

# THE İMRALI POST

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Issue № 121 / 4 October 2024 ★ Contact: [imralipost@freeocalan.org](mailto:imralipost@freeocalan.org)

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## Contents

<b>Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan.....</b>	<b>2</b>
‘All Kurds should unite and speak out against isolation and injustice’ .....	2
‘Freedom Shall Prevail’ to be presented in Britain.....	3
Global Free Öcalan Days kick off today.....	4
‘Cry for Freedom’ to be exhibited in Berlin.....	5
Lawyers meet with CPT, request a new visit to İmralı.....	6
Press conference at CoE calls on European institutions to fulfil their duties and responsibilities.....	7
<b>Prisons.....</b>	<b>10</b>
Female prisoner in Tehran banned from visits after protesting death sentences.....	10
Hunger strikes in Iran spread to more than 20 prisons.....	11
Ill prisoner sees his release postponed for fourth time.....	11
Seriously ill prisoner Abdulkadir Kudadı dies in Metris jail.....	12
IHD Prisons Commission says Abdulkadir Kudadı left to die in prison.....	13
ÖHD: 56 prisoners deported from Urfa prisons in one year.....	13
Hayrettin Ekinci released after 30 years.....	14
Prisoner in Mardin allegedly committed suicide.....	15
Bayındır: Kurdish hostility leads to the death of prisoners.....	15
<b>Military aggression and occupation.....</b>	<b>16</b>
HPG and YJA Star guerrillas shoot down two small Turkish drones in Metîna.....	16
Northern and Eastern Syrian Internal Security Forces pay tribute to 3 of their martyrs.....	17
Autonomous Administration sets up crisis desk for Syrian returnees from Lebanon.....	18
Internal Security Forces work relentlessly to maintain peace and stability in Deir ez-Zor.....	19
Military operation and blockade in rural neighbourhoods of Dicle.....	20
Occupation forces kidnap 7 people for ransom in Afrin.....	21
3,230 people cross from Lebanon into North-East Syria.....	21
14 mercenaries killed, 19 others wounded in Manbij in September.....	22
SDF dismantles an ISIS cell in Deir ez-Zor countryside.....	22
88 attacks on Afrin-Shehba Canton in one month.....	23
Thousands cross from Lebanon into northern and eastern Syria.....	23
Six people killed and 29 wounded in Afrin in September.....	24
Over 200 thousand people detained, 80 thousand tortured under AKP rule.....	24
HPG balance sheet: 28 Turkish occupiers were killed in September.....	26
Another 1,200 refugees were settled in Girê Spî in September.....	27
Parliamentary elections in South Kurdistan scheduled to take place on 20 October.....	28
Investigation against 6 village guards who refused to participate in Turkish occupation operation...	30
HPG: Three drones shot down.....	31
2 killed in Turkish airstrike on the Qamişlo-Amûdê road.....	32

<b>Feminicide.....</b>	<b>32</b>
Academy of Jineoloji Conference publishes Final Declaration.....	32
Memorial for young Ceylan Önkol on the 15th anniversary of her death.....	34
Call from the International Justice Initiative for Nagihan Akarsel.....	35
<b>Ecocide.....</b>	<b>37</b>
Protest against mining project in Lice: People are forced to migrate.....	37
Bakırhan: We struggle against a government that is hostile to forests, rivers and mountains.....	38
<b>Human Rights Violations.....</b>	<b>40</b>
DEM Party First Region co-spokesperson Dilber Demir sent to prison.....	40
MED-DER's former co-chair Rıfat Roni sent to prison.....	40
Armed attack on DEM Party building in Istanbul.....	41
Three people including a journalist imprisoned in İzmir.....	41
Civaka Azad condemns agreement that allows deportation of Kurdish refugees from Germany to Turkey.....	42
Members of Kurdish music band Koma Hevra detained in Amed.....	43
Koma Hevra musicians released.....	43
At least 6 people taken into custody in Şırnak and Erzurum.....	44
DBP and HDP politicians sent to prison.....	44
DFG: Pressure on the press increased, judiciary turned into a cudgel against journalists in Turkey. .	45
KCK Press Trial against 46 press members adjourned.....	46
Academic in solidarity with Özgür Gündem newspaper sentenced to prison.....	46
<b>Interview.....</b>	<b>47</b>
HPG fighter Haki Pir: The real enemy of Turks is the racist ideology of Turkism.....	47
Guerrilla Haki Pir: War against Kurds has the Imrali torture system at its center.....	50
Kalkan: We must wage the struggle much more effectively.....	53
Kalkan: Kurdistan and the Middle East have turned into a bloodbath.....	57
<b>Opinion.....</b>	<b>60</b>
Felemez Zawi: My daughter Rûken sacrificed herself for her people and the freedom of her country	60
Lavrov and his anti-Kurdish demagoguery.....	62



# Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

‘All Kurds should unite and speak out against isolation and injustice’

ANF | AMED | 29 SEPTEMBER 2024

Mothers of the Justice Vigil continue their ‘Give voice to freedom’ protests demanding an end to the isolation of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan and the rights violations against political prisoners. The mothers come together every fortnight on Mondays and make press statements.

Afife Kartal, mother of prisoner Muhammed Kartal, called for participation in the central rally to be held in Amed (Diyarbakır) on 13 October and said, “The aim of our action is the end of isolation and the physical freedom of Mr Öcalan. We are calling out to the whole world to stand against isolation.”

Speaking to ANF, Afife Kartal emphasised that they are following the cause of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan and said, “Our children sacrificed their lives in his footsteps. He is the leader of 50 million Kurds. Let the isolation be lifted; let the Kurdish people come together with their Leader. If Mr Öcalan speaks, our young people will not die, our nature will not be slaughtered, crises and wars will end. This state is killing our people, nature and animals. It ignores our culture and language. We want an honourable peace.”

Afife Kartal called on all Kurds to participate in the rally against isolation to be held in Amed on 13 October, saying “We must raise our voices against isolation. Every Kurd with dignity should stand against isolation and raise their voice.”

Stating that the condition of sick prisoners has also worsened, Kartal said, “Sick prisoners should be released as soon as possible. The prisoners whose sentence is over should be released. They bear hostility towards Kurds in every way. I underwent angiography twice. My toes are broken due to diabetes, and I can't walk anymore, but that doesn't stop me going to demonstrations even in this state. If we don't raise a voice today, no one will tomorrow. All Kurds should unite and speak out against isolation and injustice. Kurds should stand up for their struggle. No one should fall into the tricks and traps of AKP and MHP. Let us starve but not give up our honour. On 13 October there will be a rally against isolation in Amed. Everyone should attend this rally, and we should raise our voices for the physical freedom of Mr Öcalan. We want an honourable peace to come to our Kurdistan. Our hearts should not bleed anymore. I don't want money, I don't want worldly goods, but we want Mr Öcalan to be among us, 4 parts of Kurdistan to be united, peace to come, our children to be released from prisons. We will raise our voices for this at the rally.”



## ‘Freedom Shall Prevail’ to be presented in Britain

ANF | LONDON | 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

The graphic novel ‘[Freedom Shall Prevail](#)’, which is based on the life of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan, who has been kept under aggravated isolation conditions for 25 years in İmralı Island, will be presented in Britain on 3 and 4 October. The event, which will be held on October 3 between 13.00-15.00 at the Cambridge University Sociology Department Seminar Hall, is organised by the Democratic Kurdish Center in Britan (Navenda Demokratik a Kurdên Britanya, NADEK), Jiyan Women's Assembly and PJAK.

The event will also be held on 4 October at 17:00 at the Kurdish Community Centre in London N4 1HU. Jiyan Women's Assembly, Tekojin, Tevgera Ciwanên Şoreşger will present the book at a joint event at the Kurdish Community Centre in London.

The award-winning Scottish author Sean Michael Wilson, who wrote the text, and the Kurdish illustrator Keko, who drew the drawings of the novel, will attend both events where the novel will be promoted, and Reimar Heidar, representative of the International Initiative.

After the introductory speeches, the events will continue with questions and answers.

## Background

*Freedom Shall Prevail* is the first graphic novel exploring the life and struggle of Abdullah Öcalan, affectionately known as “Apo.”

Highly regarded around the world, Öcalan led the Kurdish freedom struggle as the head of the PKK from its foundation in 1978 until his abduction by the Turkish state in 1999. He has, so far, spent twenty-five years in captivity. In this graphic novel we learn, in his own words, what Öcalan’s childhood was like in the partially Kurdish areas of Eastern Turkey and how his political awareness and commitment grew as a student in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Through the personal struggle of Öcalan we also see the terrible devastation that Kurdish people have suffered and learn about the tumultuous and dramatic history of the relationship between the Kurds and the Turkish state.

The book also dives into the theories developed by Öcalan that continue to influence the ongoing struggle today. Expanding on these, the second part of the book gives us a wider consideration of the issues and policies around women's freedom, democratic confederalism and paints an inspiring picture of one of the most impressive attempts to build a genuinely grassroots democratic system anywhere in the world. The struggle going on in the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, also known as Rojava, is one that is directly combatting gender and racial discrimination and the abuses of the capitalist economic system—in truly interconnected ways.

The wonderfully illustrated graphic novel is a collaboration between award-winning Scottish writer Sean Michael Wilson and Kurdish artist Keko, with backing and research help from the Peace in Kurdistan Campaign and the International Initiative “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan—Peace in Kurdistan,” groups with long-term and impassioned commitment to the cause of Öcalan and the Kurdish people’s freedom.

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## Global Free Öcalan Days kick off today

ANF | 1 OCTOBER 2024

The campaign *Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan: A Political Solution to the Kurdish Question*, has declared 1-10 October Global Free Öcalan Days.

This initiative marks the one-year anniversary of the campaign, which was launched on 10 October 2023 in Strasbourg, France.

During the "Free Öcalan Global Days" we will organize a series of events in more than 20 countries (Austria, Slovenia, Greece, United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, Cyprus, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Belgium, Netherlands, France, South Africa, Indonesia, Colombia). Including press conferences, seminars and public discussions to promote dialogue and raise awareness. We encourage media representatives to participate, report and amplify the voices of those working for justice and reconciliation.

The campaign wrote: "As we reflect on the past year, we acknowledge the significant progress made in raising awareness of the plight of Abdullah Öcalan, who has endured more than three and a half years of inhumane isolation by the Turkish state. Our campaign has successfully built a broad international network of support, including legal experts, political figures, and human rights defenders committed to Öcalan's rights and the broader Kurdish issue."

To mark the anniversary of Öcalan's expulsion from Syria on 9 October 1998 – the first step in the international conspiracy that led to his abduction – the International Solidarity Network is preparing a hashtag campaign for the evening of 8 October, at 19:00 European time and 20:00 Kurdistan time.



## ‘Cry for Freedom’ to be exhibited in Berlin

DEVİRİS ÇİMEN - DENİZ BABİR | BERLIN | 1 OCTOBER 2024

In Berlin, between 10 October-14 November, 40 works by Ali Zülfiyar will be presented to art lovers under the title ‘Reflections’ at Junge Welt Maigalerie, Torstraße 6.

Painter Zülfiyar created a portrait of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan on a giant tree with the root painting technique in his work titled ‘Cry for Freedom’. The exhibition will also include portraits of environmental activist Greta Thunberg, imprisoned politicians Figen Yüksekdağ and Selahattin Demirtaş, as well as portraits of Antonio Gramsci, Rosa Luxemburg, Nelson Mandela and Che Guevara.

Expressing that he aims to draw attention to the ongoing isolation of Abdullah Öcalan and international obligations with his work, Painter Ali Zülfiyar said, “I thought and developed this work as a contribution to draw attention to the isolation conditions of Abdullah Öcalan in particular and the need to build a peace bridge between peoples in general.”

Ali Zülfiyar gave the following information about his work ‘Cry for Freedom’: “I am a son of this geography. On this basis, I thought together with the identity, cultural, artistic and political questions of the Kurds, and searched for the answer to the most basic question. First of all, I searched for maps from ancient history, including the Kurdish geography and living areas. I tried to reach a document prepared by G. Ritters and printed by the Berlin Dietrich Reimer Printing House in 1854, which includes the Kurdish geography and is also referred to as ‘Kurdistan’. The original of this map is also in the British Museum in London. This map was a historical document in which the settlements and their names in the historical period were indicated together with the old names of the social existence and cities. On this basis, Abdullah Öcalan set out for the Kurdish people's values of identity and freedom and assumed responsibilities for

the sake of this cause and still continues to do so. I want to create an evaluation based on these social realities. I believe that this problem can only be matured and discussed with more interpretations by people like us who work in the fields of art, literature, etc.”

Ali Zülfikar noted that the portrait of Abdullah Öcalan in the centre of the work was taken by photographer Günay Ulutunçok in 1991 in Lebanon, and pointed out that he drew the picture with pencil technique and preferred a mystical expression style.

The work ‘Cry for Freedom’ will be displayed on large billboards in the city centre and streets of Berlin from 1 October until 11 October.



## Lawyers meet with CPT, request a new visit to İmralı

ANF | 2 OCTOBER 2024

Lawyers from Asrin Law Office, the defence lawyers of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan, who is held in İmralı Island Prison and has not been heard from for 43 months, held a meeting with the Council of Europe Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE).

İbrahim Bilmez, one of the lawyers of Asrin Law Office, spoke to the Mesopotamia Agency (MA) about the meeting.

İbrahim Bilmez said that during the meeting with the CPT they emphasised that ‘the isolation has reached an unbearable point’. They told the CPT delegation that the isolation system in İmralı is unique in the world.

Lawyer Bilmez said, “We also asked the CPT to explain the report they have prepared. Even if the report is published, it is outdated since it has been 2 years since it was published and, for this reason, we requested them to make a visit to İmralı again.”

Bilmez said, “The CPT delegation stated that they have been closely interested in İmralı since 1999 and in constant dialogue with the Turkish government to overcome the isolation. They stated that they could not release the report without Turkey's approval, but that they were endeavouring to obtain approval.”

Bilmez stated that they had also held a series of diplomatic talks with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and informed them about the isolation and aggravated life imprisonment.



## Press conference at CoE calls on European institutions to fulfil their duties and responsibilities

ANF | STRASBOURG | 3 OCTOBER 2024

A delegation of the DEM Party and İbrahim Bilmez, who are in Strasbourg to attend the meetings of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) between 30 September - 4 October 2024, held a series of meetings. During the meetings, human rights violations in Turkey, anti-democratic practices and problems in the field of law were expressed. Lawyer İbrahim Bilmez, who also held a meeting with officials from the CPT (Committee for the Prevention of Torture), handed over a dossier on the absolute isolation of Abdullah Öcalan in İmralı Island Prison, torture and genocide system and the absolute lack of communication with Öcalan.

On the last day of the meetings, a press conference was held at the Council of Europe on 'The Situation of Political Prisoners in Prisons in Turkey', with a special focus on the İmralı system of isolation, torture and genocide and the Council of Europe Council of Ministers' resolution on the Right to Hope.

The press conference was moderated by academic Dr Sarah Glynn and attended by Asrin Law Office Lawyer İbrahim Bilmez, Left Unity Group Parliamentarian Dr Deepa Govindarajan Driver and DEM Party Amed (Diyarbakır) MP Berdan Öztürk.

After Berdan Öztürk's evaluation of the system of isolation, torture and genocide against Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan in İmralı, İbrahim Bilmez, a lawyer of Asrin Law Office, took the floor.

### **'Prisons and the Situation of Political Prisoners is Turkey's Bleeding Wound'**

Stating that they held the press conference at the Council of Europe, to which the ECtHR and CPT are also affiliated, Bilmez said the following: "We are here, in an institution that we can call the protector of the general principles of law and human rights. We are talking about an institution signed by the member states that have established the Convention on Human Rights. Unfortunately, Turkey has a bleeding wound: prisons and especially the situation of political prisoners. There is the issue of sick prisoners. There are prisoners who are not released on parole despite having spent 30 years in prison.

### **Problems at Their Peak in İmralı**

There are many more problems, but the place where they are at their peak is İmralı prison. For 43 months we have been unable to receive any news from İmralı. Can you imagine this? There is a prison in a city of a member state of the Council of Europe, for example, in Strasbourg, Paris or Munich, and for 43 months no one has been able to enter this prison, no one has been able to get any news from the four prisoners there. Neither lawyers, family members, politicians nor civil society organisations can go there. There is no possibility of telephone contact. We write letters, but we receive no reply.

### **‘There is a State of De Facto Disappearance in İmralı’**

The CPT describes this as a kind of incommunicado state. In other words, this situation is a kind of de facto disappearance. One of our interlocutors on this issue is, naturally, the CPT, because the isolation conditions in İmralı mean ‘torture’. CPT has travelled to İmralı many times until today. But its last visit was two years ago. And despite all our insistence, it has not yet released its report on this visit. ‘For this, we need Turkey’s approval as a matter of procedure,’ they say. But I have just explained the situation in İmralı; there is no news. In our opinion, waiting for Turkey’s approval is a luxury. The CPT actually made such a statement about Azerbaijan a short while ago. We think that the time has come for Turkey as well. Because despite all the reports and recommendations presented by the CPT for 24 years, Turkey has not made any improvements. It persistently avoids doing its part.

### **‘Aggravated Life Imprisonment is a Death Sentence Spread Over Time’**

There is also the aspect of ‘aggravated life imprisonment’. There was no such penalty in Turkey. Mr Öcalan was tried and sentenced to death. But Turkey abolished the death penalty in order not to be tried at the ECtHR. However, all legal experts agree with our view that ‘aggravated life imprisonment’ is a penalty similar to capital punishment. It is a death sentence spread over time. Because those who receive this sentence have no possibility or hope of being released in any way. This is what they were aiming for when they gave this sentence to Mr Öcalan. ‘We will kill him slowly over time’, they were saying. This issue is no longer a matter concerning Mr Öcalan. Today, thousands of people have been sentenced to this penalty. Although the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe asked, Turkey does not even reveal the number.

I would like to give a striking example to illustrate the gravity of the situation. On 1 October, we had a meeting with the CPT. There I expressed the situation of prisoner Abdülkadir Kuday. He was sentenced to aggravated life imprisonment. He was so seriously ill that he was bedridden. In other words, he couldn’t even stand up. He even made his lawyer meeting on a stretcher. In Turkey, the Forensic Medicine Institution normally does not easily give a ‘cannot stay in prison’ report for sick prisoners. But since his sentence was aggravated imprisonment, they did not release him. They couldn’t release him even if they wanted to. Because there is such an article in the law. On 1 October, we told this to the CPT. And unfortunately, we learned in the morning that Abdülkadir Kuday had passed away. So I am trying to explain how ‘aggravated life imprisonment’ could cause big problems for Turkey.

### **‘ECTHR Said Aggravated Life Imprisonment is Torture’**

And in our application on behalf of Mr Öcalan in 2014, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) said “This is contrary to Article 3 of the convention’ and confirmed that this penalty is ‘torture’. Although 10 years have passed, unfortunately, Turkey has not made any changes on this issue. After Mr Öcalan, the ECtHR made similar decisions in other cases. Unfortunately, the Committee of Ministers, which is responsible for the implementation of the judgements of the European Court of Human Rights, does not fulfil its duties in this regard. Turkey is constantly spreading its problems over time. It does this as a policy and method. It does the same thing with aggravated life imprisonment. Unfortunately, the Committee of Ministers also gives Turkey this space.



## **‘Turkey’s Approach to İmralı Means Deadlock in Kurdish Question’**

At the most recent meeting last week, Turkey was given one more year to make arrangements regarding aggravated life imprisonment. Mr Öcalan's status is not on the agenda only because he is our client. He also has a political stance. He is a person who has something to say about the Kurdish question. He is an actor taken as an interlocutor by Turkey in the Kurdish question. Therefore, the state's approach to İmralı, the isolation imposed on İmralı actually means that the Kurdish issue remains unsolved. And this is a loss for the whole of Turkey in every sense. Maybe Europeans may not realise the importance of this. But, one of the biggest obstacles to the democratisation of Turkey is the lack of a solution to the Kurdish question and the consequent isolation imposed in İmralı.

Let me also state the following to make this clear. For five years between 1999 and 2004, after Mr Öcalan was brought to İmralı, the PKK declared a unilateral ceasefire at his call and withdrew its armed forces from the border. And in those five years, Turkey realised all the reforms in the process of accession to the European Union. Full membership negotiations began. It was granted candidate status and its economy improved during that period. Unfortunately, Turkey did not utilise that process well. And it pretended that the Kurdish question was solved. However, this was not the case. There was no solution. And things got worse after a while. In the context of all this, I call on everyone in European institutions to be more sensitive about the Kurdish question.”

## **Turkey is based on Non-Solution of the Kurdish Question**

In her speech, Prof. Dr. Deepa Govindarajan Driver pointed out that many states had a hand in the International Conspiracy against Abdullah Öcalan. Driver emphasised that a solution table was previously set up between the Turkish state and the Kurds and that this table was overthrown by the Turkish state.

Deepa Govindarajan Driver underlined that the Turkish state is a member of the Council of Europe and is a signatory to all conventions and continued: “The isolation of Mr Öcalan continues. European institutions need to fulfil their duties and responsibilities within the framework of democracy, rule of law and human rights. As we put these institutions under more pressure, we also see their shortcomings. When we look at the situation of Mr Öcalan, the most important issue that concerns us is the conditions he is in and the attempts to cut him off from the society. This is one of the things that concerns us the most. Mr Öcalan is actually under isolation far above the Type F prison. The solidarity of prisoners is very important for a common struggle. While this is possible in many prisons, when we look at the conditions Öcalan is in, it is not possible. For example, the ‘Mandela Rules’ are against absolute incommunicado, but today Abdullah Öcalan is not being treated within the framework of these rules, but in a way that is contrary to them. This is a situation completely outside the universal rules of law.

## **Turkey tops the List of Tortured Prisoners**

We can also encounter this extremism in America's prisons, the so-called ‘black holes’. There are people imprisoned illegally, unlawfully, held in isolation. There are extreme examples such as strip searches in very cold weather and releasing insects into the cells where prisoners are held. These things are happening. Organisations that should fulfil their responsibilities say: ‘Actually, we are not interested in these’. They ignore this. This is also happening in Guatemala. Since those there are ‘Muslim prisoners’, the world ignores this

too. Instead of ending this system of torture, states are trying to build more prisons and develop this system. Turkey is currently at the top of the list in terms of 'tortured prisoners'.

### CPT Approves Torture in type of F Prisons

What is being done to Mr Öcalan is somehow being ignored. Therefore, what is being done to all prisoners, to all oppressed people through Mr Öcalan is being ignored. I was very surprised when I learnt that the CPT had visited İmralı 9 times. The CPT once reported that F Type prisons provide better conditions for prisoners. In fact, this report by the CPT confirms what I have just said. In other words, the CPT has shown an attitude that approves torture in Type F prisons."

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## Prisons

### Female prisoner in Tehran banned from visits after protesting death sentences

ANF | 29 SEPTEMBER 2024

According to East Kurdistan media, teacher and activist Anîsha Eshedullahi, who is imprisoned in Evin Prison in Tehran, was banned from family visits for 3 months.

It is reported that Anisha Eshedullahi was subjected to the ban because she protested against the death sentences given to Pakhshan Aziz and Sharifeh Mohammadi. Journalist and social worker Pakshan Azizi was sentenced to death on 23 July and activist Sharifeh Mohammadi on 4 July. Both women were subjected to severe torture and inhuman treatment during weeks of detention.

Anisha Eshedullahi had previously protested the execution of Kurdish prisoner Reza Resai on 6 August 2024 and was subjected to a one-month phone ban.

Anisha Eshedullahi was arrested in April 2023 during a raid on the house of teachers' union activist Mohammad Habibi. She was transferred to Evin Prison and released on bail on 8 May of the same year.

The 26th branch of Tehran Revolutionary Court then sentenced Anisha Eshedullah to 5 years in prison on charges of 'assembly and conspiracy' and 8 months in prison on charges of 'propaganda against the state'.

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## Hunger strikes in Iran spread to more than 20 prisons

ANF | 1 OCTOBER 2024

In Iran, hunger strikes are organised every Tuesday to protest the death penalty.

Hunger strikes in the 'Tuesday Without Execution' campaign, which entered its 36th week, spread to 22 prisons.

Most recently, political prisoners in Arak Prison announced that they would be on hunger strike every Tuesday.

The prisons where hunger strike action against death penalty continues are as follows: Evin Prison, Qezal Hesar Prison, Karaj Central Prison, Greater Tehran Prison, Khorramabad Prison, Nizam Prison in Shiraz, Asadabad Prison in Isfahan, Bam Prison, Mashhad Prison, Lakan Prison in Rasht, Qaimshahr Prison, Ardabil Prison, Tabriz Prison, Urmia Prison, Salmas Prison, Khoi Prison, Naqdeh Prison, Saqqez Prison, Baneh Prison, Marivan Prison, Kamiyaran Prison and Arak Prison.



## Ill prisoner sees his release postponed for fourth time

ANF | URFA | 2 OCTOBER 2024

Ismail Hakkı Tursun (59), who was arrested in Amed on 30 December 1992 and sentenced to life imprisonment, has had his release postponed for the fourth time despite having completed the term of his sentence. Tursun, who is being held in Urfa No. 2 High Security Closed Prison, had his release postponed once again due to a report prepared by the Prison Administration and Monitoring Board stating that he was not showing "good conduct".

Tursun completed the required time to apply for release on 9 December 2022. However, his release was last postponed for 6 months and 5 days on 7 June 2023, and then on 13 December 2023. On 25 September, his release was postponed for another 9 months.

The Board set the next evaluation date as 25 June 2025.

Tursun appealed the decision through his lawyer.

### Who is Ismail Hakkı Tursun?

Arrested on 30 December 1992 on the grounds of "aiding an illegal organization", Tursun was put in Antep H Type Closed Prison. He was sentenced to life imprisonment on the charge of "disrupting the unity and integrity of the state". He was transferred to Elbistan E Type Closed Prison on 4 October 2011, and

then to Siverek No. 1 T Type Closed Prison on 6 July 2015. He has been a prisoner in Urfa No. 2 High Security Closed Prison since 28 September 2016.

Tursun is on the list of seriously ill prisoners of the Human Rights Association (IHD).

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## Seriously ill prisoner Abdulkadir Kaday dies in Metris jail

ANF | 2 OCTOBER 2024

Abdulkadir Kaday was not released from prison despite his serious illnesses. Kaday lost his life in Metris R Type Closed Prison.

Salih Kaday, Abdulkadir's brother, said that he passed away on Wednesday morning.

Lawyer Tahir Demirci visited seriously ill prisoner Abdulkadir Kaday on 17 September, and warned that bad news could come at any moment. He called for the release of Kaday, adding that he suffered from many serious illnesses and was less than 40 kilos. Kaday had also had a heart attack on 10 July 2023, and lawyers from the Association of Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD) had shared their concerns that he could have another attack.

Lawyers had applied for both a precautionary release request for Kaday and a presidential pardon.

On 3 September, the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) had also requested the release of Abdulkadir Kaday and other ill prisoners whose health conditions were deteriorating in Metris No. 2 R Type Prison.

DEM Party Legal Commission co-spokesperson Öztürk Türkdogan had warned that Kaday was 98 per-cent disabled and that his health was getting worse.

Political prisoner Abdulkadir Kaday was born in 1972 and detained and arrested in Mardin (Mêrdîn). He had been held in prison since 2014.

Kaday was tried for the crimes of "disrupting the unity and integrity of the state" and "deliberate murder", and was given an aggravated life sentence despite the lack of any concrete evidence. The sentence was upheld by the Court of Cassation. The case was brought to the Constitutional Court, but remained unanswered.

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## IHD Prisons Commission says Abdulkadir Kaday left to die in prison

ANF | ISTANBUL | 3 OCTOBER 2024

The Human Rights Association (IHD) Istanbul Branch Prisons Commission held a press conference in the branch building in Beyoğlu about the death of Abdulkadir Kaday, a seriously ill prisoner whose release was prevented. Kaday died in Metris R Type Prison.

IHD Prisons Commission member Hatice Onaran stated that they were "angry". Underlining that Kaday should have been with his family at least for the "last hours of his life", Onaran said: "We know that even prisoners in intensive care in the hospital are handcuffed. It is a violation of rights for prisoners in intensive care to be treated in this way or to be tied to a bed even while intubated and not to be allowed to see their family.

Even the 'right to spend the last hours' with their family is being taken away from prisoners. There are thousands of prisoners in this situation. The only reason why prisoners are prevented from being released is because they are sentenced to aggravated life imprisonment. We cannot accept this."

Mehmet Acettin, a member of the IHD Prisons Commission, said that they have been following Kaday's situation for a long time, and added: "The reason why Kaday was not released was because he was sentenced to aggravated life imprisonment. However, we know that some judicial prisoners are released with a presidential pardon. They have legally bound seriously ill prisoners to a presidential pardon. That is why they are being left to die in plain sight."

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## ÖHD: 56 prisoners deported from Urfa prisons in one year

ANF | URFA | 3 OCTOBER 2024

The Association of Lawyers for Freedom (ÖHD) Urfa (Riha) Branch Prison Commission released its report on the recent deportations from the city's prisons.

ÖHD Urfa Branch Prison Commission co-spokesperson Deniz Akyıldırım spoke about prisoner Abdulkadir Kaday, who was not released despite his health problems in the Metris R Type Closed Prison and thus died.

Akyıldırım stated that the political power was responsible for Kaday's death, and added: "Abdulkadir Kaday was murdered as a result of the political power's policy towards Kurdish political prisoners. It should be known that those who commit this irresponsibility will of course be held accountable before the law one day. The state should defend human life, not death. We are not accepting this practice, and we reiterate once again that we will fight for justice for all ill prisoners' right to life violations."

Speaking about the deportations, Deniz Akyıldırım said: "Forced deportations, which have become a tool for ill-treatment and discrimination, especially against Kurdish political prisoners, continue to be implemented. We have reported in detail the policy carried out with the increasing deportation from Urfa prisons."

Akyıldırım noted that 56 prisoners were deported from the prisons in Urfa to different prisons in the last year. Underlining that 52 percent of the deportations were made to Erzincan, Deniz Akyıldırım continued as follows: "13 percent of deportations were made to Adana, 11 percent to Erzurum, 6 percent to Antalya, 6 percent to Samsun and 4 percent to Elazığ prisons. It is clear that since 84 percent of the prisoners were deported more than once, it is difficult for them to adapt to the place they are deported to, their material and spiritual integrity are affected and their communication with their lawyers and families is badly affected. According to our report, only 16 percent of the prisoners were not deported, while the remaining 84 percent are seen to be subjected to permanent deportation."

Akyıldırım said that rights violations occurred in 33 percent of the deportations, and added: "45 percent of the applicants we interviewed stated that their belongings were not given to them after exile, 15 percent stated that there was torture, and 15 percent stated that no precautions were taken for their illnesses."

### **Torture increases in prisons as isolation in İmralı continues**

Akyıldırım said: "We see that the isolation practices against Mr. Abdullah Öcalan is spreading to all prisons and to society in general. The increase in deportations is one of the results of this isolation policy. The most natural rights of prisoners are being taken away through deportation. The attitude and political mentality that does not consider prisoners as human beings, sees them as tools of political pressure. We do not accept that the most basic rights of political prisoners are taken away."

Bedriye Ulutaş, the mother of prisoner Ali Ulutaş, who was deported from Urfa to Antalya High Security Prison, said: "Lift isolation. We will follow our sons and daughter wherever you take them. Lift the isolation on Abdullah Öcalan. Put an end to discrimination."

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## **Hayrettin Ekinçi released after 30 years**

ANF | 4 OCTOBER 2024

Hayrettin Ekinçi (63), a prisoner in İzmir Aliğa Şakran No. 2 Closed Prison, whose release was postponed for 6 months because he did not accept the imposition of "repentance" despite having completed his 30-year sentence, was eventually released on Thursday.

Ekinçi, who spent 30 years and 6 months in prison, was welcomed in front of the prison by his family, the executives of the Aegean Association for Solidarity and Assistance with the Families of Prisoners and Convicts (EGE TUHAYDER) and the executives of the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party).

Ekinci said that the prisoners resisted the imposition of "repentance", all kinds of rights violations and intimidation policies.



## Prisoner in Mardin allegedly committed suicide

ANF | MARDIN | 4 OCTOBER 2024

Political prisoner Mizgin Acar allegedly attempted suicide in Mardin E Type Closed Prison on the night of 1 October.

Acar, who was taken to Mardin Education and Research Hospital, is in intensive care in critical condition. Mizgin Acar was given a life sentence for allegedly "participating in clashes" during the curfew period in the Nusaybin (Nisêbîn) district.

The woman was arrested five months ago in the Mîdyad (Midyat) district of Mardin (Mêrdîn) and first taken to Elazığ High Security Prison.

She was brought to Mardin E Type Closed Prison on 30 September for the final hearing of the case filed against her.



## Bayindir: Kurdish hostility leads to the death of prisoners

ANF | MARDIN | 4 OCTOBER 2024

Abdulkadir Kuday, a seriously ill prisoner whose release was prevented, died in Metris R Type Prison two days ago.

Masses are paying condolence visits to the Kuday family after the funeral in the district of Kızıltepe yesterday.

In addition to hundreds of residents, Democratic Regions Party (DBP) Co-Chair Keskin Bayındır, Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) MPs, co-mayors, provincial and district executives visited the condolence house in Kızıltepe on Friday. They were welcomed by the Kuday family and observed a minute of silence in memory of those who lost their lives in the struggle for freedom and democracy.

Mehmet Şafi Erol, speaking on behalf of the Marmara Association for Assistance with Prisoner Families (TUHAY-DER), said that Kuday's body was sick but his spirit was alive. Noting that Kuday did not accept surrender despite all the pressure he faced, Erol said, "He resisted and fought for his people until his last breath. We bow to his resistance with respect."

Stating that Kудay did not bow down to those who persecuted Kurds, DEM Party MP Saliha Aydeniz said, ‘His stance should be an example for us. With this stance, we need to carry on the Kurdish people's struggle for freedom every day.’

Saliha Aydeniz stated that it is necessary to be in a state of resistance every day for the freedom of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan and that their primary duty for the freedom of the Kurdish people is to ensure the freedom of Abdullah Öcalan and to break the isolation.

Co-Chair Keskin Bayındır, who paid a visit to the Kудay family to the accompaniment of a delegation that included Mardin Co-Mayor Ahmet Türk, said that the government uses all human needs against the people. Bayındır stated that prisoners are deprived of all humanitarian needs and lose their lives in prisons as a result of Kurdish hostility.

Paying tribute to Kудay, Bayındır said: “His will was that the Kurdish people should grow their alliance even more, and that we should not kneel against oppression and hostility until our last breath. His will is going to be the way and method of resistance and freedom for us.”

Noting that Kудay's path is the path of freedom and resistance, Bayındır added: “Today, millions of people in prisons and all over Kurdistan are carrying out the struggle of comrade Abdulkadir. Today, our duty is to raise this struggle and this resistance. This was his will. We will honour this will. We will enhance our unity and alliance. We will love each other. We will struggle and resist against this ruling, this oppression, this enmity, this isolation until we achieve freedom, the freedom of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan.”



## Military aggression and occupation

### HPG and YJA Star guerrillas shoot down two small Turkish drones in Metîna

ANF | BEHDINAN | 28 SEPTEMBER 2024

As reported by the Press Center of the People's Defense Forces (HPG), guerrillas shot down two small drones belonging to the Turkish army in South Kurdistan on Thursday. The drones were flying over the Şêlazê resistance area in Metîna. One of the drones was destroyed by shooting, the other was seized by the guerrillas along with its explosives.



## YJA Star stops military road construction in Zap

In addition, according to the HPG statement, guerrillas from the Free Women's Units (YJA Star) on Thursday used heavy weapons to stop the construction of military roads in the Girê Bahar area on the western front of the Zap region by firing twice at an excavator. In Girê Amêdî, female guerrilla fighters intervened with semi-automatic weapons against the Turkish army's attempt to install military technology in the area. In addition, the occupying troops in Girê Amêdî and Girê Cûdî in the Zap and in Girê Şehîd Hêmin in the Xakurke region were fired upon four times with heavy weapons in the past two days.

## Attacks by the Turkish army

According to HPG, the Turkish army used prohibited explosives against guerrilla tunnels in the Girê FM, Girê Amêdî and Girê Cûdî areas a total of seven times on 24, 25 and 26 September. Since Tuesday, HPG has identified forty air strikes on the Medya Defense Zones, 26 of which were carried out by fighter jets and 14 by attack helicopters. The areas bombed by fighter jets were Girê Şehîd Hawar, Lolan, Girê Qele, Sinînê, Berbizinê, Girê Mesken and Kendekola in Xakurke, Sêdarê, Şiyê, Girê, Mam Nêçîr, Dêreşê, Avtehlê and Kanî Sarkê in Gare as well as Girê Cûdî, Girê Bahar and Girê Amêdî in the western Zap region. Helicopter attacks were carried out on areas in the Xakurke, Metîna and Zap regions.

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## Northern and Eastern Syrian Internal Security Forces pay tribute to 3 of their martyrs

ANF | 28 SEPTEMBER 2024

The Northern and Eastern Syrian Internal Security Forces have announced the identities of 3 of their members who fell as martyrs in attacks carried out by ISIS gangs on Thursday.

The statement reported that the operations force chief Merwan Oso and the operations force members Omran El Hesûnî and Omer Abêd were killed.

The identity information of the martyrs is as follows:

Name and Surname: Omer Abêd

Father's Name: Elî

Mother's Name: Coze

Place and Date of Birth: El-Zeydaniye, 1-1-1995

Place and Date of Joining: Hol, 1-8-2021

Place and Date of Martyrdom: Hol 26-9-2024

Name and Surname: Omran El Hesûnî

Father's Name: Kesar

Mother's Name: Hemîde

Place and Date of Birth: 1-12-1997

Place and Date of Joining: Şedadî, 3-11-2021

Place and Date of Martyrdom: Hol 26-9-2024

Name and Surname: Merwan Oso

Father's Name: Evbul Ezîz

Mother's Name: Şêxa

Place and Date of Birth: Xezne, 25-1-2002

Place and Date of Participation: Heseekê, 3-2-2020

Place and Date of Martyrdom: Hol 26-9-2024



## Autonomous Administration sets up crisis desk for Syrian returnees from Lebanon

ANF | 29 SEPTEMBER 2024

According to the United Nations, more than 50,000 people have fled to Syria as a result of the ongoing Israeli attacks in Lebanon. Syrian media report much higher numbers. The Democratic Administration of North and East Syria (DAANES) declared itself ready to accept Syrian returnees from Lebanon earlier this week. As the DAANES Department for Foreign Affairs announced today, a crisis management team has been formed for this purpose. Thousands of people have already arrived in the region.

Gulistan Eli, Deputy Co-Chair of the Foreign Relations Department of the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (DAANES), delivered a statement of next steps at the border between the Autonomous Region and the Damascus-controlled area of Syria, saying that the crisis unit had been decided at an emergency meeting and comprised of representatives from the institutions responsible for hosting the refugees. The aim is to ensure the safe return of Syrians from Lebanon and to provide for their accommodation.

Gulistan Eli explained that refugees are received and registered by the crisis unit upon their arrival in North and East Syria. After their identities have been established, people who come from the region and can stay with their families can continue their journey. For refugees without this option, the DAANES will provide accommodation. The crisis unit will monitor the accommodation process.

Gulistan Eli called for support from the international community and the reopening of the Til Koçer (Al-Yarubiyah) border crossing for humanitarian aid. The border crossing with Iraq was closed in 2018 by decision of the UN Security Council at Russia's insistence. The DAANES representative called on the government in Damascus to facilitate access to the autonomous region for refugees.



## Internal Security Forces work relentlessly to maintain peace and stability in Deir ez-Zor

ROJ DENİZ/HIVDA HEBUN | DEIR EZ-ZOR | 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

Loehi El Setem, General Management Member of Internal Security Forces in Deir ez-Zor Region, spoke to ANF about the security situation and the activities carried out in Deir ez-Zor. Loehi El Setem stated that after the liberation of Deir ez-Zor, the construction process started with the establishment of the People's Assembly and the Military Council, and added, "Internal Security Forces also played an important role in this process. For a comfortable, peaceful and safe life, we have been involved in the work 24 hours a day without interruption. Of course, this process had its difficulties. After the territorial end of the ISIS threat, there were some obstacles. Foremost among these were the secret cell organisations in the region. A large number of sleeper cells, which constantly attempted attacks, spread in the region. These cells were assigned to prevent the establishment of peace and stability in Deir ez-Zor. We have been on alert against the dirty activities of these cells. The people of the region and the tribes have also supported us for the establishment of peace and stability."

### Multifaceted attacks

Loehi El Setem noted that not only ISIS but also the gangs backed by the Damascus government and Iran, such as Difa al-Watani, took action to disrupt the atmosphere of trust in Deir ez-Zor: "While these groups were attacking from the other side of the water, the secret cell structures in the region had the opportunity to move and organise more easily. It was the people who suffered the most from the attacks on the other side of the Euphrates and under the control of the Damascus administration. Many lives were lost in these attacks."

## The people suffered great damage

Loehi El Setem noted that they are constantly vigilant against terrorist groups attacking the region and that they are carrying out operations. He said that many secret cell structures have been neutralized so far and continued: “An operation to strengthen peace and security has been carried out in Deir ez-Zor for nearly a year. This operation, led by the Internal Security Forces, was supported by all institutions in the region as well as the SDF (Syrian Democratic Forces). Recently, there have been attacks targeting the SDF and Asayish checkpoints. The people suffered great damage in these attacks, most of which were carried out from the other side of the Euphrates, from the areas under the control of the Damascus administration. They carry out such attacks from time to time. Their aim is to intimidate the people of the region and destabilise it. We will not allow this.”

## Internal Security Forces serving in the region are specially selected and trained

Loehi El Setem shared the following information regarding the organisation of the Internal Security Forces in Deir ez-Zor: “It is primarily our duty to ensure the security of the region. We continue our work against secret cell structures, drug traffickers and organised crime without interruption. The members of the Internal Security Forces serving in the region are specially selected and trained in special academies. They receive ideological and military training in these academies. Everything from the best training to the best service is done for the region. We see all this as a debt to our people. As the children of Deir ez-Zor, we will protect our region from all attacks. The only power working for the society is the Autonomous Administration and its institutions. We call on everyone to unite around the Autonomous Administration and bring peace and stability to Deir ez-Zor.”

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## Military operation and blockade in rural neighbourhoods of Dicle

ANF | AMED | 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

Entering and exiting rural neighbourhoods in the Dicle district of Amed (Diyarbakır) was banned two days ago.

The military operation launched immediately afterwards continues on its second day. While special troops were also included in the operation, many rural neighbourhoods were blockaded.

It is reported that residents of Tonekrag, Herêdo, Şingirîka Corîn and Şingirîka Cêrîn, Bahro neighbourhoods, the targets of the operation, are prevented from going to vineyards and collecting firewood.

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## Occupation forces kidnap 7 people for ransom in Afrin

ANF | 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

According to a statement released by the Afrin-Syria Human Rights Organisation on Monday, the Turkish state-affiliated gangs of 'al-Amshat' kidnapped 7 Kurdish citizens in the district of Mabata.

According to the report, the gangs affiliated to the Turkish state demanded a ransom between 300 and 500 dollars from the families of the abducted people.

The names of the abducted civilians are as follows: Mihemed Îzet Bekir (45), Xebat Îzet Bekir (38), Beşar Zuhêr Hemade (25), Diyar Şêx, Basil Henan Çîçeko (26), Dilo Ehmed Mistefa (39) and Elî Mixtar (45).

The Turkish state, which has established a complete terror regime in occupied Afrin, kidnaps people almost on a daily basis and treats them inhumanely. While the whereabouts of the abducted people are not disclosed, ransom is often demanded from their families. The gang regime confiscates property belonging to the people and seizes or loots their basic livelihoods. While the overwhelming majority of Afrin's Kurdish population has been forcibly displaced, families of the gangs and migrants from other regions and countries have been settled in the region as part of the ethnic cleansing campaign. Numerous colonies have been established for this purpose.

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## 3,230 people cross from Lebanon into North-East Syria

ANF | MANBIJ | 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

As a result of the war between Israel and Hezbollah, which has intensified since 23 September, tens of thousands of Syrians and Lebanese are trying to cross into northern and eastern Syria. The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria set up a crisis desk yesterday to welcome the returnees from Lebanon and established shelter centres for those coming from outside the region. The Crisis Desk at the Tahiye and Tabqa border gates of Manbij continues to welcome refugees from Lebanon.

In the last 2 days, 847 men, 1,093 women, 402 children and 11 Lebanese people crossed into North and East Syria through Tabqa Border Gate. On the other hand, 887 people crossed into North-East Syria through Tahiye border crossing in Manbij. Bodies of seven people were also transported to the region from the two points.

The Crisis Desk is providing services by building camps for the people coming from Lebanon. Refugees who cannot receive services from the region will be sent to Autonomous Administration camps.

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## 14 mercenaries killed, 19 others wounded in Manbij in September

ANF | MANBIJ | 1 OCTOBER 2024

Manbij Military Council Press Centre announced the balance sheet of the infiltration attempts and attacks against the region in September. Accordingly, at least 14 mercenaries were killed last month.

The Manbij Military Council Press Centre stated that at least 400 artillery shells and howitzers hit the Manbij region in September. While the region was targeted by two drone attacks, the mercenaries of the Turkish state tried to enter the canton 8 times but were prevented.

According to the statement, 4 drones were shot down by the Manbij Military Council.

Stating that 4 civilians were wounded as a result of the attacks, the Manbij Military Council noted that 14 mercenaries were killed and 19 others were wounded as a result of infiltration attempts and clashes.

The balance sheet released on Tuesday stated: "The occupying Turkish state and allied mercenaries attacked the villages of Manbij canton with hundreds of artillery and mortars. 14 shells were fired at Hoşeriye village, 45 shells at Çat village, 5 shells at Deriç village, 15 shells at Tuxar village, 98 shells at Ewn Dadat village, 12 shells at Mefarid village, 21 shells at Mehzenli village, 30 shells at Jarad village, 13 shells at Erebesen village, 25 shells at Jilud village, 32 shells at Dendeniye village, 22 shells at Siyade village, 9 shells at Kawikli village, 59 shells at Kor Hiyok village."

Manbij Military Council stated that the Turkish government shelled the villages from its bases in the villages of Şêx Nasir and Yaşli, close to the battle fronts.

According to the Military Council, the property of the residents was damaged in the attacks and a generator and a motorbike were burnt.

The Manbij Military Council emphasised that its forces responded to the attacks and did not allow the mercenaries of the Turkish state to occupy the villages in question.

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## SDF dismantles an ISIS cell in Deir ez-Zor countryside

ANF | 1 OCTOBER 2024

On September 29, the Anti-Terrorism Units (YAT) of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) conducted a successful security operation with the support and participation of the International Coalition Forces targeting an ISIS terrorist cell in the al-Shahail town, Deir Ezzor's eastern countryside.

“Based on precise intelligence, our forces raided where the terrorist cell was hiding and successfully captured two terrorists, Mohammed Hassan Saleh Al-Madad and Bashar Jaan Al-Hamid,” said the SDF statement about the operation.

According to the statement, the two captured terrorists were actively supplying ISIS with weapons and ammunition to carry out terrorist acts against both SDF forces and civilians in the region.

The following were confiscated in the operation: Smartphone 1; Personal documents; Gluck Pistol 1; Pistol quiver 1; Wi-Fi router 1

“Our SDF forces, in close partnership with the International Coalition forces, continue the anti-ISIS operations to maintain security and stability in the NE Syria Region,” the statement underlined.

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## 88 attacks on Afrin-Shehba Canton in one month

ANF | 1 OCTOBER 2024

The Afrin-Shehba Canton Defence Forces stated that 32 villages, towns and rural areas of the canton were targeted 88 times between 1-30 September.

According to the statement, mortars, howitzers, tanks, grenade launchers, rockets, drones and armed unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) were used in these attacks.

On 9 September, a 30-year-old citizen named Mihemed Sadiq was killed in an attack in Dêr Cemal village.

In another attack on Tinibê village on the same day, 4-year-old Zeynep Feysel Cinêd and her 6-year-old brother Ehmed Feysel were wounded.

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## Thousands cross from Lebanon into northern and eastern Syria

ANF - 1 OCTOBER 2024

According to officials from the Autonomous Administration of the North and East Syria, around 8,000 people crossed through Tahiye and Tabqa border crossings in Manbij after the Israeli attacks in Lebanon.

Crisis desk officials reported that 7,703 Syrian and Lebanese refugees entered the region through both border crossings in the last few days. In addition, bodies of 12 people were transported into the region.

The Autonomous Administration's representative in Lebanon established a committee on 24 September to monitor the situation of refugees wishing to return from the region.

The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria set up a crisis desk on 29 September to receive the arrivals from Lebanon. Accommodation centres were set up for people from outside the region.

The crisis desk is setting up camps and providing services to people arriving from Lebanon.

It is reported that refugees who do not have relatives in the region will be transferred to Edna camp in Raqqa and Eriş and Roj camps in Cizre canton.



## Six people killed and 29 wounded in Afrin in September

ANF | 2 OCTOBER 2024

The Afrin-Syria Human Rights Organization published its September report on the crimes committed by the Turkish state and its gangs against the people of Afrin under its occupation.

The report shared information about the crimes committed by the Turkish state-affiliated gangs against civilians, such as massacre, harassment, torture, usurpation of citizens' property, cutting down trees and changing the demographic structure of the region.

The report said that 6 people were killed, and 26 people were injured, and added that the Turkish state robbed the people of their property in the village of Kaxîrê and forced them to pay money.

The Violations Documentation Center, meanwhile, reported that more than 50 people were kidnapped in the occupied regions in September.



## Over 200 thousand people detained, 80 thousand tortured under AKP rule

ANF | ISTANBUL | 2 OCTOBER 2024

The AKP and its leader Erdoğan claim at every opportunity that the old era of repression is over and that Turkey is now a country of freedoms, but reports by human rights organisations show that repression and torture have systematically increased.

According to AKP Chairman and President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Turkey is now a country where everyone can express their thoughts and live freely. The annual reports of the Human Rights Association



(IHD), however, reveal the opposite. In its early years, the AKP government was not a party of freedoms, as it declared or tried to show to people through its media power, but a party that systematically sought ways to suppress those who did not think like it. According to IHD data, the balance sheet of the 22 years of AKP rule is as follows:

### **Extrajudicial executions**

1,229 people lost their lives and 3,147 others were wounded in extrajudicial executions perpetrated by the police, gendarmerie and village guards. Only in prisons 916 people lost their lives and 64 people were wounded.

### **19 disappeared in custody**

During the AKP rule, 19 citizens disappeared in detention. Until today, the efforts of human rights defenders regarding these citizens have been fruitless.

### **73 murdered in custody**

Detention continued to be used as an instrument of torture and oppression under AKP rule. 200,139 people were detained, 19,992 of them were subjected to torture. 73 citizens were murdered in detention.

### **80 thousand people were tortured**

Torture ceased to be a system applied only in detention during the AKP rule and spread to the streets as well. 10,459 citizens were subjected to torture during protests and events. 9,737 prisoners were subjected to torture by guards and soldiers. The number of torture cases involving village guards was announced as 321. In total, nearly 80 thousand citizens were tortured in different places.

### **Attacks by state-affiliated forces**

In the mass and individual attacks of state forces or gangs against rights defenders, 647 people lost their lives and 5,415 people were injured. In the attacks whose perpetrators were not caught and which were recorded as unknown perpetrators, 422 people lost their lives and 684 citizens were injured.

### **1,579 people forced into spying**

The government did not limit its method of oppression on the society only to attacks and torture. In 22 years, the government has imposed spying on many people in organisations, unions and parties opposed to the government in order to obtain information. Kidnappings, offers of money and blackmailing continued year after year. In 22 years, 1,579 people were forced into spying through various methods.

### **Thousands of publications confiscated**

Press, media and culture and arts activities were among the most affected by the AKP's repression. Stating at every opportunity that the Kurdish language is free, the AKP government banned 1,322 events, the majority of which were Kurdish art events. The ban even came to such an extent that even a wedding was

banned. 1,165 books and magazines were confiscated. Offices of newspapers and magazines were raided 203 times. Cultural centres were raided 32 times.

### Nearly 30 thousand political arrests

In Turkey, which they describe as the 'Land of Freedom', 8,030 demonstrations were attacked or banned by the authorities. Political party buildings were raided 1,843 times; party and association buildings were attacked 527 times. Tens of thousands of people were investigated for their opinions, 29,369 people were arrested for expressing their opinions or participating in a protest action.



## HPG balance sheet: 28 Turkish occupiers were killed in September

ANF | BEHDINAN | 2 OCTOBER 2024

The press centre of the People's Defence Forces (HPG) published a balance sheet of war for the month of September and recalled the self-sacrificial actions that targeted a Turkish police station in Mersin in September 2022 and in Ankara in October 2023. The actions were carried out professionally and successfully, heralding a new era, the HPG stated, paying tribute to the fallen fighters Sara Tolhildan, Ruken Zelal, Rojhat Zilan and Erdal Şahin.

"Our self-sacrificial pioneers started a new era in the most difficult period by carrying out self-sacrificial actions professionally and with full success. They raised the bar of participation in the struggle by maximising Apoist sacrifice, and redefined the measure of the right life and struggle in the Apoist line. We reiterate our promise that we will always follow and keep alive the Apoist life and action style of our self-sacrificial fighters, who have left their mark on our yesterday, command our today and determine our tomorrow," said the HPG statement on Wednesday, which further included the following:

The Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla, a follower of the self-sacrificial line, resisted the attacks of the colonialist genocidal Turkish state and the occupying army in September with the Apoist self-sacrificial spirit. In Northern Kurdistan, numerous operations and bombardments were carried out by the occupying army from Mardin to Botan, from Amed to Dersîm and Garzan.

During a confrontation with the occupying Turkish army, our comrades Zerdeşt Suruç - Adem Özkan and Rêbaz Bagok - Selman Dağdelen heroically fought and fell as martyrs in Mardin Province, and Hebûn Pîro - Zirav Taş, Botan Oryan - Fehmi Başkurt in Amed Province.

In September, when the occupying Turkish army increased its attacks and bombardments based on war techniques, our Medya Defence Zones were bombed 51 times with banned explosives, 8 times by explosive-laden drones, 169 times by attack helicopters and 303 times by warplanes.

The Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla responded to these attacks of the occupying army with Apoist sacrifice spirit and professional guerrilla tactics.

Our guerrillas, who displayed an active performance in September, carried out a total of 112 actions with various tactics, 1 from the air and 111 from the ground.

As a result of these actions, a total of 28 invaders, including Infantry Major Osman Ayan, were killed and 11 invaders were wounded.”

The detailed balance sheet of war for September is as follows:

**ATTACKS BY THE TURKISH ARMY:** Fighter Jet Attack: 303; Helicopter Attack: 169; Prohibited Explosive Attack: 51; Explosive-laden Drone Attack: 8

**MARTYRED COMRADES:** Our comrades who fell as martyrs: 4

**GUERRILLA ACTIONS:** Guerrilla actions carried out from the air: 1; Guerrilla actions carried out from the land: 111; Total guerrilla actions carried out: 112

**ENEMY LOSSES:** Number of invaders punished: 27; Number of ranked invaders punished: 1; Number of invaders injured: 11

**MILITARY EQUIPMENT DESTROYED:** Radar System: 2; Armoury: 1; Chain Grenade Launcher: 1; Drone: 5; Surveillance Camera: 4; Emplacement; 3 Solar Energy: 1

**MILITARY EQUIPMENT HIT:** Attack helicopter: 2; Sikorsky helicopter: 1; Emplacement: 3; Digger: 1

**SEIZED:** Drone Loaded with Explosives: 1

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## Another 1,200 refugees were settled in Girê Spî in September

ANF | 2 OCTOBER 2024

According to information obtained from local sources, the Turkish state took 1,200 Syrian refugees, who were deported from Turkey in September, through the occupied Girê Spî border gate and handed them over to the "Military Police" gangs to be settled in homes in the city.

The number of people settled in Girê Spî has increased to 39,700. 72 of the refugees are Iraqis.

The Turkish state aims to change the demographic structure of the regions of Idlib, Afrin, Azaz, Bab, Cereblus, Girê Spî and Serêkaniyê by settling Syrian refugees in areas that are not the areas they come from.

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## Parliamentary elections in South Kurdistan scheduled to take place on 20 October

ANF | 3 OCTOBER 2024

The parliamentary elections in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq are scheduled to take place on 20 October after a two-year delay.

This time, voting will not be organized by a regional electoral committee, but by Iraq's Supreme Electoral Council. The KDP, whose irregularities were exposed in the last elections, apparently has reason to worry. Chronic problems such as oil smuggling, cooperation with the Turkish state, corruption, theft and inadequate services are expected to result in a loss of votes.

### Seat allocation after the last elections

The fifth and last parliamentary elections in the Kurdistan Region took place on 30 September 2018. In this election, the KDP won 45 seats, the PUK 21, the Gorran Movement 12, the New Generation 8, the Islamic Society Party 7, the Yekgirtu and Islamic Movement 5, and the Communist Party and the Socialist Party one seat each.

According to the law, the term of the Kurdistan Region Parliament is four years. On 9 October 2022, the fifth legislative period was extended until 31 December 2023, by the votes of 80 MPs. The Iraqi Federal Court ruled that this was unlawful and elections should be held as soon as possible. The Kurdistan Regional Government has decided to hold parliamentary elections four times since 2022. However, these decisions have not been implemented.

### Why could the elections not be held?

The Supreme Judicial Council of Iraq changed the electoral system that favored the KDP and divided it into four regions: Sulaymaniyah (Silêmanî), Erbil (Hewlêr), Halabja (Helebce) and Duhok. The Kurdistan Region Election Committee was dissolved, and the elections were placed under the jurisdiction of the High Election Committee of Iraq.

The quota system for eleven parliamentary seats, of which the KDP had reserved six for Turkmen alone, was annulled. Following this decision, the KDP announced that it would boycott the elections scheduled for 10 June 2024. The elections were blocked.

The Supreme Judicial Council of Iraq then decided to allocate a quota of five seats in the Kurdistan Region Parliament to Turkmen, Christians and Armenians, which was accepted. The number of seats is now 95+5. In the previous elections, it was 100+11. Irregularities in past elections

In the last parliamentary elections in 2018, the KDP was the party that committed the most irregularities in public view. The PUK initially pushed for the annulment of this election. Nevertheless, the KDP and

the PUK eventually agreed on the results behind closed doors and with the intervention of the US and Great Britain in the name of regional stability.

### **False voters of the KDP**

In connection with electoral fraud, the KDP was accused, among other things, of having false voters. In addition, many people from the Kurdish regions of Rojava, Bakur and Rojhilat, i.e. from Syria, Turkey and Iran, also voted.

Massive pressure was put on the Peshmerga, there was collective transport to the polling stations and the KDP was sent photos of completed ballot papers. Due to these allegations, some security measures were taken for the upcoming elections.

### **Show us your vote, get your salary**

In the past, hand-paid salaries were one of the KDP's most important assets. The KDP asked the people it paid to photograph their ballot papers and present them as proof.

If they failed to do that, they faced salary cuts or dismissal. The Iraqi government took action against this and demanded that all salary payments be made through banks. It is now official that 500,000 people receive their salaries through the banks. This makes free and secret voting easier.

### **Biometric cards for eligible voters**

The Supreme Electoral Council of Iraq has taken further measures to combat the irregularities of the past. Unlike in previous elections, biometric cards are issued to eligible voters. People who are at least 18 years old, have Kurdistan Region ID cards and are Iraqi nationals are eligible to vote.

There are two ways to vote: electronically and manually. The results of electronic and manual voting are compared and recorded in the presence of party representatives and candidates in all constituencies. This helps to partially prevent fraud attempts. All polling stations are also monitored by the Supreme Electoral Council of Iraq and UN representatives.

### **30 percent of the population**

One of the biggest problems with elections is the dwindling hope in the existing government. This is evident when you look at voter turnout. In the last Iraqi elections, turnout was highest in Duhok at 35 percent, while in places like Erbil and Sulaymaniyah it was 25 to 30 percent. Over 70 percent of people did not vote.

The current representation is 30 percent of the population. There have even been claims that even this percentage is questionable and has been increased by UN intervention. According to them, this was to prevent the legitimacy of the vote from being questioned or the election from being annulled.

## Investigation against 6 village guards who refused to participate in Turkish occupation operation

ANF | VAN | 3 OCTOBER 2024

Van Regiment Command assigned 400 village guards to participate in the Turkish invasion operations in Southern Kurdistan (Northern Iraq).

It is reported that 150 village guards were selected from the district of Başkale and the rest from Çaldıran, Çatak and Erciş districts. These village guards are set to move to Southern Kurdistan on 18 October 2024.

Many village guards objected to the decision. Nedim Yiğiter, the head of the village guards, threatened the village guards who said 'We are temporary village guards, we are only responsible for protecting our own village, we are not commandos.'

According to reports, Nedim Yiğiter, who serves the occupying Turkish army, said: "If you refuse to participate in these operations, we will consider you as supporters of the organisation (referring to the PKK). Everyone should take their weapons and go to the designated place. You will be rewarded for this, but if you act otherwise, it will be bad for you."

Despite Yiğiter's threats, 6 village guards in Aydemir village refused to accept the assignment. An investigation was initiated against the village guards whose statements were taken at Eşmepınar police station and their weapons were confiscated.

The village guards, who were sent to Southern Kurdistan in advance for the invasion operation planned to be carried out in the near future, are asked to stay in the occupation zone for one year, while they are allowed to visit their families every two months.

In the past years in Van, investigations were launched against the village guards who refused to participate in the occupation operations and they were dismissed.

### Village guards

Village guards are Kurdish paramilitaries in the service of the Turkish state. The village guard system was established in Turkey in 1985 to combat the Kurdish liberation movement and has its roots in the Hamidiye Regiments in the Ottoman Empire. The paramilitary units, founded according to tried and tested colonial methods, are now officially called the "Security Guard" and are used as local experts and cannon fodder in Turkish military operations in Kurdistan. Their mission also includes foreign missions.

## HPG: Three drones shot down

ANF | 4 OCTOBER 2024

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

According to the statement, fighters from the HPG and YJA Star (Free Women's Units) shot down three drones and destroyed a military vehicle, and three Turkish soldiers were killed. In addition, the HPG reported dozens of attacks by the Turkish air force and ground troops with fighter jets, attack helicopters and prohibited explosives. The HPG provided the following war bulletin for the period 30 September - 3 October:

### **Guerrilla resistance to military road construction**

The guerrilla resistance is concentrated on the western front of the Zap region. In the Girê Bahar area, an excavator used by the Turkish army for military road construction was fired at with heavy weapons on Monday, and construction work was subsequently stopped. Shortly afterward, the YJA Star destroyed a military vehicle. The vehicle, which was also being used for road construction, was hit by an artillery shell and burst into flames.

### **Occupiers killed in YJA Star act of sabotage**

In the Girê Amêdî resistance area in the western Zap region, a female sniper on Tuesday hit the building of a Turkish army position. One soldier was wounded. On Wednesday, at least three occupiers were killed in an act of sabotage by the YJA Star. The occupying troops were also attacked twice with heavy weapons.

### **Drones shot down in Zap and Gare**

In the Girê Cûdî area, the YJA Star have shot down two drones since Wednesday evening. A drone moving from Çemankê towards Çirav was also shot down in the Gare region on Monday. On the same day, the guerrillas attacked the occupying forces in Girê Şehîd Hêmin in the Xakurke region twice with heavy weapons.

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

According to the HPG, the Turkish army has used prohibited explosives against guerrilla tunnels in the Girê Cûdî and Girê FM areas nine times since Monday. During the same period, areas in the Xakurke, Gare, Zap and Metina regions were bombed 21 times by fighter jets and 17 times by attack helicopters.

## 2 killed in Turkish airstrike on the Qamişlo-Amûdê road

ANF | 4 OCTOBER 2024

In a written statement on Friday, the Internal Security Forces of North-East Syria announced that the Turkish state bombed a vehicle on the Qamişlo-Amûdê road yesterday, killing two people.

“As the Turkish state continues its hostile attitude towards the region, the occupying Turkish army bombed a vehicle travelling on the Qamişlo-Amûdê road at around 18.00 yesterday. The vehicle that went off the road after the attack was targeted by a second strike. 2 people in the vehicle lost their lives on the spot,” the statement said.

The Internal Security Forces pointed out that: “The occupying Turkish state, which does not recognise any international law, endangers the lives of the people with its hostile attacks against the people of the region.”

Turkish drone terror is part of everyday life for the people in northern and eastern Syria. The drones move unchallenged in the US- and Russian-controlled airspace over Syria. Since the beginning of the drone war against the region in the summer of 2020, Turkey has carried out hundreds of attacks using unmanned aerial vehicles.

According to data from the Rojava Information Center (RIC), an NGO based in the region, Turkish drones have carried out around 120 attacks this year. More than 30 people have been killed and more than 60 injured. Last week, two SDF fighters were killed in a Turkish drone attack in the area surrounding Manbij.

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## Femicide

### Academy of Jineoloji Conference publishes Final Declaration

ANF | HESEKE | 28 SEPTEMBER 2024

The Final Declaration of the 2nd Conference of the North-East Syrian Academy of Jineoloji, held in the city of Heskê on 25-26 September with the slogan "Updating Women's Wisdom", was published.

**'We will advance Jineoloji studies, and move to a new stage'**

The final declaration reads as follows: “Our second conference was held in the city of Heskê on September 25-26 with the slogan "Women's Wisdom is Updated with Jineoloji". Our conference was held with



the participation of representatives of all institutions and organizations that take part in the construction of the democratic nation system, and representatives of the dimensions of the women's confederal system.

The word Jineoloji was first said by Leader Apo [Abdullah Öcalan]. The dominant system is trying to prevent the spread of Leader Apo's ideas in society and the world with the most severe isolation practices. For this reason, our conference sees it as a primary duty to convey Leader Apo's views to all women of the world and to ensure his physical freedom.

We dedicate our conference to all martyrs of freedom.

The declaration continued: "The conference stated that Jineoloji analysis and studies should be shared more with all women's organizations and institutions in the dimensions of the democratic nation and especially with all segments of society. The universalization of Jineoloji studies, and at the same time, the distribution and deepening of our branches of study in social life give each other strength and complement each other.

Although there is still a need to continue the work of introducing and understanding Jineoloji, we now need to enter a new phase. Our conference evaluated that it is important for the Academy of Jineoloji to respond more to the needs of the women's revolution from now on, and to direct the solution of social problems in terms of the sociology of freedom. It is important to strengthen mutually complementary relations with all segments of society so that the ways and methods of Jineoloji can form the basis of the understanding and implementation of the democratic women's confederal system in all dimensions."

The statement added: "Jineoloji has intellectual duties in creating a paradigmatic revolution in science and in the construction of democratic modernity. In order to fulfill this duty and to take Jineoloji studies one step further, it is important to establish the Academy of Jineoloji system. Research center members, academics and Jineoloji educators should focus more on their intellectual duties and training sufficient academic staff. They should be able to represent Jineoloji in their own personality, life and work.

It is important to deepen our discussions on the ways and methods of reaching the truth. The main point in methodology is to overcome the effects of the ruling mentality and reach clear views and solutions to vitalize our paradigm.

Jineoloji creates a great impact on society. It is important for these courses to reach all women and society. Women who provide Jineoloji courses need to constantly educate themselves first so that they can be satisfactory in their teaching. They can have a positive impact on democratic change and transformation in society both in terms of content and stance, style, language and method."

### **'The women's revolution must be permanent'**

The declaration continued: "Jineoloji has an important role in the permanence of the women's revolution and jineoloji cannot be implemented without the women's revolution. On this basis, the Academy of Jineoloji should play an active role in the development of the scientific foundations of the women's revolution in all dimensions within the women's confederal system. In order to establish a healthy connection between science, life and women, Jineoloji should reflect the results of analysis and research to communes, assemblies, cooperatives and academies.

The universalization of Jineoloji studies is based on the revolution that started in Kurdistan. The women's revolution, especially in Northern and Eastern Syria, has had an impact on women around the world, and in particular in the Middle East, and Jineology is recognized as the science of this revolution. Worldwide relations should be expanded, and existing relations should be brought to the level of organization, and these activities should form the basis of the world women's confederation.

The women's revolution will reach its scientific foundation through Jjineoloji. We are entering a new phase of Jineoloji based on the knowledge of moral and political society and the experience of the women's revolution. We will raise our struggle in the field of science with the 'Jin Jiyan Azadi' formula so that the 21st century will become the century of women. Jin Jiyan Azadi!"

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## Memorial for young Ceylan Önkol on the 15th anniversary of her death

ANF | AMED | 29 SEPTEMBER 2024

Ceylan Önkol was killed by a mortar shell fired from a police station in the Xanbaz Hamlet of the Kanîsipî (Şenlik) rural neighborhood of the Licê district of Amed when she was only 12 years old on 28 September 2009.

Young Ceylan was commemorated at her graveside on the 15th anniversary of her killing. The memorial was attended by the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM), Amed Provincial Organization, Önkol's family, the Democratic Regions Party (DBP) and DEM Party provincial and district organizations, DEM Party deputies, representatives of civil society organizations, and many others.

DEM Party MP Beritan Güneş said: "Today we are talking about Ceylan and Narin, another day we will talk about Uğur. Despite 15 years passing, we cannot see any progress in child policies in Turkey. Because those who fired mortar shells at Ceylan's body from the police stations were not held accountable for this."

Güneş added: "The mentality that killed Ceylan is the same mentality because of which Narin could not be found for 19 days."

### Background

Ceylan Önkol (12) was killed by a mortar shell fired from Yayla outpost while she was grazing her animals on 28 September 2009 in the village of Şenlik in the Lice province of Amed (Diyarbakır).

Born in 1997, schoolgirl Ceylan Önkol was on a hill in the hamlet of Xambak, which belongs to the village of Xiraba (Şenlik), to graze sheep and goats near her parents' home on the day of her violent death.

Villagers said there was a sound in the air followed by an explosion. Shortly after the explosion, Ceylan was found dead with her midsection shredded.

The scene villagers found in front of their eyes was horrendous: body parts were scattered over 150m with some landing in the branches of nearby trees. Despite the massive damage to her midsection, witnesses say her legs and feet as well as her arms, hands and head were relatively uninjured.

The authorities were contacted, and the family waited at the scene for what they expected to be military security forces, a doctor, and the local prosecutor. Nobody arrived. After six hours of waiting, the family was informed that the doctor and prosecutor would also not be coming because they feared for their safety.

The village Imam had been instructed to take photographs of the scene and the family was asked to gather the girl's remains and bring them to the police station in Bingöl province where an autopsy could be performed. According to local protocol, the prosecutors should have conducted the autopsy at the scene.

The Human Rights Association (IHD) stressed that the prosecutor did eventually arrive: it was three days later, and it was then he conducted his "investigation".



## Call from the International Justice Initiative for Nagihan Akarsel

ANF | 29 SEPTEMBER 2024

On 4 October 2022, the Kurdish journalist, academic and women's rights activist Nagihan Akarsel was murdered as she left her home in the city centre of Sulaymaniyah in South Kurdistan / Iraq.

Last year, more than 150 women's organizations and women from all continents and different professions appealed in an open letter to the UN, the Council of Europe and the Iraqi government to clarify the background of this political murder and to hold those responsible accountable, as well as to take legal and political measures to prevent further feminicides and political murders. The Initiative 'Justice for Nagihan Akarsel' was born on that occasion.

The Initiative has now released a statement in which it said: "On 24 December 2023, the murderer, Ismail Rasim Rifat Peker, a Turkish citizen, was sentenced to death by the Court of Cassation of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq under Article 2.2 of the Anti-Terrorism Law. But neither the public nor Nagihan Akarsel's relatives were informed about the legal investigations or court. In this way, the relatives were deprived of the right to participate in the proceedings through legal representation.

According to the court decision and media reports, Ismail Peker had previously been arrested in Turkey for attacking a woman with a cleaver in December 2017. Although Peker was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment, he was already released in 2022 after 4 years and two months of detention. In his statements to the authorities in South Kurdistan after the murder of Nagihan Akarsel, Ismail Peker admitted that during his imprisonment in Turkey he had been instructed and paid by a "Turkish state official" to travel to Sulaymaniyah to kill Nagihan Akarsel.

He admitted that during his stay in Sulaymaniyah he was guided and in constant contact with officials of the Turkish Secret Service MIT in the planning and execution of this murder. They also provided him with the weapon to carry out the crime. The fact that Peker was employed by the Turkish Secret Service MIT was already confirmed by a press statement by the Turkish ambassador to Iraq, Ali Rıza Güney, just a few days after the crime."

### **Instigators should be prosecuted**

The statement added: "Although there are numerous testimonies and evidence that Turkish state authorities organised the assassination of Nagihan Akarsel and that more people were involved in the crime, only İsmail Peker was convicted. To our knowledge, no legal action has yet been taken against the contractors of the murder or other accomplices, let alone political measures enacted to prevent further political feminicides.

A representative of the Directorate Middle East and North Africa of the European Union external action in Iraq replied to our open letter last year, stating that 'the EU Office in Erbil continues to follow the different issues related to this murder and the investigation.' However, it appears that no measures have been taken to protect the lives and freedom of expression of Kurdish women's rights defenders.

On the contrary, the attitude of the Kurdistan Region and Iraqi authorities, the lack of sanctions by international human rights mechanisms and the political inaction of international organizations have been encouraging the Turkish AKP-MHP government to further intensify the assassination of Kurdish politicians, especially Kurdish women leaders and journalists, inside and outside Turkey. These include the assassinations of Sakine Cansız, Fidan Doğan and Leyla Saylemez on 9 January 2013 in Paris, of Zeyneb Sarokhan on 22 September 2022 by a drone attack of the Turkish army in Region of Autonomous Administration North and East Syria (AANES), of Emine Karar on 23 December 2022 in Paris, of Leman Shiweş and Yusra Derwish on 20 June 2023 by a Turkish army drone attack in the AANES Region, of Feryal Sileman Khalid on 18 January 2024 in Kerkuk / South Kurdistan-Iraq. Again, on 23 August 2024, a Turkish army drone targeted a car and assassinated the Kurdish journalists Gulistan Tara and Hero Bahadin in the region of Sulaymaniyah / South Kurdistan-Iraq. However, following Saddam Hussein's 'Anfal' genocide operations, the Turkish army is now bombing and evacuating Kurdish and Assyrian villages, burning forests and massacring civilians - men, women and children - in the same areas of Southern Kurdistan. From 2023 to July 2024, a total of 30 civilians, including 4 children, were massacred by the Turkish army in Southern Kurdistan."

The Initiative called "on the bodies of the Council of Europe and the UN to take immediate and effective measures to prevent their member state Turkey from continuing to break international law with impunity and to ensure that those actually responsible for these political murders are politically and legally sanctioned.

In order to achieve justice for Nagihan Akarsel and all others murdered by the Turkish state, as well as to prevent further feminicides targeting women's rights defenders and journalists, we call on journalists, academics, artists, local and international human rights and women's organizations to address the political dimension of these murders through press statements, articles and a variety of actions and to work together to convict those primarily responsible for the murders."

## Urgent and effective measures should be taken

The Initiative reiterated its demands for ensuring urgent measures to defend the lives and rights of Kurdish women rights defenders and journalists. The demands are as follows:

- The prosecution and conviction of the perpetrators responsible for and involved in the assassination of Nagihan Akarsel and all other extra-judicial killings.
- Closure of Iraqi and Syrian airspace for the Turkish Air Force, including armed and unarmed UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles).
- Urging Turkey to stop its illegal attacks, politics of occupation, war, and systematic assassinations of women's rights defenders and people living in any part of Kurdistan, especially in regard to the territories of Iraq and North and East Syria.
- Prosecution of war crimes and crimes against humanity – including genocide and feminicide - committed by Erdoğan and the AKP-MHP government, in accordance with international law.

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## Ecocide

### Protest against mining project in Lice: People are forced to migrate

ANF | AMED | 28 SEPTEMBER 2024

A copper mine is planned to be established in the area covering the rural neighbourhoods of Zengesor, Heşeder, Mizag, Peçar, Bayırlı and Şaxur in the Lice district of Amed (Diyarbakır). Residents took to the streets in protest at the project and made a statement to the press.

The demonstration promoted by Lice Nature Defence Collective was supported by Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) Amed MP Serhat Eren, Amed Ecology Association, Chamber of Agricultural Engineers, Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (TMMOB) members and many locals. During the demonstration, banners reading 'Capital, hands off Lice' and 'Our nature is our existence, we are not giving up' were unfurled.

Before the press statement, Turkish soldiers entered the neighbourhood in armoured and civilian vehicles. Samet Ucaman, former Branch President of the Chamber of Agricultural Engineers, said that the mining project is a plunder of nature. Pointing out that the environmental impact assessment (EIA) report was

not duly prepared, Ucaman said, “We are fighting against this. We see that the work carried out in areas close to settlements is aimed at changing the demography and forcing the people to migrate.”

DEM Party MP Serhat Eren said that the livelihoods of the people are in danger: “There is an attack on animal husbandry, beekeeping and agriculture. Efforts are made to displace our people from their land and send them to big cities, where the people's ties with their land, history, culture and language are wanted to be severed. We will never allow this. We will resist these mines until the end.”

Eren added: “No one can destroy our nature, trees, forests, living spaces and agricultural areas. The people's struggle to protect their nature is a struggle for freedom. We will embrace this struggle for freedom until the end.”

Zeki Kanay from the Ecology Association said: “Mesopotamia is a geography where all grains are grown and spread around the world. Now when we ask why we don't have tomatoes or grains, it is because even our streams no longer flow freely. They have built dams on all the flowing waters. Today, the Tigris and Euphrates do not flow. They submerge our houses, and then they sell us that water for money.”

Ahmet İnan, a lawyer from the Environment and Urban Commission of the Amed Bar Association, said that the area where the mining project is set to be realised is of critical importance for the people. Pointing to intentions to implement the mining project in the forested and water-flowing area, İnan said, “As stated in the EIA report, the area opened for mining activities is, unfortunately, 700 hectares of forest area.”

İnan concluded: “The destruction of our living spaces and attempts to sever our ties with nature are also an attack on the eco-sociological structure and values of our people. We clearly state that we will not allow any project that will usurp the rights of our people and nature.”



## Bakırhan: We struggle against a government that is hostile to forests, rivers and mountains

ANF | BALIKESİR | 29 SEPTEMBER 2024

The Peoples' Democracy and Equality Party (DEM Party) Balıkesir Provincial Organisation is holding a conference on ecological destruction.

The ‘Balıkesir Ecology Conference’ is taking place at Reha Yurdakul Cultural Centre in Burhaniye district with the participation of DEM Party Co-Chair Tuncer Bakırhan, many residents from Balıkesir as well as neighbouring provinces.

The conference opened with the screening of Hakan Tosun's documentary on ecological destruction. Speaking at the opening, DEM Party Co-Chair Tuncer Bakırhan started his speech by commemorating Reşit Kibar, who was murdered on 3 September in Borçka, Artvin while trying to protect the forests.

Reacting to the pro-rent logic of the government and capital, Tuncer Bakırhan drew attention to the 'Bread and Justice Meetings' they have been organising for a few months and said: "Wheat producers in Nusaybin, sunflower producers in Tekirdağ, shopkeepers, fishermen, women, youth, those who seek justice and law are all revealing the reality of the government everywhere."

Bakırhan continued: "In addition to the struggle waged by the friends of the Kurds in the quest for democracy, the struggle waged in the Aegean region, Balıkesir and Kazdağları against ecocide is very important and valuable. The struggle in this field is at least as valuable as the struggle for democracy. I would like to thank all my friends who are fighting this struggle for their efforts."

Criticizing the fact that the government is making it even easier to commit ecocide with omnibus bills, Bakırhan said, "The government relies on its numerical majority, it relies on its partners who think like it-self. It trusts the opposition, which is not strong and serious. Since they are faced with an opposition that makes their work easier, they can do everything more easily."

Pointing out that the government has amended the forest law 32 times in 22 years, Bakırhan said that they are struggling against a government that is hostile to forests, green, rivers, mountains, resisting Kurds and women.

Bakırhan stated: "I am saying it here for the first time. They are preparing a new law proposal for mining companies, which are constantly trying to propose new laws to the government in order to have easier access, to obtain licences more easily and to obtain more rent. They want there to be no administrative obstacles in front of them. They are already overcoming the obstacles in some way, but they want to eliminate them altogether. Our job is difficult, but 80 percent of Turkey thinks like us. We have only one shortcoming. We are unable to organise, to come together, to build a strong ground against this savage capital, the palace, the ecocidal power that works for war."

Remarking that 155 mining companies in Balıkesir received 279 mining exploration-operation licences, Bakırhan concluded as follows: "Therefore, all the districts of Balıkesir are in the same situation and Kazdağları has become a centre of gold mining. There are several foreign and local companies. Whether foreign or domestic, the aim of the companies is rent. These companies are so reckless that they work to obtain the highest rent at the lowest cost, just like the capitalist system does. Where should those people who are engaged in animal husbandry, agriculture, fruit and vegetables go? No one cares about this, the government does not care at all. Then we should not care about this government either. Let's get rid of this government that is dragging us into the abyss and bringing Turkey to the brink of destruction."

# Human Rights Violations

## DEM Party First Region co-spokesperson Dilber Demir sent to prison

ANF | ISTANBUL | 28 SEPTEMBER 2024

The statements of those detained in Istanbul on 24 September have been completed. Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) executive Yusuf Meniye, DEM Party Arnavutköy District Organization executive Hayrettin Erikli, Democratic Regions Party (DBP) executive Mustafa Kızılaya, Peoples' Democratic Congress (HDK) worker Şamil Altan, and MATUHAY-DER executive Kalo Bozutmak were released after giving their statements to the prosecutor.

DEM Party First Region co-spokesperson Dilber Demir, however, was referred to a judge with a request for arrest.

The court ruled that Demir should be arrested on charges of "membership of an illegal organization."

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## MED-DER's former co-chair Rıfat Roni sent to prison

ANF | AMED | 28 SEPTEMBER 2024

On 24 September, 30 people were detained in raids conducted on the Mesopotamian Language and Culture Research Association (MED-DER), Payız Pirtûk and Anka Language and Art Education Cooperative, as well as many houses in Amed. The 30 people were taken into custody on the basis of statements given by an informer.

While 28 of the detained people were released, Kurdish teacher and former MED-DER co-chair Rıfat Roni was sent to prison on the charge of "being a member of an illegal organization."

Dilan Güvenç, who was referred with a request of arrest, was released on bail.

MED-DER co-chairs Şükran Yakut and Mehmet Remzi Azizoğlu, Ipek Oyur, Rezan Aktulum, Beritan Gürbet Orak, Belkisa Süleymanoğlu Bitkin, Şilan Elmas Kan, Mine Karakaş, Mehmet Salih Öngün, Jineoloji Magazine editorial board member Rojda Yıldız, Ayhan Karatekin, who were referred under judicial control, were released without judicial control after their statements were taken at the Criminal Judgeship of Peace on Duty, while Berivan Duman was released under judicial control.





## Armed attack on DEM Party building in Istanbul

ANF | ISTANBUL | 28 SEPTEMBER 2024

The Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) building in Sultangazi district of Istanbul was targeted by an armed attack last night. The windows were broken by the bullets.

According to DEM Party Sultangazi District Co-Chair, Faruk Kaya, residents heard shots at around five o'clock in the morning. The police then inspected the building. The bullets fired by unknown persons broke through window panes. A total of around ten shots are said to have been fired.

The DEM Party, like its predecessor party HDP, is frequently the target of violent attacks. In May, 14 shots were fired at the DEM office Birecik district of Urfa. The most serious attack on a party building took place in June 2021 at the HDP headquarters in İzmir. Deniz Poyraz, a 38-year-old Kurdish woman, was murdered with six bullets in the building by a self-confessed fascist and follower of the far-right Grey Wolves organisation.



## Three people including a journalist imprisoned in İzmir

ANF | İZMİR | 28 SEPTEMBER 2024

Four people were taken into custody into political genocide operations in İzmir on 25 September. The detainees were asked questions about their involvement in press statements, leaflet distribution and cemetery visits. One of the detainees, Lütfiye Burcu Kara, a reporter for Mücadele Birliği Newspaper, was asked about the press briefings she covered, the interviews she conducted and why she travelled to the representative office of the newspaper.

The detainees were referred to Izmir Courthouse after giving their statements to the police, with a demand for their arrest on charges of “membership in an illegal organisation”.

Reporter Lütfiye Burcu Kara, Evrim Özten, Organisation Specialist of Yapı Yol İş Union and Cemal Kara, a member of the Revolutionary Student Union were remanded in custody, while the other detainee was released on judicial control conditions.



## Civaka Azad condemns agreement that allows deportation of Kurdish refugees from Germany to Turkey

ANF | 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

Thanks to the agreement reached between Turkish president Erdoğan and German Chancellor Scholz last year, 13,500 Turkish nationals, mostly Kurds, whose asylum applications were rejected, will be deported *en masse*. 200 people have already been sent back. With this agreement, Turkey hopes to overcome visa obstacles in Germany. For the Kurds fleeing Turkish terror, this is a return to hell.

After months of negotiations with Turkey in Ankara, the Scholz government has started to send back many citizens of the Republic of Turkey whose asylum applications were not accepted.

The German-based Kurdish association Civaka Azad has issued a statement denouncing the Turkish-German agreement that will hand over Kurdish refugees to the Turkish state.

The statement said: "The new deportation agreement between the German federal government and Turkey represents another weak point in terms of human rights and reveals the ignorance of the state authorities to recognize the reality of Kurdish society in Turkey. Thousands of Kurds are at risk of falling victim to the "deportation offensive" at the traffic lights already announced in the coalition agreement.

Numerous reports and reports paint a frightening picture of the human rights situation in Turkey, especially with regard to the rights of Kurds. The Turkish judicial system operates far from the principles of the rule of law."

A recently published report by Pro Asyl, which examines in depth the independence, impartiality and protection of procedural rights of the Turkish criminal justice system, indicates that in Turkey, criminal law is used to suppress politically undesirable actions.

The statement said that "charges such as terrorist propaganda are brought arbitrarily and the corresponding criminal prosecutions are not conducted in accordance with the rule of law. Those affected have no opportunity to defend themselves effectively and legally. Certain risk groups are particularly at risk of being politically prosecuted, such as members of the opposition or people who comment on politically sensitive topics – although it is often difficult to estimate when an issue will become more explosive. Due to their systematic discrimination and oppression, Kurds are at greater risk than other groups.

More than 84 percent of the asylum applications filed by Turkish citizens in Germany last year came from Kurds. Under these circumstances, it is all the more alarming that the federal government has decided to deport people to a state in which fundamental constitutional principles are not respected. It cannot be ruled out that those deported will be exposed to arbitrary state repression and serious human rights violations."

The statement added: "Germany is complicit. The Kurds need protection from the Erdoğan regime and arbitrary state persecution. The new agreement is clearly in contradiction with the decisions of German courts.

Even though many asylum applications are rejected, some courts, citing the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), recognize bans on deportation to Turkey in accordance with Article 60 (5) of the Residence Act. According to this standard, deportation cannot take place if the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms is not guaranteed."

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## Members of Kurdish music band Koma Hevra detained in Amed

ANF | AMED | 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

Members of the Kurdish music band Koma Hevra performed at a concert attended by thousands of people in Şêx Sêîd Square in Amed (Diyarbakır) on Sunday.

The musicians paid a solidarity visit to Mesopotamia Language and Culture Research Association (MED-DER) after the concert.

After leaving the association, members of the music band were intercepted by the police and detained.

The police stated that there was a detention warrant for Zeynep Doğan, Gencay Morkoç and Yusuf Keleş.

It is reported that the band members were taken to the Provincial Security Directorate and detained because of Kurdish songs they sang at the concert on Sunday.

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## Koma Hevra musicians released

ANF | AMED | 1 OCTOBER 2024

Koma Hevra members who performed songs in front of thousands of people at a concert organized by the Amed Metropolitan Municipality in Şêx Sêîd Square in Amed on Sunday were taken into custody after a solidarity visit they paid to the Mesopotamian Language and Culture Research Association (MED-DER).

It was learned that group members Zeynep Doğan, Gencay Morkoç and Yusuf Keleş were detained on the charge of "making propaganda for an illegal organization" due to the songs they performed at the concert on Sunday.

The group members who were taken to the Provincial Police Department were released after giving their statements on Monday evening.

DEM said in a statement: "The AKP systematically continues its anti-Kurdish policies and attacks on the Kurdish language and culture. Just as our people have resisted attacks on the Kurdish language for years and kept their language and culture alive, they will continue to do so."

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## At least 6 people taken into custody in Şirnak and Erzurum

ANF | 1 OCTOBER 2024

Four people were detained in a raid conducted in the village of Hespîst in the Idil (Hezex) district.

Turkish state forces detained the Murat-Hasibe Tekin couple as well as villagers Sadiye Tekin and Mervan Tekin during house searches.

In the raids that took place in Erzurum (Erzirom) in the morning hours, DBP Erzurum Provincial co-chair Ramazan Karakaş and former Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) Qereyazi District co-chair Çetin Demir were taken into custody.

It was reported that the arrests in Erzurum were based on an investigation conducted under the orders of the Ağrı Republic Chief Public Prosecutor's Office. It is not known what the detainees are accused of.

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## DBP and HDP politicians sent to prison

ANF | AĞRI | 3 OCTOBER 2024

As part of the investigation conducted upon the instructions of the Ağrı Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, Democratic Regions Party (DBP) Erzurum (Erzirom) Provincial co-chair Ramazan Karakaş and Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) Karayazı (Qereyazî) former district co-chair Çetin Demir were taken into custody on Tuesday morning following a raid on their homes.

Both politicians were brought to Ağrı to give their statements, and subsequently they were referred to the prosecutor's office with a request for arrest. The request was accepted, and the two politicians were sent to prison. In addition, a confidentiality order was imposed on the file, but the reason for the arrest of Karakaş and Demir was not disclosed.

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## DFG: Pressure on the press increased, judiciary turned into a cudgel against journalists in Turkey

ANF | AMED | 3 OCTOBER 2024

Announcing the 'September Report on Violations of Rights against Journalists', Dicle Fırat Journalists' Association (DFG) drew attention to the fact that pressures against the press increased at a time when war policies were escalated, poverty and special war policies were deepened.

"Journalists were taken under judicial clamp on the grounds of 'why did you report news' and faced police and military obstacles in the field many times," the report said.

The report referred to the practices against JINNEWS reporter Rabia Önver, who was targeted for her report on prostitution and drugs in Hakkari and whose house was raided, and emphasised that 'September was the most obvious example of the repression against journalists'.

The report noted that the repression against Rabia Önver was 'the most concrete example of the arbitrariness of the judiciary and how it has been turned into a cudgel against journalists'.

Emphasising that censorship and access bans continue in addition to the pressures against journalists, DFG said, "The bans have turned into a means of protecting AKP members. On the grounds of violation of personal rights, 645 news articles and virtual media posts about Presidential Communications Director Fahrettin Altun were blocked from access by the decision of Istanbul 3rd Criminal Judicature of Peace dated 12 September 2024 and numbered 2024/8772."

The report pointed out that: "We emphasise once again against all this pressure, obstruction and censorship; the duty of a journalist is to report the news. Journalists are the mirror of society. It is also the duty of the judiciary to investigate the facts in the news. The judiciary investigates the journalists' allegations and takes administrative action against those who commit offences. However, this situation has turned into the opposite during the AKP era. The judiciary targets journalists who report news, disregarding freedom of the press."

Stressing that they will continue to write the truth while the pressure and censorship of the government and the judiciary against journalists increases, DFG said, "Our determination to reveal the truth does not decrease in the face of these pressures, on the contrary, it increases. Just like the determination of the murdered Free Press employees, just like the determination of the first female editor-in-chief Gurbetelli Ersöz and Nagihan Akarsel. On this occasion, we honour Akarsel and Ersöz on the anniversary of their deaths."

According to the report, 2 journalists and 1 media organ were attacked, 2 journalists' houses were raided, 5 journalists were detained, 2 journalists were imprisoned, 4 journalists were threatened and 9 journalists were prevented. In addition, 4 journalists faced investigations and 6 journalists faced lawsuits.

The report stated that 5 websites were shut down, access bans were imposed on 699 news articles and 409 virtual media accounts.

The report said that the number of imprisoned journalists was 37 as of 2 October.

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## KCK Press Trial against 46 press members adjourned

ANF | ISTANBUL | 3 OCTOBER 2024

46 people, mainly journalists and media workers, are standing trial in the so-called ‘KCK Press Trial’ for ‘being a member of an illegal organisation’, ‘being an executive of an illegal organisation’ and ‘making propaganda for an illegal organisation’.

The 32nd hearing of this case was held at the Istanbul Courthouse 3rd High Criminal Court in Çağlayan on Thursday.

Those on trial did not attend the hearing. The lawyer of journalist Yüksel Genç stated that a new case was filed against his client at Istanbul 25th High Criminal Court.

The lawyer stated that this case is similar to the current case in terms of the subject matter and the date of offence, and requested the case to be merged.

The court decided to request the case filed against Yüksel Genç at Istanbul Courthouse 25th High Criminal Court and to wait for the execution of the arrest warrant issued for İsmet Kayhan, one of the journalists targeted by the case. The court adjourned the hearing to 23 January 2025.

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## Academic in solidarity with Özgür Gündem newspaper sentenced to prison

ANF | ISTANBUL | 4 OCTOBER 2024

Those who participated in the ‘Editor-in-Chief on Watch’ campaign against the crackdown on Özgür Gündem newspaper continue to be targeted by the judiciary.

Academic Beyza Üstün was sentenced to 1 year and 3 months in prison for showing solidarity against the crackdown on Özgür Gündem.

The hearing of the lawsuit filed against Üstün, who took over the one-day editor-in-chief of the newspaper as part of the campaign was held at Istanbul Courthouse 13th High Criminal Court. She is accused of ‘making propaganda for an illegal organisation’, meaning the PKK.

Beyza Üstün did not attend the verdict hearing, where she was represented by her lawyer, Oya Meriç Eyüboğlu. The prosecution repeated the previous hearing's final opinion that she should be sentenced to imprisonment on the charge of 'making propaganda for an illegal organisation'.

Beyza Üstün's lawyer once again asked for her client's acquittal.

The court sentenced Beyza Üstün to 1 year and 3 months for 'making propaganda for an illegal organisation'. The court decided to defer the announcement of the verdict.

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## Interview

### HPG fighter Haki Pir: The real enemy of Turks is the racist ideology of Turkism

HELİN HARUN ÇEKDAR | BEHDINAN | 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

HPG fighter Haki Pir talked about his roots in a reactionary environment and his path from the army to the guerrillas. "The real enemy of Turkish identity is the racist ideology of Turkism," he said.

The PKK is an internationalist movement beyond any ethnic demarcation. The PKK is waging a social, anti-sexist and anti-racist struggle in which Turks have also participated from the very beginning. Haki Karer and Kemal Pir, for example, were among the first Turkish-born internationalists in the Kurdish liberation movement. Guerrilla fighter Haki Pir is Turkish too, and has adopted the names of both revolutionaries as his battle name.

Growing up in a conservative and right-wing extremist environment, he became a professional soldier in the Turkish army. There he also met his first Kurdish friends. The discrepancy between the official doctrine, which was also his, and the Kurdistan reality he now perceived created initial contradictions with his then "reality" and ultimately led him to the PKK. "Turkish nationalism is the greatest danger to the Turkish people," said Haki Pir. This is evident in the state in which Turkish society finds itself due to fascism and militarism.

*Where are you from and what kind of society did you grow up in?*

I was born in Niğde and have spent my whole life there. I grew up in a conservative and nationalist, poor, working-class environment. It was an introverted, very conservative society. We lived in the city, but since there was also a connection to the village, I was shaped by a synthesis of city and village culture.

The first contradiction in my life was between the village and the city. Village life always attracted me. I took every opportunity to stay there, even for a day longer. Everything in the village felt warm and sincere. For me, it was the only place where there was a collective lifestyle, love for the land and nature, work, simple beliefs without exaggeration and people who were sincere.

Life in the city has always had a negative impact on me. I had difficulty adapting. The laws of morality and freedom that applied in the village did not work in the city. I perceived the city as a monster that frightens people, drives them crazy, imprisons them and pushes them into helplessness. Having no other choice, I was forced to endure the city and moved towards urbanization - that is, towards becoming a monster. To achieve the beautiful life promised by capitalism, I wanted to be the best everywhere.

I lived this cycle by joining religious orders to be the best Muslim, turning to the idealist societies [Gray Wolves] to be the best Turk, working in the factory with the aim of being the best worker, breaking rules to be the best friend, and taking exams to be the best student. Even now, I do not know exactly in which category to classify my beliefs and social cultural practices, myself, my family and my environment, and by what to define them. Religion and national consciousness have become so exaggerated and corrupted that within the current system, seeking and living the truth about them can be no more than a dream.

*What were your feelings towards the Kurdish people when you were stuck in this system?*

The word that scared us the most in our childhood was "gypsies". We were always told who the "gypsies" were, how they traveled, how they stole and kidnapped children. We rejected them as a society in an organized form and there were many conversations that started with "the Kurds and Armenians".

They were all conducted in a rhetoric of hatred and contempt. The first swear words we learned were always directed against them. It was like a game for us: whoever swears gets candy, chocolate or a reward. We didn't like the "gypsies". "We chased them out of the neighborhood, but we didn't insult them. We were made to believe that Kurds and Armenians, who we didn't even know were a people, whom we had never seen, were worse than "gypsies".

When I was seven or eight years old, I first met a Kurdish family who had fled a blood feud and had to move to our neighborhood to cover their tracks. Even before they unloaded their belongings from the truck, the whole neighborhood, young and old, became restless. Everyone wanted them to leave, but they had to stay, and they stayed, risking everything, giving up their identity. Even if they didn't say "I am Kurdish," no one in the neighborhood felt comfortable. Even the man who rented them his house was threatened and beaten. They were constantly ostracized and humiliated.

The most common expressions I remember were memorized phrases like "murderers, separatists, traitors, descendants of infidels," and they applied to every Kurd. Of course, there were prominent spokespersons who organized all this and incited the neighborhood. The tragic thing was that these people were not Turks themselves, they were Albanians and Muhajirs [descendants of Muslim migrants from the Ottoman Empire]. Our relations with the Muhajirs and Albanians were very close; they were sincere, honest and responsible. But the "Turkishness disease" made them forget their own culture, and they had to display behaviors unworthy of the essence of Turkish culture in the name of the Turks. The greatest enemy of the Turks is Turkism, which has been separated from its essence and created at a table by distorting the original.



*How were the Kurdish people viewed in this context?*

After all that had happened, when we learned that there was a people and that they lived in the East, we thought that the Kurdish people were backward, wild and barbaric, that they were easily deceived by our global enemies because they were ignorant, that they were made up of rebels who were always rising up to overthrow the state, and that this people could never be trusted.

The ethnic and cultural existence of the Kurdish people was like a bomb that was about to explode, threatening both our religious and national integrity. They were interpreted as the hump on Turkey's back that prevented it from rising up.

Some said, "The Kurds are the snakes we feed in our womb." The anachronism of their traditions, customs and tribal organization was seen as a problem to be overcome. Kurds were tolerated because they were cheap labor and did their work with high productivity. As this situation led to constant competition between Turkish and Kurdish workers, they were marginalized by the working class and abused by the employers. Today, the same problem is being imposed on Arab and Afghan migrants. On one side are the exploited and assimilated peoples, on the other side is the state, which uses security concerns as populist political material and leverage.

*What was your attitude towards the Kurdish people and the PKK during your time as a Turkish soldier, and what was the reason that made you break with all of that and join the PKK?*

The motto "Happy is the one who calls himself a Turk" was practically instilled in our cradle, and for the state, every child is a seed. The state plants this seed in kindergarten at the age of four to five. It does everything it needs to make it grow accordingly. It constantly waters, fertilizes, hoes and prunes it until it bears fruit. One of these fruits is military service. My hostility towards the Kurdish people and the PKK, which began in my childhood, grew with each passing year. Military service was the culmination of my hatred for the Kurdish people. I always thought that I would have the chance to face my enemies, whom I had hated for years, and take revenge.

During my military service, I met my first Kurdish friends. A deep relationship with them soon developed. The process of getting to know the Kurdish people began with them and lasted until 2014. With each Kurd I met, I realized that what we had been told in the past was a lie. It took six to seven years for the profile of the "evil Kurd" imprinted on my mind to change and for me to get to know the Kurdish people in reality.

Neither in Adıyaman nor in Dersim could I realize the things I had dreamed of during my military service. I could not adapt to the centralized, hierarchical system of the state. My contradictions, which had started in the army, multiplied. Both the injustices within the army and the injustices towards society reached a level that could no longer be ignored. I was torn between duty and conscience.

After some back and forth, I decided to leave the army, which was rewarded with a one-year prison sentence for breach of *contract*. Prison was the beginning of enlightenment for me, and I began to better distinguish between white and black. I recognized inequality as a child, witnessed injustice during my military service, and understood the lack of freedom that resulted from remaining silent about it.

I was released from prison and was filled with the desire to achieve equality, freedom, and justice. For five years, however, I could not find where and with what struggle I could defend the social values I believed in. During this period of passive search, I began to live in a neighborhood where the Kurdish people were in the majority but were still oppressed. Together with them, I had the opportunity to get to know the Kurdish people, the culture of Kurdistan, and the PKK freedom movement up close. When I heard the Newroz message by Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] in 2013, I imagined a Turkey so beautiful that I dreamed about it for a few minutes.

The message of democracy, equality, peace and brotherhood was very strong and sincere. With this event, my eyes opened, and I began to look into the distance. I began to walk towards the horizon where I believe the truth lies. My orientation, which now appears as a change from one side of the front to the other, is essentially a result of commitment to principles and goals.

The first front, where I fought for the safe coexistence of peoples in equality, freedom, justice and prosperity, did not give me the opportunity to realize these goals, but on the contrary, pushed me further away from them. I felt that I could achieve the goals through the PKK. I believe in this more than ever today.

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## Guerrilla Haki Pir: War against Kurds has the Imrali torture system at its center

HELIN HARUN ÇEKDAR | BEHDINAN | 2 OCTOBER 2024

HPG guerrilla Haki Pir talked about making himself a revolutionary and life in the PKK.

*How did you come up with your revolutionary idea and practice?*

Many drops of water fell into the glass, but the drop that filled it was the PKK's struggle against ISIS and the thinking behind it. I commemorate with respect and gratitude all the martyrs of the revolution who ensured the liberation of Rojava, and I promise that we will always keep their struggle for humanity alive. Everyone has been following this war closely. In response to the fascists who support ISIS in this war and those who say that they support the Kurdish people and the PKK but do not contribute to democracy, I decided to join the ranks of the PKK in search of a real life.

*How do you see life in the system and life inside the PKK?*

Years ago, there was a sentence in the Turkish TV series "Valley of the Wolves": "Death is nothing but death, my rose, I risked living for you." It may sound like a joke, but this sentence was our social reality at that time. The choice between trying to show oneself brave and fearless by simplifying and trivializing death, and a life full of suffering in which life becomes torment and torture... Both choices are expressions of poverty, lovelessness and exhaustion. We used to be proud of this phrase, which does not contain any social, moral and human values, and there are still many who are proud of it.

In the PKK, I met Kemal Pir and his struggle. Everything he did in life and struggle became our principles. With his words "We love life so much that we are ready to die for it," anyone who has a little morality and conscientiousness knows how to live. A life without true love, longing, hope, sorrow and peace cannot be balanced or liberated. It is a virtue to live against those who have sworn to destroy social values and humanity, never to bow down, to ask for nothing and to be convinced that they will win. To live for peace and to face all wars for peace.

For such a meaningful and dignified life, PKK fighters have renounced money, possessions, career, family, pleasure, egoism, egocentrism, in short, all the obligations through which the system made life unbearable for society. By giving up all these, they learned what must never be given up: freedom, dignity, one's own culture, society and humanity...

*What would you like to say as a PKK fighter with Turkish identity in view of the occupation attacks carried out by the Turkish state in Southern Kurdistan for more than four years?*

The fact that the war, which has been going on for many years and has the İmralı torture system at its center, continues in the form of occupation and annexation attacks is an indication of great destruction not only in Turkey and the Middle East, but also in a universal sense. Once again, it has been shown that all international organizations and agreements are not there to protect the will of the peoples, but to ensure the survival of the monopolies of power. This war, which is being waged against the will of the Kurdish and Arab people, is an ethnic, political and cultural genocide. The war, which is being waged with secret negotiations and massacres, will also bring great material and moral destruction to the peoples of Turkey. It must be understood that the name of Turkey and Turkishness is only a facade for this war.

The "infinitely valuable Turkishness" created by the elite in the interests of their own interests and the interests of their partners abroad by seizing power is an insult to the ancient Turkish people and their culture. Turkishness is used as a means of renouncing human and moral virtues. Unfortunately, the price of trying to exist through destruction is the denial of one's own existence. Our own culture is now a museum piece. Especially recently, the fascist AKP/MHP regime, with its Turkish-Islamic synthesis, has turned all state institutions into criminal organizations and the Republic of Turkey into a center of crimes against humanity. The crimes committed by the Turkish government have been proven and brought to light hundreds of times; everyone knows this. The fact that the palace is waging all kinds of wars in the name of the Turkish people in order to preserve its glory is a shameful situation for the Turkish people who have not fallen for the false game of an alleged *Umma* and Turkishness and have not denied their original culture.

The people of Turkey have nothing to gain from these attacks of occupation and annexation. The regime is trying to impose its fascist Sharia ideology on its neighbors, it is waging a war aimed at profit and maintaining power. Where the massacre is not complete, the regime is deploying all of Turkey's military and administrative resources to implement occupation and, ultimately, annexation. The only obstacle to the spread of this inhuman, bloody ideology is the Kurdish people and the freedom fighters of the PKK. It is not just the Kurdish people and their values that are being defended here. It is the fight of humanity, all peoples, faiths and social values against the state system that despises nature, women and morality.

*How does this war affect the economic, sociological and psychological situation of the Turkish people?*

The cause of all the problems within Turkey's borders is the insistence on continuing this genocidal war. This war, which has no other reason than ideological expansion and political interests, is not an expression of Turkey's struggle for survival, but of the fascist AKP-MHP regime. It is using all of Turkey's material and moral resources on this war. The peoples of Turkey have been living in fear and terror for years, and the result of the war is not the cause. The main purpose of the government, which is constantly systematically producing chaos, is to channel all possible resources into the war, to create legitimacy and to generate a "homeland question" in order to suppress the real problems of the people.

The fascist alliance, which is spreading the lie of the loss of the country, has nothing to offer other than security policy. Consuming without producing will inevitably lead to the end. All the research and statistics conducted in Turkey show that the people are experiencing a collapse in every respect. In my eyes, mothers and fathers who give away their milk money for war and say, "My child can grow up without milk" are cursed people who have lost their sanctity. That those who eat caviar talk about protecting the country is a denial of the Republic that was created by eating dry bread.

*What do the Turkish people need to improve their living conditions? As a PKK fighter and a Turk, what can you tell your people?*

The establishment of the democratic model built by Rêber Apo based on the paradigm of free life and free society is the only and permanent solution. Any attempt to find a solution other than this will end in chaos and war. Erdoğan's sultanate and the opposition's attempt to introduce a parliamentary system are a vicious circle and an undemocratic search for a solution.

As long as the standard of living is determined by the policies of the ruling party that forms the state, only the state and state-affiliated capital will thrive in these so-called developing countries. Democratic modernity is a metapolitical, social formation without party-political orientation and requires the widest possible participation and representation. Any society without moral and political values needs chauvinistic, arrogant and authoritarian political figures. Today's immoral and apolitical political struggles are exhausting Turkey and draining it more every day. The process initiated under the name of normalization was a pause for political maneuvering and tactical developments. Real normalization can only be achieved through an organized and active struggle initiated by the people. There are still dynamics in Turkey that can set this struggle in motion. We are in a period where a struggle must be waged that brings together a variety of groups such as women, environmental activists, workers, working people, pensioners, youth, civil servants and the unemployed. The common demand of all these groups is an equal, fair and free life.

There were many precious sons and daughters of this people who stood up for a free life. In this sense, Kemal Pir is always one of those who hold the torch in the forefront. Kemal Pir made great efforts for the line and struggle of the PKK. He represents the strong practice that Rêber Apo brought forth. With his socialist and revolutionary personality, who rejects Turkish nationalism and prevents the development of Kurdish nationalism, he is the bearer of a struggle that all Turkish youth must recognize.

"It was not enough for me to recognize and know the world, I had to change it, I had to fight for its change," he said, not remaining silent against the unjust and distorted order around him. It was part of his lifestyle not to stand idly by and watch moral and human social values disappear before his eyes. He saw

the future of Turkey in the PKK freedom movement and fought with firm belief in it. He loved his homeland too much to leave it to a handful of elitist, chauvinistic, self-serving fascists and devoted his entire life to creating an equal and free life without expecting anything in return. In the prison of Amed, resisting until his last breath, he rejected the impositions of a slavish, submissive and cowardly life and said: "We love life so much that we are ready to die for it". Kemal Pir is a source of inspiration for all those who dream of a fully independent, equal, free and democratic Turkey with all the values he created with his life and struggle.



## Kalkan: We must wage the struggle much more effectively

ANF | BEHDINAN | 3 OCTOBER 2024

PKK Executive Committee member Duran Kalkan talked about the decision of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, and said that it was seen that if the ideas of Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan were spread all over the world and the resistance was increased, results could be achieved.

*The primary agenda of the Kurdish people and their international friends is the ongoing isolation and the struggle against it. The global freedom campaign 'Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, a Political Solution to the Kurdish Question' is about to complete its first year. Let us dwell on this one-year process and the latest decision taken by the Committee of Ministers (CM) of the Council of Europe (CoE).*

At the beginning, I salute the continuing resistance in İmralı and Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] with respect. I also salute all those who struggle for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo and wish them success. The İmralı system of torture, isolation, and genocide continues. Rêber Apo has been held in this system for 25 years, 7 months, and 15 days now. At the same time, the struggle against this also continues. It is a great struggle that is taking place on any possible level. Particularly in the last year, the whole of humanity has been participating in the campaign aiming for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo and the solution to the Kurdish question. Our people, women and young people, are the ones playing a leading role. All over the world, revolutionary and democratic forces, academics, human rights activists, and all those who strive for freedom and democracy are participating in the campaign. This struggle has reached an important level.

One of the most important developments of the last week or two has been the decision of the Council of Ministers of the Council of Europe and what followed it. Our leadership published a statement, showing the position of our movement regarding this decision.

Also, our people and our international friends revealed their position on September 21 in Frankfurt. With the 32nd Kurdish Culture Festival, they made a declaration of their will. It was both a response to the anniversary of the international conspiracy, and an attitude towards the first anniversary of the global freedom campaign, striving for the development of further activism. Concretely, it can be said that the attitude of the Kurdish people, their international friends, and the democratic, socialist forces, as well as the attitude of the Committee of Ministers, were clearly put forward. On this basis, many discussions developed. Also previously, 69 Nobel laureates had taken a stance and sent letters to different places. They ob-

jected to the situation and took their initiative. Various other organizations and initiatives developed open positions in favor of the physical freedom of Rêber Apo. A general discussion developed through those efforts. Now, after ten years, the CM of the CoE took the decision once taken by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) under discussion, and as a result, they gave the Turkish state one more year to make changes in its law and find a solution to the issue of the so-called 'Right of Hope', which is at the center of their contradiction. Our leadership expressed some concrete criticisms in this regard. And all the actions I mentioned were actually a criticism and attitude towards this. I see no need to repeat all of them here, but some things may be added.

One of these points is that in some discussions it was said that the CM took a political decision. Of course, the decision was political, since it is a political institution. The decision of the CM of the CoE should not be evaluated from a legal point of view. Such institutions are not legal institutions; they do not make decisions in terms of law. They make political decisions; they are political institutions. It is the same with the ECHR. They were the political institution responsible for following up on the implementation of that decision. Giving a one-year deadline to the Turkish state was a political decision. On March 18, 2014, the ECHR made a decision, not fully aware of the politics and without being able to correctly estimate what would develop in the course of it. But we also know that on September 30, 2014, a plan for the destruction and liquidation of the Kurdish Freedom Movement, the so-called 'çöktürme planı' (destrucyion plan), was exposed. The Turkish state, the AKP-MHP government, decided on this and put it into practice. It was all about the Kurds, and undoubtedly, it was also about Rêber Apo.

The CM waited for ten years until they decided to take a stance. One needs to ask, why did they postpone it for so long? It waited for the PKK to be destroyed and liquidated, or at least be drastically weakened, on the basis of this collapse plan. The freedom struggle in Kurdistan would no longer be possible, the guerrillas would be crushed, the people would be cut off from Rêber Apo and freedom, and accordingly genocide would develop, as well as assimilation would advance. That was what they were hoping and waiting for. Because after that, there would be no point in discussing the decision of the European Court of Human Rights. Regardless of whether they negotiated or not, the organizations, peoples and communities that would put Rêber Apo's ideas into practice would have disappeared. This was the hope and the expectation. Why did they wait for ten years? What did the CoE do? The CoE waited until the attacks on the basis of the collapse plan were successful, and then they would take action. But no matter what they did, they could not get results. And now they could not wait any longer. It was on this basis that they set the agenda for the meetings on September 17-19. In fact, their hopes, calculations, and plans were that this plan of annihilation and liquidation would succeed. If that had been the case, they would have taken the discussion on their agenda earlier.

Now they are forced to take this step. What does this one-year deadline mean? Obviously, the AKP-MHP government asked for time, and the CM gave it to them. They gained just a little more time for the task of destroying and liquidating the PKK. The relevant circles, including the CM, hope and calculate that within this one year the PKK will be weakened and maybe even destroyed. And then the Right of Hope for Rêber Apo would not have any meaning anymore, because there would not be any more discussion about it. As long as there are no forces to implement Rêber Apo's ideas, what can Rêber Apo do alone? This is their calculation. This needs to be seen and well understood. They want to continue the annihilation attacks based on the collapse plan for another year. They tied the implementation of the ECHR decision to this. What is the conclusion one can draw from this? For ten years, we have destroyed all their expectations and disrupted their plans.

We have repelled all their attacks. This is very important. Secondly, they can no longer extend the period. They have to evaluate the situation within a year. What are their hopes and expectations? The liquidation of the PKK, the crushing of the guerrillas, and the discouragement of the people from the struggle for freedom. If we understand the ongoing developments, if we develop the global campaign that we are carrying out for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo more effectively, if we carry out the freedom struggle more strongly and effectively, we will be able to force the CM and the other relevant institutions to deal with the problem without waiting for a year. We will be able to break their calculations and frustrate their expectations.

What will they do after another year? If there is a much stronger organization, struggle, and stance of the Kurdish people and their international friends, if we spread Rêber Apo's ideas to the four corners of the world more effectively, if education, organization, work, and the struggle for freedom develop more on this basis, then there is nothing more they can do. What will they do then? They will have to look for some solutions. At least they will have to look for compromise. Let's see it like this: We have reached the final. This one year is actually the final period of this struggle. The stronger we fight, the more successful we will be. This is the truth of the matter. We have to struggle accordingly.

October 10 marks the first anniversary of the campaign, and it will enter its second year. We must now use the phase around the first anniversary, as well as the entire second year of the campaign in general, to wage an even stronger and more effective struggle and take it to all levels and all places. Because the light on the horizon has been seen. We will get results through a struggle. Each one of us must struggle for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo, as if we are competing in order to contribute to the result. We must organize rallies and develop further actions wherever we are. We heard of some planned actions that are currently being propagandized. Those who are planning these actions say that they will take a very clear position through them and emphasize their demands with a clear stance.

Indeed, it is necessary that the peoples, the Kurdish people with its youth, women, and workers, as well as all the other peoples, emphasize their will and demands everywhere by taking to the streets, conducting other actions, and taking the initiative. The largest rallies, continent by continent, region by region, city by city, and person by person, need to be organized. The most powerful actions need to be organized in order to protect Rêber Apo. Much more mass struggles for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo, with rich methods should be developed. Like this, we will achieve success.

The struggle is intensifying. Everywhere and all the time, actions and events are taking place in this framework. There was a conference in Geneva, and at the same time, the youth were marching in Hamburg chanting 'Bijî Serok Apo'... and so much more. I salute them all. I applaud them. Their attitude is really important. As far as I know, Hamburg is a revolutionary city in Germany. And as befits its history, it embraces the ideology and struggle of Rêber Apo. Rojava is on its feet constantly, and countless meetings and rallies are taking place in Northern Kurdistan. It is like this everywhere. Here in Amed (tr. Diyarbakir) on October 13th, they plan to enter the second year of the campaign with mass actions. Everybody that can should participate in this in order to make it the strongest success.

There are calls from Turkey and Kurdistan, and we definitely support their call; everybody should join these actions. We will not let fascism, colonialism, and genocide pass. We must unite around Rêber Apo much more; we must embrace him more strongly. So much so that we must show everyone: Life will be with Rêber Apo. If there is to be a free and democratic life, it will be with Rêber Apo. There is no other

way. Everyone will know that without Rêber Apo, otherwise there can be no free and democratic life. This must be expressed all over the world. Everybody should learn about this. Many rallies and other actions are also planned in Europe to mark the anniversary on October 10. Everyone should take part, and we must ensure that we enable the broadest possible participation. Everyone has an opportunity to struggle, no matter where and how. Recognizing this and acting accordingly is of the utmost importance.

The global freedom campaign has reached an important level within this one year. The friends are evaluating and discussing it, and I broadly agree with them and do not have much to add. But we should always be aware of what it has achieved. The campaign has definitely corrected our agenda. Our agenda must be the physical freedom of Rêber Apo and the struggle for it, because the solution of the Kurdish question depends on it, just as the overthrow of fascism, the freedom of Kurdistan, and the democratization of Turkey depend on it. The weakening of the male-dominated mentality and politics also depends on this, as does the development of women's freedom, and everything else depends on it.

All the attacks in the framework of the special warfare can be broken like this. We have found the key; it is the physical freedom of Rêber Apo. We must link all the struggles we wage with the physical freedom of Rêber Apo. He must be a part of it. We must give it priority. Because there is no free life without Rêber Apo. Everyone's struggle for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo is a struggle for their own free life, for gaining freedom.

What also needs to be pointed out as one of the main achievements so far is that we have united. In this one year, strong joint actions have developed everywhere. And we have become a force of struggle that has spread from the four parts of Kurdistan to all four corners of the world. We have become very rich, practicing different methods of struggle. There are conferences, reading days are organized, and a variety of further actions follow each other. We have become very rich in this sense, and we have won many things. This one-year struggle has created important developments. Concrete results were yielded. This is very meaningful and important. So, if in the second year we deepen these forms of action in an even more widespread, rich, and effective way, then indeed the struggle within the second year will increase many times more than the first year. As I pointed out before, it is like we are entering a final year.

There are very critical processes ahead of us. There will be events that represent important global historical developments. In such a period, the struggle for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo will not only be about demanding and ensuring the freedom of Rêber Apo as a person, but it will actually be like unlocking the door to freedom for everyone and to democratization. So let's make good use of this anniversary. Let's organize more different actions. Our actions should be richer in terms of form and method; they should be more numerous, and, of course, they should be much more massive. Let's develop as a people a declaration of will in front of the whole world, expressing that we demand the physical freedom of Rêber Apo, that we don't want a life without Rêber Apo, and that this is a life that is not free and democratic.



## Kalkan: Kurdistan and the Middle East have turned into a bloodbath

ANF | BEHDINAN | 4 OCTOBER 2024

In the second part of this interview, PKK Executive Committee member Duran Kalkan said that "the Kurdish people have suffered the greatest injustice in history. The attack on Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] was the greatest injustice, the greatest oppression, and the greatest torture."

*With the global freedom campaign reaching its first anniversary, the 26th anniversary of the beginning of the international conspiracy is obviously also approaching. It may have been discussed before, but once again and particularly regarding the developments over the last months; to which extent would you say has the conspiracy really been understood? And in the same context, what level has the 26 years of struggle against it brought about?*

The international conspiracy took its beginning on October 9, 1998, when Rêber Apo was forced out of Syria. It is known who planned, decided, organized, and implemented the conspiracy. There is no ambiguity or uncertainty in this regard. Almost everything is in fact clear, open, and distinct. But indeed, it is necessary to dwell on the situation and attitude of 26 years. It is more than a quarter of a century. A very important time. We need to look back at these 26 years and look at the process that paved the way for the conspiracy. That means that we need to look at twenty-six years, thirty years, or maybe even thirty-five years. What happened during this period? What is the connection between the developments that we call the attack of the international conspiracy, which aims at the destruction of Rêber Apo? We also define this process as the process of the Third World War. In fact, the Third World War started in the early '90s, preparing the ground for the conspiracy. After that, the forces waging the Third World War became involved in the conspiracy attack in order to succeed in their own goals and to make their interests dominant. They did this regardless if they contradicted each other, or if they contradicted each other. The rulers were united with the opposition in this attack. Now when we look back at this process, what do we see? What was the attack aimed at? It was aimed at the destruction of Rêber Apo. They failed, and so they put him in İmralı, in the system of torture, isolation, and genocide. If they had succeeded, they would have wanted to exterminate him.

Why did they attack Rêber Apo? Why did they want to destroy him? If there had not been the international conspiracy, if Rêber Apo had struggled freely for the past 20 years, if he had led the freedom struggle of Kurdistan, if he had led the Kurdish people's struggle for freedom, if he had educated the youth and women, what would have been the result? This is what we need to question. What did Rêber Apo want? In the early '90s, a new process began. Serhildans developed in northern Kurdistan. And with the Gulf War, political scope emerged in southern Kurdistan. Rêber Apo wanted unity in both parts. He wanted Kurdish freedom to develop. What would have happened if, on this basis, Rêber Apo had found the opportunity to carry out and realize these goals, his decisions, and his understanding? Kurdish freedom would have developed. Based on this, democratization would have developed in Turkey, democratization would have developed in Iraq, democratization would have developed in Syria and Iran, and democratization would have developed in the Middle East. A free Kurdistan resembles a democratic Middle East. What would a demo-

cratic Middle East mean? There would be unity, brotherhood, solidarity, and communal life. What would not have happened!

And now let's take a look at all the blood that has been shed for the past 26 to 30 years. Let's look at the atrocities and massacres. The Middle East has turned into a bloodbath. Kurdistan has turned into a bloodbath. The international conspiracy is the main reason for this bloodbath. The conspiracy means massacres. In fact, the free struggle of Rêber Apo would mean the prevention and elimination of all this and the development of free life, democratic administration, democratic confederal unity, and the unity of peoples against all this. How good this would be for humanity! Not only for the Kurds, not even for the peoples of the region. In fact, a democratized Middle East would have made a great contribution to humanity and its free and democratic march. All this was prevented. The conspiracy needs to be understood like this. Yes, the conspiracy was a heavy attack to realize the Kurdish genocide, to prevent Kurdish freedom, to destroy and liquidate the Kurdish people's will for freedom. It was an unjust, very unjust, the most unjust attack in the history of humanity. But it did not only happen to Kurds.

Rêber Apo evaluated the Turkish dimension of this conspiracy. Did Turkey gain or lose? Tayyip Erdogan came to power in this process, and Devlet Bahçeli became the government twice. They have lined their pockets, stolen from the country, and enriched themselves. They personally benefited from the conspiracy, but what happened to Turkey? Has Turkey developed or regressed? On the other hand, let's look at the situation in the Middle East. It is inextricably linked to the conspiracy. The conspiracy was not only against Kurdish freedom; it was also against a democratic Turkey, against the democratic Middle East, and against humanity's life of freedom. It was also against the women's freedom struggle, against the development of women's will for freedom, and the revolution for freedom. It emerged and developed as an attack against all these. It was launched by the United States, Britain, and Israel, while all the European states and Russia participated. They included everyone they needed; they made them partners. Some by force, some for profit. Everyone was involved in this crime. Now what is the outcome? The result is obvious.

One really needs to understand these policies correctly and needs to evaluate them well in order to know how to develop a correct political attitude. But also those responsible for these policies must get it right. If they are really in favor of humanity, democracy, and human rights, as they claim all the time, they must admit that they have committed massive injustice and cruelty. They have been responsible for countless massacres and bloodshed. They should question themselves and give up on this.

Whenever we evaluate this issue and voice our criticisms, these forces try to wriggle out of it. They tell us that we should not name them as responsible for this, and they do not want us to talk about it as a conspiracy. So what do they want us to say? Do they really want us to simply ignore it? The conspiracy is still going on. For now, more than 43 months, there is no information from Rêber Apo. There is no law, no justice, and no human consciousness in the system of İmralı. They committed a crime by establishing the İmralı system, and they have to solve it. We will not simply pass over this. If we just continue, we could not build anything new on these mistakes and crimes. We couldn't build righteousness or achieve success. Success is not born from error. Righteousness does not develop from wrong. This needs to be solved. Those who are responsible need to be solvent. They must question themselves and give self-criticism.

The Kurdish people have suffered the greatest injustice in history. The attack on Rêber Apo was the greatest injustice, the greatest oppression, and the greatest torture. But it didn't only aim for Rêber Apo; it was an attack aimed at the entire Kurdish people. Aimed at the women, the youth, the peoples of the Middle

East, the peoples of Turkey, and humanity. Kurdish youth, children, and women have been persecuted so much and subjected to so much oppression, torture, and special war practices. They have experienced so many massacres. Those responsible for this are the US government. Back then, the Democrats were in power, and today again they are in power. Today in the UK, the Labour Party is in power again. We have pointed this out many times before. These powers must admit the injustice they have done and have to make amends. They owe the Kurdish people. They have a responsibility to eliminate the oppression they have inflicted on the Kurdish people for 26 years, let alone before that. We invite them to approach this way. They need to look at the past. They need to look at what Rêber Apo wanted to do. What have they caused by preventing him? Did they do good?

Did they produce a solution in Kurdistan? Did they produce a solution in the Middle East? They developed insolvency. Rêber Apo was the solution power, and they prevented the power of solution. They became responsible for so much bloodshed, massacres, and torture. On the occasion of the anniversary of the conspiracy, I want to remind all the relevant forces of what has happened. We invite them to give up what they have done, to correct it, and to apologize for the oppression and torture they have inflicted on the Kurds.

On the other hand, lays the mentioned very significant 26-year struggle against the conspiracy. They wanted to destroy Rêber Apo. The October 9th conspiracy was an extermination attack. But it was rendered unsuccessful. Again, the February 15th conspiracy was an extermination attack. They wanted to execute him. That is why they kidnapped Rêber Apo from Kenya and delivered him to Turkey in an illegal and immoral manner. This was thwarted by the struggle. In the Imrali system of torture and isolation, they wanted to make Rêber Apo rot; they wanted to make him unable to think, unable to be productive, and therefore unable to be a political power. In these 26 years, the greatest struggle in history was waged against the conspiracy. If it was the heaviest, most unjust, and most immoral attack in human history, at the same time, the 26-year struggle against the conspiracy is the most meaningful, most libertarian, and most democratic resistance and struggle in history. Rêber Apo led this struggle first and foremost.

The entire Kurdish people and all our international friends gave their support. Everyone participated in this struggle and has a share in it. The struggle repeatedly defeated attacks that took place in the framework of the conspiracy; it made it fail. It frustrated many of their plans. While they wanted to make Rêber Apo incapable of thinking and producing new thoughts within the Imrali torture and isolation system, Rêber Apo became a force of thought that showed the way to liberation of all the oppressed, especially women. He became a global leader. He became the one who best understood and defined the universe. They wanted to suffocate and silence Rêber Apo in the torture and isolation system in Imrali. But now, Rêber Apo is all over the world. As he said, "Wherever my prison writings are, there I am." The prison writings are now all over the world. Young people, women, workers, and laborers all have the books in their hands. That is why today Rêber Apo is everywhere, with everyone. The Imrali system of torture, isolation, and genocide has been repeatedly riddled and shattered by Rêber Apo. I have repeated all this to underline that struggle brings success. This is the most fundamental lesson we can learn from 26 years of struggle against the international conspiracy. If you struggle, you win. He struggles; that is why Rêber Apo is winning.

Following Rêber Apo's struggle, the Kurdish people, the Kurdish freedom forces, and the Kurdish guerrillas fight and win. Therefore, it is wrong to say that the Imrali torture and isolation system and the genocide system cannot be broken, defeated, or overcome. Victory is closer than ever. With an effective strug-

gle, in these coming weeks, months, and days we can indeed bring about the most important libertarian and democratic developments in history. Let's believe in this, let's trust in ourselves, and let's carry out our struggle against the international conspiracy in the 27th year on the line of victory, and let's ensure the physical freedom of Rêber Apo by shattering the international conspiracy and the Imrali torture, isolation, and genocide system that tries to maintain it.

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## Opinion

### Felemez Zawi: My daughter Rûken sacrificed herself for her people and the freedom of her country

HIVDA HEBUN | QAMISHLO | 29 SEPTEMBER 2024

Felemez Zawi is guerrilla Rûken Zelal's father. His daughter carried out a self-sacrificing action with another guerrilla, Sara Tolhildan Goyi, in Mersin on the night of 26 September 2022.

Felemez Zawi spoke to the ANF on the occasion of the anniversary of the two guerrillas' deaths. Zawi said that as a family, they had been involved in the Kurdistan Freedom Struggle from the beginning and that their doors were always open to PKK members. "I think it was 1992. One day, my friends asked me, 'Do you want to see Leader Öcalan?' Of course, I said. I wanted to see him. We, a group of 30 people, went to Aleppo to see him. We had never seen the Leader before. Once you see him, it is impossible for you to abandon his path and line. The Leader started this struggle for the oppressed people whose rights and freedoms have been usurped. No people who cannot defend their rights, country, language and culture have a chance to survive. The Freedom Movement, developed by Leader Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] is a movement that defends the dignity of humanity, democracy, equality and freedom. Since the day I saw him, I promised that I would never walk away from the Leader's line. All my children and their children will carry this idea of the Leader as long as they exist. Whether we live or die, we will never give up this struggle. For years, we and our children have lived on this belief and philosophy and will continue to live."

#### Rûken grew up with party education

Zawi added: "Rûken grew up with this party education. When friends came home, their respect, approach to people and love for children were very different. For this reason, children always loved them very much. This had a serious effect on the development of children's characters. Rûken also grew up this way. It affected her entire life. She was a successful student at school and was loved by her friends. She was loved in her family, among her siblings and in the neighborhood. She completed 9th grade with the highest grades. She graduated from her class with honors without any external support. She wanted to continue studying, but Syria went into turmoil in 2011 and the first stages of the revolution had already begun. We were losing martyrs every day. There were public demonstrations and marches. Rûken was attending all the cere-

monies and marches for the martyrs. One day she came home and told me, 'Dad, I will pick up my gun.' I really liked that, but I told her that it was a heavy burden, not a comfortable thing, and that it would be difficult to handle. She said to me, 'Dad, keep your head up, I am aware of everything and I know all the difficulties. Rest assured, I will overcome this and succeed.' She told my friends: 'Why are you going to go and tell my father? Our house has always been open to the fighters of this revolution since before I was born. This is our duty, and we will do it.' As I said, she came and told me and all I had to do was say, 'May your path be clear.'"

### **We know the meaning of martyrdom very well**

Zawi added: "I didn't see her for a long time after that. When her mother called me and told me that Rûken and a friend named Sara had come home, we were very happy. Sara had become our child too. We never made a difference between the two. They stayed for a long time and then left. We didn't hear from her anymore until one day we received news of her death. We are a patriotic family, and we know the meaning of martyrdom very well. Rûken was like all her friends to us. Thousands of young people sacrificed their lives like her. Those who decide to fight for their own country should, of course, also take the risk of becoming a martyr. The enemy does not give anything to a person easily. If you want to achieve your goal, then you have to take the risk of everything. Our leader has been in captivity for 25-26 years. They don't even let their lawyers see him. When every patriot demands his rights, of course there are prices to pay for this."

### **We never thought of running away**

Zawi said: "No country has ever been won easily. Of course, anyone who defends their country can fall as a martyr. They were coming after us a lot in Rojava. There were attacks every day. We had to resist, too. If we had not resisted, none of the places we have liberated would be in our hands today. Each of us would have scattered somewhere. The Turkish state was sending gangs across the border to Rojava. As they came after us, we were defending ourselves. They were not coming in small groups. They were coming after us in thousands, tens of thousands. They were coming with the latest technological weapons in their hands. We had nothing but a Russian weapon. Sometimes they would advance without distinguishing between villages and cities. We never thought of running away. A patriot cannot run away anyway. He cannot leave his own land, his own country. He dies in his own home, but he never runs away. Running away is not for us. Where are we going to go anyway? We are surrounded by enemies on all sides. Are we going to Turkey? It is the greatest enemy. For this reason, we took up our weapons and defended ourselves."

Zawi continued: "We are defending our own land, language, and culture. We have not attacked anyone. We defend our own country, and of course this cannot be achieved without sacrificing martyrs. No country has gained its independence without bloodshed. No one can give you your independence as if it were a gift. You have to resist. As long as you do not resist, you cannot find life. Nothing can come by itself without paying the price, and it is not possible. Everyone who wants their own freedom and country has to risk paying the price."

### **It is an honour to have a martyr in our home**

Heval Rûken was also one of those who risked any price for her own people, country, and the freedom of her country. Like all her friends and comrades, she sacrificed herself for her people. We always hold our

heads high in the face of their struggle. The friends who came to tell us about her martyrdom were a little shy. When they told me that Rûken had fallen a martyr, it was the greatest honor for me. Martyrdom has a very different meaning for patriotic and good people. Martyrdom is sacred for us. Of course, it is a great honor for a martyr to appear in our house. Today, not only our family, but also all relatives have their photos hung in the most important corner in their houses. Our whole family stands tall in the face of their struggle and martyrdom. Martyrdom is not something that everyone gets. Rûken and Sara sacrificed themselves on this sacred path, and we have nothing to say but bow before their struggle."

### **We loved Sara as we loved Rûken**

Zawi said: "We loved Sara as we loved Rûken. In all our relatives' homes, Sara and Rûken's photos stand side by side. They started this struggle together, resisted together, sacrificed themselves for the same idea and philosophy, and were killed together. We are struggling for a life in line with Leader Apo's philosophy. We are fighting a war of existence and non-existence.

Either we will live a life in line with Leader Apo's philosophy, or we will not have a life. If you do not have a language, freedom, country, and culture, there is no point in living physically. We will follow Leader Apo's line until the end. We will either be free or die. This is the dignity of humanity."

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## **Lavrov and his anti-Kurdish demagogy**

**RONAHI NEWSPAPER | ZEKI BEDRAN | 3 OCTOBER 2024**

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has once again spoken out about Syria and the Kurds. Russia's contradictions and rivalries with the United States are well known. Russia's attempt to make the Kurds part of this contradiction is unacceptable. The Kurds cannot afford the luxury of being part of such a contradiction. Firstly, the Kurds are a people facing genocide. Lavrov's constant portrayal of the Kurds as pro-American shows awful bad intentions.

Firstly, it should be noted that the US did not bring its forces to Syria because of the Kurds, but to fight the Islamic State. The reason why their paths crossed with those of the Kurds is the fight against Islamist terror. ISIS was diverted to Kobanê by Turkey, and the Kurds were under heavy fire. If Russia had acted instead of the US and come to Kobanê's aid, the Kurds would have joined forces with them. But Russia did not come to help. And the US realized that no one was seriously fighting ISIS except the Kurds. The Syrian and Iraqi troops were fleeing from ISIS. To prevent the region from falling into the hands of the Islamists, the US preferred to act in partnership with the Kurds.

The Turkish state was in talks with the PYD at the time. It wanted the PYD to fight against Bashar al-Assad and ally itself with the so-called "Syrian opposition forces." The Kurds did not accept that. When they refused to fight against Assad, Turkey classified them as enemies. In the days when ISIS held the borders, the Erdoğan government showed no reaction or discomfort. He did not utter a sentence like "terrorists are at my borders, the security of my country is in danger."

Brett McGurk, the US special envoy for Syria at the time, knew this very well. Lavrov is also one of those who know best what Turkey did in cooperation with ISIS. They have all the information and documents. They also shared some of them with the media at the time.

Lavrov said: "The Kurds approached Syria after the Turkish attacks. They came to us, but when the US said they would not withdraw from Syria, they turned to the US again." There is no need to repeat everything that happened then now. Lavrov is misinforming the public. When the Turkish army and its gangs occupied areas such as Serêkaniyê, the US had already withdrawn and opened the area for occupation.

Then the US intervened, and a ceasefire was achieved. Russian military personnel came and settled in the areas vacated by the US. Syrian troops were moved to the Turkish border. This was done within the framework of an agreement with the Autonomous Administration of Northern and Eastern Syria. As you can see, the demagoguery that the US will create a Kurdish state is far from the truth. Lavrov often resorts to this argument.

The Kurds never said they wanted to establish their own state. They presented their demands to Russia in writing. Their main demand is the recognition of their cultural existence and identity. Moreover, Russia's Syria settlement plan included an article granting the Kurds cultural autonomy. Lavrov now talks as if he has forgotten this. But he has not forgotten, he is saying it on purpose to cover up secret agreements with Turkey. They had requested 120 delegates from the Autonomous Administration for a major meeting in Sochi. Everything was prepared for the delegates, but Russia reached an agreement with the Turkish side at the last minute and canceled their trip to Sochi.

Russia has also prevented the Autonomous Administration from participating in the Geneva talks on a new Syrian constitution. "The Turks are blocking it," they said. The US said the same.

The Astana process was also a lesson for the Kurds. In the final declarations of these meetings, the Kurds were always portrayed as a force that wanted to divide Syria. Although Turkey occupied a significant part of Syria, armed almost a hundred thousand mercenaries and formed an alternative Syrian National Army (SNA) from them, this was not described as divisive and illegal. However, the Kurds, who are Syrian citizens and want democracy, are always portrayed as a threat and a divisive force. In the final declaration of the last Astana summit, the Autonomous Administration was explicitly declared illegitimate. It is an undeniable fact that the Astana process forms an anti-Kurdish front against the Autonomous Administration.

When Russia sent troops to the autonomous regions, promises were made to the Kurds and the Autonomous Administration. "We will be mediators, we will reconcile you with the government in Damascus," it was said at the time. The Kurds have always advocated reconciliation and the unity of Syria. If Damascus had reached an agreement with the Kurds and the autonomous regions in Northern and Eastern Syria, Turkey would not be in Syria now. Syria would have recovered. And the Kurds never broke off dialogue with Damascus. Lavrov says: "The Kurds should reach an agreement with Damascus." Very good, then he should use his weight as a mediator. It is well known that Russia is biased, defends the Syrian government and tries to keep it in power. But the Kurds have not made this a problem. They want to solve their problems with Damascus, and they have no problem with Russia. The Kurds have never been anti-Russian.

There have been talks with Damascus for years, but no progress has been made because Russia has not thrown its weight into the balance. The reason for this was Russia's commitment to Turkey. Turkey does

not want the Kurds to have a status under any circumstances. Even if Damascus says "yes", Ankara will say "no". This is why Lavrov is not telling the public the truth. Russia is not fulfilling its role as a mediator and wants to make the Kurds pay for it.



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