subject of bargaining. This point must be clear, since it is very crucial. There are many writers, illustrators, and politicians in Turkey who pass themselves off as intellectuals, who supposedly defend the rule of law, who fight for secularism and democracy, who identify themselves as Kemalists, leftists, or socialists, and who defend the values of the republic. They consider law, justice, and democracy as fundamental human rights and a fundamental right for the society in Turkey. So what do they say regarding the ongoing situation in Imrali? Now in Imrali, Turkish law and international law are being trampled on. The law is being violated. For 26 years, there has been a system of torture and isolation in Imrali. For the last four years, there has been a systematic practice of solitary confinement and absolute isolation. And now this practice has spread all over Turkey. There is a terrible system of isolation and torture in all prisons now. People who have conducted their prison sentences are not being released. People, sick people, seriously ill people are dying in prison. People aged 70, 80, 85 are arrested and put in prisons. Tiny babies are growing up in prisons. This lawlessness developed in Imrali and has now spread throughout Turkey. This is being practiced on Kurdish politicians and revolutionaries in a multiplied way. What do these writers and intellectuals in Turkey who define themselves as left-wing democrats, defenders of the law, defenders of justice say about this? If they say nothing, what do they have to do with being intellectuals or writers?

Anyone who tramples on the law in such a way, anyone who doesn't say a word, who doesn't utter a sentence about the lawlessness in Imrali, about these disgusting negotiations, and about this dirty politics being carried out through Imrali, cannot be called an intellectual. Someone like this cannot be called a politician of the people, cannot be called opposition, cannot be called a defender of democracy, justice, and humanity. Imrali is a litmus paper, a measure of how much of an intellectual, leftist, democrat, socialist, and defender of justice and law one is. A person reveals their true face in their approach to Imrali and in their approach to these disgusting policies, injustices, and unlawfulness practiced against our leader. This is the determining factor.

The criteria of law, justice, and democracy advocacy are the approaches developed against the torture and isolation system imposed on Rêber Apo in Imrali. Of course, it also reveals how important this global freedom campaign is and how necessary it is in a very striking way. All this is actually a result of the pressure built up through the campaign. It is the freedom campaign that has brought the fascist regime to such a point. The regime is having much difficulty in the face of the struggle. It is in a deadlock, unsure of what

to do. Especially the lawyers are carrying out a very significant and valuable work and struggle. The situation in Rêber Apo and the isolation and torture system in Imrali have been put on the agenda of the United Nations (UN). It is also on the agenda of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CoE). The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) will also convene in September to evaluate this situation. The ECHR said years ago that what has been going on in Imrali is torture and a violation of rights. Despite knowing this, these institutions have just been observing for years. In other words, they have been watching these unlawful acts, this massacre, and these genocide policies without showing any effort to act. In fact, not only are they just watching; they are also a partner to these policies. Now, the struggle through the global freedom campaign has built up so much pressure that these institutions have had to put this situation on the agenda. This is a very important result, and the struggle must be continued in this way. Because in the person of Rêber Apo, all human values are under heavy attack. There is a terrible attack on freedom, democracy, justice, law, and all human values. In that respect, one must not tolerate this in any way. It is necessary to struggle until the end, and we will definitely achieve great results.

The people's struggle has also created a certain sensitivity and a certain form of assumption of responsibility; we need to continue to raise this without interruption. We always point out that the situation of Rêber Apo and the Kurdish question are intertwined. Rêber Apo is the leader of the Kurdish people. He is the interlocutor for the democratic solution of the Kurdish question. Therefore, the approach to Rêber Apo is the approach to the Kurdish people, is the approach to the Kurdish question. Any positive development regarding the situation of Rêber Apo is also a development in the solution of the Kurdish question. The fate of the solution of the Kurdish question and the fate of Rêber Apo are tied to each other. There can only be a democratic solution. We need to carry out the struggle everywhere with integrity. The physical freedom of Rêber Apo must be at the center of the struggle everywhere. Against these genocide policies, of which Imrali is the center, we need to carry out and continue our struggle very strongly. Everywhere people must struggle against these genocidal policies, against this war of genocide, and instead for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo. As long as we continue this strongly and uninterruptedly, we will definitely yield great results.

*We are in the month of July. July 14th marks the 42nd anniversary of the great action you refer to as the 'Great Resistance' and 'National Day of Honor'. As the PKK, you have declared that you have always grown based on the spirit of July 14th. How is the July 14th spirit of resistance reflected in your struggle today?*

Of course, first of all, I commemorate the martyrs of the great death fast, comrade Kemal Pir, Mehmet Hayri Durmus, Akif Yilmaz and Ali Cicek, and all the martyrs of the July 14 resistance with all due respect, love and gratitude. These comrades put forward a historic resistance against the fascist darkness of September 12. They showed everyone that fascism can be defeated through resistance in even the most difficult conditions, even in the darkest periods of fascism. With their resistance, they proved to everyone, friend and foe alike, that all difficulties, all oppression, and all persecution can be overcome and defeated through resistance, and that free life can only be achieved through resistance. In this sense, they created a tradition, a line, and a spirit of resistance. For 42 years, the Kurdish people have been struggling and resisting according to this line of resistance. And it has created a very strong legacy of values and achievements. Again in this spirit, the guerrilla of Kurdistan, the freedom guerrilla, has been fighting for years, waging a self-defense war. Today, this war continues with the same spirit in the regions of Zap and Metina, in the provinces of northern Kurdistan, and everywhere throughout all of Kurdistan. In Rojava, a great struggle has been waged for years with this spirit. The revolution of Rojava, which today affects the whole

world and is a source of inspiration and hope for all of humanity, emerged out of the struggle carried out within this spirit. Therefore, the struggle along this line and in the spirit of July 14th has brought about great gains in Kurdistan. It created the identity of the free Kurd. It brought with it the paradigm of the Democratic Nation and the system of Democratic Confederalism. Rêber Apo led this struggle with great devotion to the martyrs of July 14th, and this struggle has brought about great developments in the line of their resistance.

Today, the Kurdish freedom movement is leading the revolutionary process in the Middle East becoming a key actor. Today, under the leadership of the Kurdish freedom movement, the Kurdish people are waging a great struggle for democracy and freedom. It is leading the peoples of the Middle East and is playing a great transformative role in liberation and democratization. These are very great achievements. And all these gains have emerged with the spirit of the July 14 understanding of struggle and resistance.

These are very valuable. This struggle continues to develop, grow, and become a united struggle, fighting fiercely against betrayal and surrender. The July 14th struggle against surrender and against betrayal is actually a great reaction to the collaborationist circles that act together with the colonialist, genocidal regime against the freedom of the Kurdish people today. Surrender and betrayal were condemned and almost buried in 1982 under the fascist September 12 coup.

Now, in the same line, in the same spirit, against this collaborative, treacherous, treacherous line, the entire Kurdish people must resist, struggle, take a strong stance. They must condemn betrayal and collaboration, and achieve freedom and victory. The July 14 resistance is proof of this. The July 14 resistance showed the world that submission will be defeated, betrayal will be defeated, oppression, fascism, and all kinds of oppression will be defeated. Now, the struggle that has been waged for 42 years in that line of struggle has revealed a very magnificent public stance and resistance. If our people develop this struggle and this resistance with the same spirit, emotion, consciousness, will, and organization against this oppressive, treacherous, and collaborative line and against the genocidal, colonialist, and fascist regime, this fascism will surely be defeated. The collaborationist, treacherous line will be buried in history along with this fascism.



## Besê Hozat: Turkey is waging a war of annexation not occupation

ANF | BEHDINAN | 21 JULY 2024

KCK Executive Council co-chair Besê Hozat said in this interview that the "total genocidal war of the Turkish state has entered a new phase," and added that "the ultimate goal of the Turkish state is very clear. This is a war of annexation, not occupation." She also spoke about the outcome and consequences of a possible meeting between Erdogan and Assad.

*As for the war, the attacks of the Turkish state in terms of the occupation of South Kurdistan have gained a new dimension. The invaders pass through official border gates and city centers before the eyes of the world. How do you evaluate this latest situation, and what has the KDP to do with it?*

We have already given an important statement on this issue, and it has also already been discussed in public opinion. The total genocidal war of the Turkish state has entered a new phase. The genocidal, colonialist, and fascist regime now want to get a definitive result by activating all their collaborators and betrayers in this war. Especially since mid-May, it has broadened and deepened the war with this concept. Now we are in July, and we see that this concept has gained a serious depth that we are constantly evaluating.

The ultimate goal of the Turkish state is very clear. It is to reach the borders of Misak-i Milli. This is a war of annexation, not occupation, as several friends have stated before. But one must be aware of the fact that this war of occupation-annexation is certainly not a war that developed in recent months. In 2019, there was actually already a war of occupation and annexation that started with Xakurke, and then later there was the great battle of Heftanin. Since that day, the Misak-i Milli policy has been fully put into effect in southern Kurdistan. In Rojava, they started with the occupation of Afrin in 2018. Then Gire Spi followed. This continues to develop step by step. Now they consider this as the finale. In other words, this year they aim to bring the policy of occupation and annexation to a conclusion. Devlet Bahçeli has admitted this and said that they are following the policy of Misak-i Milli. The ruling Turkish media is discussing this every day openly. It is public. The fascist Turkish state established a big military base in Bashiqa several years ago. What is the Turkish state doing in Bashiqa? They have established nearly a hundred military bases in southern Kurdistan, and now they are trying to make all these bases permanent. They are trying to turn all of them into fortresses. Therefore, they are also building new roads, hand in hand with the KDP. All those border gates that were opened in the name of trade are now being used for military purposes. Turkey is currently making military shipments through the so-called border customs gates. The KDP has opened all its roads to the Turkish army. Everyone can look at the Amediye road. This is a process that, in fact, has been going on for years.

The Turkish state sees the conditions of World War III as a great opportunity for itself. They see that there is currently war everywhere and assume that no one will intervene in their plans because everyone is busy with war and doesn't care much about the law or human rights. Thinking that the attention is diverted, the Turkish state is assessing the current global situation as an opportunity for themselves. When everyone is indulged in war, the Turkish state thinks that nobody is going to confront them. They hope to take advantage of this opportunity and implement the Misak-i Milli policy, and they hope to completely occupy and annex southern Kurdistan and Rojava. They hope that they can turn these areas into Turkey's territory without anyone interfering. Turkey's old borders are no more. Right now, the borders between Iraq and Turkey have disappeared since Turkey has changed them. Turkey did not accept these borders when they were determined. It has never accepted them. They always claimed that their border would be the Hemrin Mountains. They draw a border that includes Kirkuk, Mosul, Sulaymaniyah, and all these areas. This is the policy being carried out right now. And the KDP is a partner in this policy. The KDP is in this war.

Right now, the KDP is waging a genocidal war against the Kurds together with the AKP and MHP. It is capitalizing at the cost of the blood and lives of free Kurds. They are buying villas for themselves all over the world. We assessed in our last statement that some people portray the situation as if there are problems between the KDP and the PKK, saying that the KDP and PKK should not be in conflict, that they should keep distance, and follow a different constructive policy. They say that the KDP and PKK should solve

their conflicts, and in the meantime, national unity would be formed. There is such a group among the Kurdish people. This is deception. There is no such situation. When one looks at the current situation, there are currently two lines. One is the line of betrayal. The line between collaborators and traitors. The other one is the line of freedom. While one is waging a war on the side of the genocidal colonialist Turkish state against the free Kurds, the other one gives its life and sheds its blood every day to defend the free Kurds. How can you put them on the same level? How can you treat this situation as a problem between two parties? How can you define an organization, a Gladio structure that fights a war of genocide together with the enemy, that takes part in the war of genocide, that is up to its neck in betrayal, as a Kurdish party? There is no such situation. The reality is evident. The Turkish army entered southern Kurdistan with hundreds of armored vehicles and tanks, using the road of Amediye and the official trade border gate. On the same day that this happened, July 3, Massoud Barzani was silent. He later suddenly went to Baghdad in a hurry. In Baghdad, he held meetings with many Shiite and Sunni groups, met with almost all Arab consuls and ambassadors, the Iranian ambassador, and held meetings with the Turkish consulate and ambassador. He was engaged in an intense activity. Why did he leave that day? We have also already made a statement in this regard.

There are important circles in Baghdad that are uncomfortable with the Turkish state's neo-ottoman policies and occupation policies. There is also a very serious section – from parties to various bureaucrats to various individuals – within the Iraqi state that is uncomfortable with this. Barzani went and tried to convince these circles, trying to prevent a reaction from developing publicly. One may remember that when there were invasion attacks before, the Arab countries and the Arab League made various statements of condemnation and expressed their stance. This time, Barzani went and gathered the ambassadors of Arab countries and held a meeting. He tried to prevent a possible reaction. He worked very hard on this issue. At the end, he came and met with the Turkish consul in Hewler (Erbil). He is lobbying and doing politics on behalf of Turkey. They played the same role in the invasion attacks on Rojava. When the invasion of Afrin happened, the KDP played a very active role in diplomacy. It worked to legitimize the occupation. It played the same role in the invasion of Serekaniye. All the formations affiliated with it, large and small, were engaged in the same activities. Now Barzani is very actively lobbying and conducting intensive diplomacy on behalf of Turkey in order to legitimize Turkey's occupation and annexation policies and to prevent any possible reaction against them. In other words, the KDP is directly involved in this genocidal war. It has sold southern Kurdistan to Turkey. Not just a part of it; it has really sold southern Kurdistan as a whole to Turkey. Turkish modernity is currently dominant in southern Kurdistan. With its TV series, movies, politics, economy, and military, right now, southern Kurdistan has turned into Turkey's garbage dump. All the goods that are dumped in Turkey are sold in southern Kurdistan. All kinds of diseases and health problems are now rising in southern Kurdistan. Because the people of the South are fed from Turkey's garbage. Politically, it is the same. Right now, it is in the service of such genocidal policies, this genocidal fascist regime. At the moment, all of southern Kurdistan is experiencing a state of occupation and annexation. What else are occupation and annexation? It is this. Is there no political will? Is there no Kurdish will? Is there no stance against this within the politics of southern Kurdistan? There is none. This is occupation and annexation.

The Iraqi government and the Sudani government also approved the occupation policies of the Turkish state for some dirty interests, for simple gains, and for political and economic interests. The Iraqi state is fragmented within itself; there are many tendencies, and it is known that there are those who oppose this occupation. It is also known that there are those who are very seriously angry. But the situation in the Iraqi state is obvious. It is fragmented, disorganized, and weakened, and the government of this state has agreed

with the Turkish state over various political and economic interests, has approved this invasion, and has become a part of it. We are convinced that Iraqi society is very angered by this situation. This does not help Iraq either. These policies will have consequences in the future and will cause great damage to Iraq. Iraq shot itself on the foot. In this way, with this policy, it legitimized the Turkish occupation and legitimized the KDP's collaboration with the Turkish state for years. In this sense, we strongly criticize and condemn this attitude of the Iraqi government. My call – on behalf of our organization, our movement – is to the people of southern Kurdistan and the Iraqi people, the Iraqi society. The KDP's collaborative, treasonous attitude and the Sudani government's attitude that legitimizes and approves the occupation causes great harm to you. It darkens your future. Our peoples must take a very strong stance against this. They must take a firm stance against the occupation. Everywhere, the occupation must be protested.

Again, Arab intellectuals, writers, and generally all democratic individuals must put forward a strong voice and attitude against this. Now, some reactions are developing, but they are insufficient. It is necessary to develop this more strongly. All forces must unite against this betrayal, against collaborationism, and against the genocidal, colonialist, and fascist regime's genocidal war. They must wage a common and united struggle. There is a very urgent need for this now. The process we are in right now is really a very critical and historical one. If no strong attitude is put forward, the dangers are very great.

Yes, the guerrilla is resisting. It is resisting very gloriously and self-sacrificially. They are giving their lives every day. But this struggle cannot be dependant on only the resistance of the guerrilla. The guerrillas are resisting and giving their lives for the freedom of the peoples and a democratic future. The peoples must take part in this resistance. They should not only be supporters. They must be directly involved in this resistance. They must stand up everywhere and show a very strong organized will against this occupying, genocidal war, and fascism. That is what we call the line of resistance, according to July 14th. Now is the time to put forward this attitude.

One can no longer say "the guerrilla is resisting, let's support it". This necessity of the current situation goes beyond support. Now is the period of self-defense of the people. It is the period of the people developing its own self-defense. Our people must rise up everywhere, they must do their own self-defense. What is the revolutionary people's war? Revolutionary people's war is self-defense. It is to stand up against all kinds of attacks and develop one's own self-defense. It cannot expect to be protected solely by the guerrilla. The guerrilla is doing what it will do. Victory is not won only by the guerrilla's struggle and resistance. Victory is achieved through the joint struggle, resistance and self-defense of the guerrilla and the people. From now on, the people will have to see themselves as responsible of this struggle and will have to develop and raise self-defense, and the Revolutionary People's War everywhere. We are not saying to our people that each one of you should take a sword, a pistol, a machine gun, or a missile and fight. We are not saying that. What we are saying, is that there is a very serious attack everywhere. Our people must rise up everywhere, from the age of 7 to 70. They need rise up in Serhildans, they must develop self-defense. Serhildan is the strongest form of self-defense of the people. Our people need to develop this.

Our people have paid a high price over all these years. And so many great achievements have emerged. The reality is that freedom is very close. Now it is time to guarantee, secure, protect, and defend this in the strongest way possible in an all-out manner. It is especially important to emphasize and discuss this point. Everyone should participate in this struggle as a whole with all their strength and energy by subjecting themselves to very strong criticism and self-criticism and making a strong accounting of where their place is in this struggle and how they. I see this as highly important.

The guerrilla warfare continues everywhere with great heroism and at great cost. There is great resistance all over northern Kurdistan. Many valuable comrades have been martyred within it. Comrade Shekhmus, Beritan, Brusk, Rustem, Kamuran, Axin, and dozens of other valuable comrades have been martyred in this recent period. We have given tens of thousands, more than fifty thousand martyrs. And we continue to pay this high price. There is very unparalleled resistance everywhere. Our comrades, under the most difficult conditions, going hungry, thirsty, and sometimes without shoes or sleep, have been conducting this resistance and struggle for years in the spirit of July 14th and continue to do so. This resistance has been going on for more than four years in Zap, Metina, Avashin, Heftanin, Xakurke, and everywhere, in all the Medya Defense Zones, with Zap as the center. In the most recent period, we have lost comrade Onur and our commander Canfeda. I commemorate all the martyrs with respect, love, and gratitude. I bow to their memories with respect. We will continue this resistance, following their legacy. What is important is that our people see themselves as a part of this. Following the same spirit, mobilize themselves for the resistance, stand up everywhere, and continue this uninterrupted struggle. They should not just observe; they should not just be supporters. It is about being part of the resistance.

When I express these things and criticize the current level of resistance, I don't mean that our people don't resist or that they don't see themselves as part of this struggle. I believe in the consciousness of our people, their level of knowledge of this movement, and their level of comprehension; they understand very well what we mean. I mean, of course, our people have been waging this struggle uninterruptedly, especially for the last 42 years. This is where the invincibility of this struggle lies. Our people are, of course, at the center of this struggle. They have paid a very heavy price for it. Today, tens of thousands of people are in prisons, under torture; even our 70- to 80-year-old grandmothers and grandfathers are in prisons, under torture conditions, under pressure. Our people are giving their lives. Sick prisoners are losing their lives. Of course, we are aware of this. This is a very valuable attitude. But in terms of the stage the struggle has reached, one has to line out that it is sufficient. We are now waging a great and final war against the genocidal colonialist Turkish state. In other words, the Turkish state is waging a total war of genocide against the Kurdish freedom movement, against the Kurdish people who are struggling for freedom, and against the peoples. The struggle against this total war of, genocide in the way it has been waged so far, does not constitute a sufficient answer. A total struggle and a total resistance are necessary. This is what I mean. The current level of participation and resistance is expected, and I sincerely believe that our people will develop this further. Until now, our people have brought this struggle to this day by risking all kinds of costs and suffering great pain. From now on, this struggle will definitely triumph with the joint resistance of our people and the resistance of the guerrilla. I'm strongly convinced by this.

*In your evaluation, you already touched on the Turkish Republic's concept of war regarding the recent period. Erdogan's intensified diplomatic efforts on this basis are in the spotlight. Is it possible to link these economic and social problems in Turkey to the war? What are your views on this issue?*

Erdogan is obviously traveling from continent to continent to gather support for his genocidal war. One day he is in Asia; he has one foot in Russia and the other foot in China. Then he is in Kazakhstan, followed by I don't know where. Then you look, and he's gone to America. He is constantly wandering. There is only one goal and reason: he tries to get more support for this genocidal war. There is already a lot of support. He has been waging his war with NATO's support for years, and this continues. Now, even Iraq's attitude is linked to NATO and the US. Sudani went to America; he stayed there for a week before meeting Erdogan. Sudani had many meetings before coming back to Baghdad, and the moment he arrived, also Erdogan came to Baghdad. They had talks and made 22–27 agreements, and after this, a com-



prehensive annexation and occupation attack began. Iraq gave its consent to this. The attitude of Iraq is not independent from the attitude of America and the talks held there. NATO has been supporting the Turkish regime for years. And it continues its support. But even despite this, the Turkish regime is not getting results.

Right now, the fascist regime is collapsing, even though it is still struggling not to. One only needs to look at Turkey; its politics have collapsed. Its domestic and foreign policies have collapsed. The economy has collapsed. The decay in society is knee-deep; the regime is trying to sustain itself with nationalism and chauvinism by militarizing society. Society is gradually decaying morally like this. All this in order for the society in Turkey not to follow the developments in the genocidal war in Kurdistan. The regime is always afraid that society would rise up. Like this, society will rot. Its morality is already diminishing. Kurds will be massacred in front of their doors; a people is subjected to genocide; even their graves and even their bones are being disrespected. The bones of children are given to their mothers in boxes. Turkish mothers will have to sit and watch this. Will a mother who remains silent about this, remain a mother? Will her morals remain? Will the conscience of that father remain moral? Will the conscience and morals of that society remain? It would become corrupt and rotten. Kurds are subjected to so much lawlessness and injustice. In every aspect, Kurdish society is subjected to such an attack of injustice and rape, and the society in Turkey just silently sits and watches. Will anything of morality, conscience, dignity, and humanity remain in that Turkish society? No, it will rot and degenerate. It has already started to rot. This dirty politics has also caused society to rot. They still discuss the economy. Is there any economy left? I mean, all the resources of Turkey were poured into this war. The state poured the economy into the Kurdish genocide war. Now, the society in Turkey is left hungry! They are at the limit, having long surpassed normal poverty conditions. People are hungry, they can't even find bread in the garbage. In other words, they live in the most disgraceful, shabbiest situations. But doesn't this society question it? I mean, why is a rich country like Turkey, a country with such rich resources, rich culture, and rich geography, in this situation? Because everything is sold in order to lengthen this war. Turkish society doesn't question this.

At the same time, nature is being destroyed. Exploitation and plunder are rampant in Turkey. In Kurdistan, this is being carried out as part of genocide policies. The nature of Kurdistan is currently facing great destruction. Every part of nature gets destroyed through mines, sand pits, oil wells, dams, and all the forests being killed. The fascist regime is slaughtering not only human beings but also animals, plants, and essentially all living beings. The fires in Amed (tr. Diyarbakir) and Merdin (tr. Mardin) were caused by the Turkish state. The forests of Kurdistan are burning. And what the state doesn't burn, it cuts down, takes, and sells. It intentionally destroys nature. Because the state wants to force the people to migrate. The state wants to dehumanize the region, to populate these areas with Turks.

There was a news report regarding Shirnax (tr. Shirkak) the other day. It is a city totally surrounded by mountains and forests; it turned out to be the most polluted city in Turkey. They have created so many mining sites, all around natural spring waters, which get contaminated by all the chemicals they use in those mines. Not only the spring water is polluted, but also tar-like water flows from the taps in the houses. The state is poisoning society. There is no clean water, no clean air, and no clean soil. One should raise hell for this. Now we call it self-defense; we call it revolutionary people's war. A great uprising is needed against this. This is self-defense. The state destroys the place you live in; it poisons it and makes it uninhabitable. The resistance against this is a resistance against the genocidal regime, against the genocidal war. A strong struggle must be waged everywhere, may it be in Shirnax, Botan, Serhat, in the South West, or in Dersim (tr. Tunceli). In all of Kurdistan, a strong struggle is necessary.

Likewise, the state is conducting a misogynist policy. Almost every day, two women are murdered; 60 to 70 women are murdered each month. It may be just a number, but it does not express uncorrelated events. There is a complete policy of genocide against women being pursued. Rape of women and prostitution are also used as part of the genocide policy in Kurdistan. Drugs and all kinds of attacks on the youth of Kurdistan take place. In other words, there is a policy of genocide of society, particularly against women. Now they are preparing the so-called 9th Judicial Package. They are eliminating everything that was in favor of women in the laws and the constitution. A united and strong women's struggle is needed. It can not only be a women's struggle; it needs to be a struggle of the whole society. Society needs to get out of this situation. There is a terrible policy of destruction of society, women, and nature. This is also proof that this fascist regime is collapsing. It cannot govern anymore. It is trying to keep itself alive by destroying itself. The thing to do in this regard is, of course, a strong and united struggle of the forces of labor, freedom, and democracy. Together with the democratic opposition, a strong social, ecological, and women's struggle and resistance must be developed. If it develops, further destruction can be prevented. One shall never forget that all of these problems are the result of the genocidal war on the Kurds. All the problems in Turkey are the result of the genocidal war on the Kurds. The society must be made aware of this; it needs to open its eyes to organize and mobilize. This is the duty of the democratic opposition, the duty of the democratic forces. There are short-comings in this regard. I mean, there is a certain struggle, of course. For example, the 'Respect the Will' march in Northern Kurdistan, the 'Give Voice to Freedom' protests, or the mobilizations around the families of prisoners, the vigils against the trustee policies. These are very important. They have created a serious sensitivity in society and in public opinion in Turkey; they have created a certain revival of social struggle, and resistance has emerged. But this is still insufficient. There is a total war of genocide on society, and against this, a total social resistance must develop strongly under the leadership of the democratic forces.

There is still insufficiency in this regard. This insufficiency must be overcome quickly. It is necessary to unite all forces and wage a total and united struggle. There is a certain level of struggle, but it is insufficient in the face of attacks. We need a more united, total struggle.

*There is a possible meeting between Erdogan and Assad ahead of us. What will be the repercussions of this meeting on the revolution of Rojava?*

The AKP-MHP fascist regime has been pursuing a policy against Syria for years. And now there is a new attitude they have developed. This needs to be well assessed. The main actor in the Syrian civil war is the Turkish state, particularly the AKP government. It played a very serious role in the development of this civil war. In a very conscious and planned way, it attracted the Arabs from Syria to Turkey and gathered millions of people like this in camps. It has been conducting a policy over them for years, taking millions of people hostage under the name of refugees. Erdogan has taken millions of people hostage, and blackmails Europe with them, and takes money. All of this money he receives is poured into the genocidal war on the Kurds. With this money, the AKP-MHP fascist regime recruits mercenaries, organizes, feeds, and trains them. It makes them fight against the Kurds and the other people of the region. In order to get European states to support its genocidal war, it carries out attacks in Europe through these gangs and mercenaries in order to frighten and get new concessions. Turkey is also behind the attacks in Russia and Iran, as well as in Dagistan. There have been attacks in France, England, and many other countries in Europe. ISIS claimed responsibility for them, but the Turkish MIT is also behind them. It organizes the mercenaries of ISIS in order to get concessions from everyone, to extract concessions from Russia and Iran, and now they

are using them against China, as they have extracted concessions from America, Germany, and France before.

On the other hand, the AKP-MHP fascist regime exports some of those mercenaries in order to expand its area of influence, to increase its effectiveness. It exports gangs to Nigeria, Libya, Somalia and to many other parts of Africa. There are many problems there too. There are civil wars, conflicts, states are weak, and it intervenes. It tries to develop its own bases by using gangs and mercenaries. It trains, equips and feeds these gangs by transferring the resources and economic resources of Turkey, which it organized with the money it received from Europe, to this war.

It uses these gangs and mercenaries against the Kurdish people, the people of the region, and the peoples and societies of the whole world in order to blackmail concessions from the states. Most of all, of course, it uses them against the Syrian state. Through them, it has occupied many places in Syria, particularly in north-west Syria. Erdogan established a gang state there. He himself appointed a district governor, which has opened its own schools and provides education in Turkish. In Rojava, it occupied Afrin, Serekaniye, and Gire Sipi. It is changing the demography there too. It is settling the families of the mercenaries and gangs there and has appointed district governors here too. It is training police and opening schools of special war. It has established a total gang state there. It uses this as a bargaining tool and as a threat against the Syrian state. It has been doing this for years and has torn Syria apart with this policy. Now more than half of Syria's population lives outside the country in disgrace. The reason for this is the Turkish state. When this war started, a lot of information like this reached us. It turned out to be true. Erdogan is meeting with America, trying to convince the USA to allow the Turkish state to enter Syria. It was the AKP and Erdogan who put America in Syria. Now they are pontificating so much that America should get out, but you were the ones who put America there in the first place. They carried out a policy there with America against the Syrian state, established an army. Turkey has long set up a provisional a Syrian government. The head of this government, who is a Turkmen has been living in Istanbul for many years. It has been pursuing a hostile policy against Syria for years. It has been pursuing a hostile policy not only against the Kurds but against all the peoples of Syria. Why has the Turkish state come to this point now? Because its Syrian policy was futile. Erdogan planned that the gangs he organized would go, overthrow Assad, and take power in his place. They would establish an administration there under the guidance of Turkey and thus expand the Ottoman territories, since Syria used to be an Ottoman territory. So now his plans go beyond the Misak-i Milli. He wants to bring all of Syria under his control and his hegemony. He wants to rule Syria with those gangs under his control. This policy is futile. When the policy went futile, he turned his attention to the Kurds and the Kurdish genocide policy. They made invasions, used these gangs in every way, and received all kinds of support. No matter what he did, he could not get the desired results. This policy also went bankrupt. Now there is a collapsed Syrian policy. He is trying to figure out how he can manage this, how he can survive it, and how he can take Syria with him, genocide the Kurds in North and East Syria, destroy the system established by the people of North and East Syria, liquidate the revolution, and after liquidating it, take all these gangs and mercenaries and place them there, so that he can establish a policy of balance with Syria, so that he can consolidate his influence and dominance there. He is now pursuing such a policy. A regime that has been hostile to Syria for years. Doesn't Syria, the Syrian administration, and the Bashar al-Assad administration see this? Of course, they do. They know very well what Turkey has done in Syria. If Bashar al-Assad ignores all this and joins forces with Turkey to wage a war of genocide and liquidation against the Kurds and the peoples of northern and eastern Syria, then the Bashar al-Assad government will completely liquidate itself. If he survives today, it is not only with the support of Russia and Iran. The Syrian government is standing today also as a result of the struggle and

war waged by the Kurds, the peoples of Northern and Eastern Syria, against ISIS, Turkish genocide policies, Ottoman policies, and occupying policies. This is a fact. It was the peoples of northern and eastern Syria that broke the back of ISIS. It is its resistance force. After that, ISIS went downhill. It disintegrated, liquidated, and shattered. This happened in before the eyes of the world. It started in Kobane. The Syrian state and its administration barely survived. Now, if they ignore this and try to carry out a joint policy with Turkey, it would be a complete loss for Syria. In other words, it is not possible for this policy to yield results. If the opposite situation develops, of course the people of northern and eastern Syria will resist with all their might. No matter who attacks, The AKP-MHP fascist regime has lost in its Syrian policy; it was futile. Both its domestic and foreign policies have collapsed. Its defeat in the municipal elections is obvious. At the moment, it is really going downhill. It is looking for lifelines everywhere. But it is too late. No matter what it does, it does not seem possible to get results. We saw this after the Kayseri incident: AKP-MHP fascists attacked Arab refugees. There is also this kind of Arab enmity. After the calls for Syria, the attacks on Arabs in Turkey, of course, came on top of that. In all the areas it occupied, in northern Syria, everywhere, all the gangs and mercenaries stood up. In fact, this gang-mercenary policy is also futile. Now, what is he going to do with the tens of thousands of people he has gathered and made so many promises to? There is one thing he will do: he will sell them. What will happen to this structure when he sells it? It is not that easy to tell. The AKP-MHP regime is currently in such a big predicament that it is not possible for it to survive this process, no matter how pleasing the speeches may sound. It cannot make a correction in Syria in the way it wishes. There are many equations. In this respect, it is a finished regime. The one thing to do is to raise a strong struggle against it.

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## Opinion

### A fighter from Girê Cûdî: I feel alive when with my comrades

A fighter from Girê Cûdî said: “I feel alive when with my comrades. My friends cut their hair because the enemy used chemicals. My hair was not very long, but I also cut it to support them. This is the middle of all realities.”

**LALES RENAS | BEHDINAN | 21 JULY 2024**

Neither weapons and war, nor the politics and policies of states, or the poisonous air that state regimes emit into the universe. Nor the effort to make sense of the simplification of extraordinary evils. Revolutionism, fighting for freedom...Feeling the pain of others and many other noble reasons are behind choosing revolutionism, being a guerrilla, being a freedom fighter of your people...

She's not twenty-five yet. She looks just like the soil she grew up on. She remembers what she did and what she had to do. She's aware of everything. The way she walks, the heavy and upright smile on her face. Her face resembles the most bottom soil of a geography. Dry and pure. Her skin is like the red earth, the most fertile soil in Kurdistan.

The sweat on her forehead clings together and goes down faster. I seemed to recognise her, from the TV. But then her face was covered. 'We've never met, have we?' I asked. "No, but I know you, you're the press-man," she said. She smiled when a female guerrilla next to her said, 'He is probably writing the news about this in his head while you are talking'.

In this age when people tend to consume even themselves with the mortal world, not seeing these warriors who walk after their existence with love is probably turning your back on being human. Either she knows the questions I am going to ask, or her nature is such. So comfortable, self-confident and faithful. 'Do you know what I'm going to ask,' I said, 'No, this is our life. It's been four years, I know everything about it like the back of my hand, that's why I'm comfortable.' The female guerrilla who knew her already said, 'She has always been like that. She is cold-blooded'.

'I saw you on television, speaking about the weapons that the guerrillas removed from the invaders during the revolutionary operation. You even made an ironic remark that the Turkish army, an army of such low quality, should be expelled from NATO.' She smiled and said she was joking. 'NATO forces are already waging this war,' she said. She also told me a bit about the situation there. I listened attentively. She told me a lot. Her words, her eyes. Some of them I wrote, some of them I lived.

"Now you are here, on another hill, in another area, in another camp. What do you miss most about the resistance tunnels?" I asked. She answered without hesitation: 'Everything. I stayed there for four years. I got to know the mountains there, the enemy, my comrades, comradeship, fighting, battle, even war. Maybe even life. When you look at it from here, you think there is always war, but actually there is life there. We read books, we stand guard, we go to action. We discuss tactics, we work, we question. Everyday life is like that. Fighting, carrying out action is what you must do anyway. During the day we endeavour to receive training. The comrades cut their hair because the enemy used chemicals. My hair was not very long, but I also cut it to support them. This is the middle of all realities. On special occasions or when we organise actions, which is when we are at our most moral moments, we make small gifts to our other comrades in the war with what we have on those days. We make a note of these days in our diaries. I will recommend it again, to go there to be with my comrades. Because I feel alive there.'

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## What is happening in Kirkuk?

ATAKAN ARARAT | KIRKUK | 26 JULY 2024

One of the foundations of the chaos and war that has been going on in the Middle East for 100 years was shaped by the Treaty of Lausanne. Kirkuk, one of the main articles of the treaty, is still the scene of events within the framework of the agreements determined in those days. While the decisions taken about Kirkuk started on the basis of the framework of the current occupation of Kurdistan, Turkey, Iran, Iraq and other regional powers that have calculations over the region have not ended their search.

While the importance of Kirkuk in the region and its underground resources continue to whet the appetites of the sovereign powers, the power with a planned agenda and historical calculations is Turkey. One

of the main objectives of the Turkish army's occupation activities from the smallest town in Southern Kurdistan (Northern Iraq) to the Medya Defence Areas is to regain possession of Kirkuk.

According to the Turkish doctrine of Misak-ı Milli [The 'National Pact' adopted 104 years ago that takes all Kurdistan, that is, the region including northern Iraq and northern Syria, within the borders of the Turkish state], Kirkuk is at the centre of the annexation policy. Trying to expand throughout the region again through neo-Ottomanism, Ankara not only pursues policies over all the dynamics of the region, but also develops moves together with the Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITC), of which it is the guardian.

The problems in Kirkuk have their roots in the fact that Iraq was left in the status of 'disputed territories' after the US occupation of Iraq. One of the main objectives of the hegemonic powers is to create contradictory areas in Iraq and to intervene in the region through these areas. The existence of this policy preserves its place on the ground as an indisputable fact.

With the expulsion of ISIS from Iraq and Syria to the Middle East in 2014, many regions, especially Kirkuk, were intended to be redesigned. However, the fact that ISIS went beyond the determined borders and acted outside the policies of international and regional powers further complicated the events. The Turkish Republic, which tried to take Kirkuk through ISIS, also encountered the opposition of powers such as the US and Iran. In the new scene, while everyone is taking the field with a different agenda, the provincial council elections held in the city on 18 December 2023 after 18 years and their results are still controversial. This shows that the elections are still not finalised.

The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), which managed to become the first party by winning 5 seats in the elections, is known as the strongest Kurdish party in Kirkuk. However, due to the failure of the components in the city to agree on a consensus, the election of the governor of the city remains uncertain. One of the biggest reasons for not agreeing on a certain candidate is that the Turkish Republic has made Turkmens dominant in Kirkuk through the governorship.

One of the events that fuelled the fire in Kirkuk came from Erşad Salihi, a member of the MIT-originated ITC. Stating that they have reached an agreement with KDP in the city, Salihi stated that within the framework of the agreement, the governorship will be alternately held by Kurds for one year, Turkmens for one year and Arabs for one year. While Salihi's statement is one of the main requests of Ankara, the real question is what the possibility of the realization of this agreement is.

While none of the components in the city is in a position to determine the governorship on its own, the issue of agreement, which the Turkish state is raising through the KDP, is a result of the efforts to trouble the PUK. Even if the KDP reaches an agreement with the ITC and the Arabs, the agreement does not suffice to determine a governor in the event of opposition by PUK. The PUK, on the other hand, does not put forward the condition to the KDP and other Kurdish forces that the governor to be appointed must be from the PUK.

The KDP responds to the pressure from the PUK over the elections by reaching an agreement with the ITC, an extension of the MHP (Nationalist Movement Party in Turkey) in Kirkuk. It is also noteworthy that despite all their disagreements, the PUK and KDP act in agreement in 80 percent of the city's trade.

The conflict between Turkey and Iran over having power in Kirkuk through the governorship and the flow of Kirkuk oil to Turkey is becoming more and more intense. The Turkish state, which wants to dominate Kirkuk through the ITC, is trying every means in this sense. In the event that the governorship of the city and the provincial council are won, in addition to having a say in the administration and security of the city, it also brings with it the gains of selling the oil as Turkey wishes.

Turkish attempts to increase the Turkmen population in Kirkuk Castle, the city centre and its surroundings are being developed within a planned agenda. Apart from the mentioned places, many infrastructures and facilities such as schools, hospitals, social living areas, shopping centres and highways are being built with the investments of Turkish companies. In this way, Ankara, which endeavours to settle in Kirkuk by all means, is expected to concentrate on its plans for Kirkuk in the upcoming processes.

While the plans that Iran wants to realize through Hashd al-Shabi are also put into action, there is a great increase in the purchase of houses in Kirkuk by the members of Hashd al-Shabi. These initiatives are considered as efforts to increase the Shiite population in Kirkuk.

Last year, the Iraqi Federal Court, which is influenced by Iran, suspended the KDP's oil sales to the Turkish state through the Kirkuk-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline without Baghdad's authorisation on the grounds that it was illegal. Accordingly, Iran's deployment of Hashd al-Shabi forces on the route of the pipeline from Kirkuk to Mosul also contains parallel messages.

On the other hand, keeping the region alive through Kirkuk dynamics is used as another way to facilitate the moves of the Iraqi central government, PUK and other political parties. While all parties allow the events to take place in a controlled manner, they also strengthen their bases through contradictions.

Considering the triggering role of possible situations in Kirkuk, the possibility of the events spreading to Baghdad, Mosul, Tikrit and Hawija is also taken into consideration.

The activities in Mosul, which has a central importance like Kirkuk, in the last few days is also related to the aforementioned developments. While it is stated that a large force was brought to Mosul under the leadership of the Turkish army, it is reported that the forces in question consist of ISIS fighters. While the Turkish state is claimed to have positioned ISIS members in the Bashiqa base as well, Hashd al-Shaab forces are reportedly positioned around Mosul. While reports say that a force of 2500 Iraqi security forces has also arrived in the city, it is said that the developments in Mosul have mobilised many sides.

The fact that the mobilisation in Mosul takes place during the ongoing dispute between Baghdad and Washington over the presence of the Coalition forces in Iraq provides a further indication of developments.



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