

# THE İMRALI POST

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

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## Contents

<b>Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan.....</b>	<b>3</b>
New "disciplinary penalty" and family visit ban imposed on Abdullah Öcalan.....	3
Call for expansion of struggle against torture in İmralı.....	4
'Freedom for Öcalan' vigil in Strasbourg in its 646th week.....	4
Families once again apply to go to Imrali.....	5
<b>Prisons.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Solidarity action with prisoner on hunger strike in Greece.....	5
Women prisoners in Iran's Evin Prison call for action for Pakshian Azizi sentenced to death.....	6
<b>Military aggression and occupation.....</b>	<b>7</b>
Turkish attacks on Amûdê leave over 70,000 people without water and electricity.....	7
Guerrilla actions against Turkish occupation forces continue.....	8
20,206 people from Lebanon arrive in North-East Syria.....	9
'Turkey attacks North-East Syria to disrupt the peace and security in the region'.....	9
Autonomous Administration: Til Kocher border crossing should be opened for the delivery of aid.....	10
Co-chair of Ezbe Town Council in Deir ez-Zor assassinated.....	11
'Operation Enduring Security' in Hol Camp and its vicinity launched.....	11
20 ISIS members captured in 'Operation Enduring Security' in Hol Camp.....	12
'Operation Enduring Security' in Hol countryside continues on day 2.....	13
Turkish army continues operation on Bagok massif.....	13
Operation Enduring Security: Phase two launched in Hol Camp.....	14
KDP expels the spokesperson and members of the HDP Representative Office in Hewlêr.....	15
<b>Femicide.....</b>	<b>15</b>
KJK pays tribute to Mother of Plaza de Mayo Mirta Acuna De Baravalle.....	15
48 women murdered in Turkey in October.....	16
TAJÊ: We say 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadî' violence against women.....	17
DEM Party Women's Assembly: Government is trying to legalize misogyny.....	18
<b>Human Rights Violations.....</b>	<b>18</b>
Family able to take the body of HPG guerrilla Nurşin Bedir after three months wait.....	18
500 people abducted in the occupied territories in Northern Syria this year.....	19
Gendarmes raid house where journalists Ren and Yıldız stayed in Adıyaman.....	19
11 journalists sentenced to prison in Turkey in October.....	20
Music instructor sentenced to 1 year and 15 days in prison for singing a Kurdish song.....	21
Turkish court orders confiscation of Yeni Yaşam newspaper.....	21
Political genocide: Many taken into custody in İzmir.....	21
<b>Trustees and resistance of people.....</b>	<b>22</b>
DEM Party: The address is Abdullah Öcalan.....	22

Trustees appointed to Mardin Metropolitan Municipality, as well as Batman and Halfeti municipalities.....	23
DEM Party: Everyone should raise their voices against the illegitimate seizure of the will of people.....	24
CHP's Özel and Imamoğlu protest seizure of DEM Party-run municipalities.....	25
Kurdistan People's Initiative: We will be on the streets until we take back our municipalities.....	26
Gülistan Kılıç Koçyiğit: Today is the day to resist together.....	26
'We will respond to the usurpation of our municipalities with resistance'.....	27
Thousands protest the usurpation of DEM Party municipalities in Amed.....	31
People of Batman protest the usurpation of their municipality.....	32
KCK: Peoples must resist fascism, usurpation and genocide together.....	32
CHP Leader in Mardin: The will of the people cannot be disputed.....	33
TJA: Women will stay, trustees will go.....	35
Young people in Batman continue resisting against usurpation of municipality.....	36
16 bar associations in Kurdistan protest seizure of municipalities.....	36
At least 92 people detained during protests against usurpation of municipalities.....	37
People's resistance against the usurpation of their will continues in Halfeti.....	38
Co-mayor of Batman: We will never surrender.....	39
Criminal complaint against police torture in Batman.....	40
Police attack people in front of the usurped municipality of Batman.....	40
DEM Party Co-chairs vow uninterrupted struggle against the usurpation of municipalities.....	41
Gülistan Sönük: We will resist until the trustee appointment is revoked.....	42
Lawyers appeal detention of Ahmet Özer.....	43
Journalists beaten by police in Batman.....	44
Esenyurt Municipality under police blockade.....	44
Thousands continue the resistance against the usurpation of municipality in Batman.....	45
Ahmet Türk: They can never silence the Kurdish people or make them take a step back.....	46
MP Tiryaki: The government's actions and words do not match.....	47
Resistance in Mardin: We will continue to resist until we take back what is ours.....	48
Legal action against DEM Party Co-chair Tuncer Bakırhan.....	49
Resistance against usurpation of Kurdish municipalities continues.....	50
IHD Co-Chair: The Kurdish question cannot be resolved with isolation.....	51
Actions by MAK militia in Batman and Lice.....	52
Police set dog on severely disabled man during house raid in Batman.....	52
Young people continue resistance in Batman.....	53
Medeni Erol not given any liquid food.....	53
Young man imprisoned for calling on the trustee to 'evacuate the municipality' in Batman.....	55
DBP Co-Chair: Give up the dirty policies and open the doors of İmralı.....	55
DEM Party Co-Chair: We will increase our struggle until the trustees are removed from these lands.....	56
Six people detained in Mardin and Amed.....	58
<b>Interview.....</b>	<b>59</b>
Lawyer Sarıca: The right to hope is non-negotiable.....	59
Muslim: Salvation of Turkey is in the hands of Abdullah Öcalan.....	62
Besê Hozat: We stand behind the will of Leader Öcalan.....	64
Besê Hozat: Women must organize everywhere.....	71

# Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan

## New "disciplinary penalty" and family visit ban imposed on Abdullah Öcalan

ANF - Istanbul - 2 November 2024

Yet another disciplinary penalty has been imposed on the Kurdish People's Leader, Abdullah Öcalan, who is imprisoned in the Turkish high-security prison on Imrali Island, Mezopotamya Agency (MA) reported on Saturday.

The Istanbul-based Asrin Law Office, which represents Öcalan and his three fellow prisoners, has recently applied for a visitation permit for family members. The Bursa Court of Execution responded by stating that on 16 October, a three-month disciplinary sanction had been ordered against Öcalan. No information was provided regarding the grounds for the sanction. The law office intends to appeal the order.

Abdullah Öcalan has been held incommunicado on the prison island of Imrali since his illegal abduction from Kenya to Turkey in 1999. The last contact with him was a visit by his nephew, Ömer Öcalan. The 37-year-old politician, who is a member of parliament for the DEM Party in the Turkish parliament, was able to talk to his uncle for about an hour and a half on 23 October and subsequently announced that he was in good health and sending his regards. Previously, due to the strict ban on contact, nothing was known about his condition. During the visit, Abdullah Öcalan told his nephew that he was theoretically and practically able to contribute to a political and legal solution to the Kurdish question if given the opportunity.

Öcalan's last contact with his lawyers was in August 2019. After an eight-year interruption, a hunger strike led by the imprisoned politician Leyla Güven had resulted in a total of five visits by lawyers. Since then, the isolation in Imrali Prison has been taken to the level of total incommunicado detention.

Öcalan's three fellow prisoners Ömer Hayri Konar, Hamili Yıldırım and Veysi Aktaş, who were transferred to the island prison in 2015 as part of the dialogue process, are also affected by the isolation on Imrali. Arbitrarily imposed 'disciplinary measures' against the Imrali prisoners serve as the legal cover for the injustice on Imrali, including the prevention of visits by lawyers and families.

In most cases, disciplinary sanctions on Imrali are justified by the 'Roadmap for Negotiations' written by Öcalan in 2009, which was submitted to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) as a defence – but also by the bizarre argument that Öcalan 'walks up and down in the prison yard during official sports time'. This form of sanction is renewed every three months for applications for family visits and every six months for applications for lawyer visits. The Turkish judiciary has ordered this type of 'punitive measure' thirteen times since 2016, most recently last May. Contrary to European case law, repeated calls from the UN Human Rights Committee and a resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Turkish state is still not willing to end the isolation practised on Imrali.



## Call for expansion of struggle against torture in İmralı

ANF - 3 November 2024

Yet another disciplinary penalty has been imposed on the Kurdish People's Leader, Abdullah Öcalan, who is imprisoned in the Turkish high-security prison on İmralı Island. The latest measure against Öcalan was revealed by the Istanbul-based Asrin Law Office, which represents Öcalan and his three fellow prisoners, after its application for a visitation permit for family members. The Bursa Court of Execution responded by stating that on 16 October, a three-month disciplinary sanction had been ordered against Öcalan. No information was provided regarding the grounds for the sanction.

The Syrian Initiative for the Freedom of Leader Abdullah Öcalan stated that the successive 'penalties' imposed in İmralı, which have no legal basis, are a clear indication of the severe isolation policy implemented by the Turkish state.

"On the one hand, they claim that they want to start a peace process between Kurds and Turks, on the other hand, they are bombing and destroying Kurdish areas in Northern and Eastern Syria, Southern Kurdistan and Shengal with drones, warplanes and heavy weapons. Kurds are accused of terrorism and new disciplinary sanctions are being imposed on Leader Abdullah Öcalan," said the statement made by the Initiative on Sunday.

The Initiative emphasised that the struggle within the framework of the global campaign 'Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan, a Political Solution to the Kurdish Question', which has entered its second year, should be expanded. The statement called on international institutions, organisations and councils to fulfil their responsibilities against the Turkish state's torture in İmralı.



## 'Freedom for Öcalan' vigil in Strasbourg in its 646th week

ANF - Starsbourg - 6 November 2024

Under the leadership of the Initiative for the Freedom of Abdullah Öcalan, a 'Freedom Vigil' has been held in Strasbourg, France since 25 June 2012 in order to ensure the physical freedom of Abdullah Öcalan and to end the isolation regime imposed on him in the İmralı Island Prison in Turkey where he has been held since his handover to Turkey as a result of an international conspiracy in 1999.

In its 645th week, Nedim Çorak, Muzaffer Çınar, Deniz Erkilic on behalf of St. Gallen Regional Assemblies took over the vigil action, which is undertaken by a group from different countries of Europe every week.

A statement made by the group said, 'As the Kurdish people, we are making a declaration of will. Our leader is our will. We are behind all the decisions he will take. All Kurds are standing up for the physical freedom of our leader. We must continue our work.'

The activists called for strong participation in the central rally to take place in Cologne on 16 November.

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## Families once again apply to go to Imrali

ANF - Istanbul - 8 November 2024

Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan's brother Mehmet Öcalan and his guardian Mazlum Dinç applied to the Bursa Public Prosecutor's Office and the Imralı Prison Directorate requesting a visit.

In addition, Ömer Hayri Konar's sister Emine Konar, Hamili Yıldırım's brother Polat Yıldırım and Veysi Aktaş's sister Melihe Çetin also applied to the prosecutor's office and the prison directorate requesting a visit.

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## Prisons

### Solidarity action with prisoner on hunger strike in Greece

ANF - Athens - 4 November 2024

Kurdish supporters have gathered to demand the release of Mehmet Çelik, a Kurdish political refugee and father of two, who is currently held at the Foreigners' Centre in the Petrou Ralli area of Athens, protesting his detention without grounds.

The protesters carried a banner that read "Freedom for Mehmet Çelik," and chanted slogans in support of Çelik. In response, detainees inside the centre waved and raised victory signs from the windows. During the protest, Çelik's message, shared through his lawyer, was read aloud in both English and Turkish.

### **I was victimized for 26 months without any reason**

In his message, Çelik explained that he and his family, who are from Amed, were subjected to the oppression, torture and massacres carried out by Turkish fascism against Kurds.

Çelik wrote that their house was burned down in 1993 and their family was forcibly displaced from their village. One of his siblings was murdered on September 15, 2015, and another, who was studying at uni-

versity, was arrested and sentenced to 26 years in prison. The refugee added that the state threatened to force them into being spies, they arrested and tortured them, and that he had to go abroad in 2021 because there was no security of life in his country.

Çelik wrote: "While going abroad, the boat broke down in international waters. A fuel boat passing by rescued all the passengers and delivered us to the Crete-Chania police station. The police arrested me on suspicion of helping the captains just because I had a Turkish ID. I was detained for 26 months despite nobody giving any negative statements about me. On December 7, 2023, I was acquitted in court. It was proven that I was innocent. Despite this, I was victimized for 26 months. On December 8, 2023, I was detained at the Chania police station because I did not have documents. I stayed at the Chania police station for a total of 75 days. Then I was brought to the Athens Aldagapon branch. I was held in Aldagapon for 55 days and then taken to the Mandaleza camp. I was held in the camp from April 16, 2024, to October 3, 2024. Since October 4, 2024, I have been held again at the Athens Aldagapon branch."

### **Not a precautionary measure but a punishment**

Mehmet Çelik wrote that he is in detention for no reason, and explained the reason for going on hunger strike: "My detention has gone beyond being a precautionary measure for the Greek police and has turned into a punishment. I have been victimized because I have been held in prison and a police station for 3 years without a reason. I no longer have the financial means to support my family and children. Therefore, my family is also victimized. In order for my victimization to end as soon as possible, I went on an indefinite hunger strike on October 30, 2024. I will continue my action until my demand is met."

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## **Women prisoners in Iran's Evin Prison call for action for Pakshan Azizi sentenced to death**

ANF - 8 November 2024

Gulrox Irayi, Nahid Hudaco, Warisha Moradi, Meryem Yehwi, Reyhana Ensari, Sakine Perwana and Nesrin Hezri Cewadi, who are held in Evin prison, made a statement regarding the death sentence against Kurdish journalist Pakshan Azizi.

The statement condemned the death sentence and called on everyone to take action against it. The statement called on the international community to recognise Pakshan Azizi as a community volunteer and to prevent the death penalty.

### **Background**

Pakshan Azizi is a social worker and also worked as a journalist. In August last year, she was arrested in Tehran by agents of the Ministry of Intelligence and was severely tortured both physically and psychologically for weeks. She is currently in the notorious Evin prison. On 23 July, a court in Iran's capital sen-

tenced Azizi to death by hanging for "armed rebellion against the system." Her file was sent to the Supreme Court 3 weeks ago.

She was accused, without evidence, of being a member of the Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan (PJAK). She herself denies the accusation as baseless and speaks of a political verdict. Trials in Iran are systematically unfair because prisoners are denied the right to due process, including access to legal counsel, and "confessions" extracted through torture are usually used as evidence for their conviction.

Pakhshan Azizi studied social work at Allameh Tabatabai University in Tehran, where she was first arrested in November 2009. She was accused of taking part in students' protests against the execution of Kurdish political prisoners. She was released on bail in March 2010.

Additionally, Azizi faces a new charge of "rioting in prison" in a case being handled by Branch 3 of the Evin Prosecutor's Office, allegedly related to the second round of the 2024 presidential election.

She had also been arrested previously, on November 16, 2009, and was released on bail after four months.

In early August 2024, Aziz Azizi (Pakhshan's father), Parshang Azizi (her sister), and Hossein Abbasi (her brother-in-law) were convicted in a joint case with Pakhshan Azizi. Each was sentenced by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court to one year in prison for the charge of "assisting a criminal to evade trial and conviction." On September 26, the Court of Appeals confirmed these rulings.

Aziz Azizi, Parshang Azizi, and Hossein Abbasi were arrested at the same time as Pakhshan Azizi and later released on bail.

On 26 September, Pakhshan Azizi was taken from Evîn Prison to a hospital after her health problems worsened and doctors advised that she should be treated in hospital.

On 23 September, a post on Pakhshan Azizi's digital media account stated that the journalist's request for treatment had been rejected.

The post said: "Pakhshan Azizi suffers from headaches and her family is ready to pay for her treatment, but she is still not allowed to see a doctor."

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## Military aggression and occupation

Turkish attacks on Amûdê leave over 70,000 people without water and electricity

ANF - Qamishlo - 2 November 2024

The Turkish state attacked the regions of Northern and Eastern Syria with heavy weapons between 23 and 27 October. The region's infrastructure, service centers, factories, and basic living centers were bombed by warplanes, drones, and helicopters. Many people were killed or injured in the attacks, and service centers were targeted.

A large part of the bakery in Amûdê was damaged. The 66/20 KF Electricity Station, which provides electricity to the district and approximately 188 villages, was out of service as a result of the attacks.

According to the Amûdê Council, 13,800 families or 70,000 people live in the city, villages, and towns.

The people of Amûdê meet their water needs from 24 wells with electric water pumps. However, the attack on the gas station left the people of the region without both electricity and water.

A woman named Xezale Kemal Ebas from Amûdê told ANHA that the people in the city have been without water since 24 October, and added: "Neighbors are drawing water from the wells they dug in the neighborhoods. The Turkish state attacked the people's basic sources of life and massacred people."

The hospital and bakery in the city have also been affected due to the electricity station being out of service.

According to Shamsedin Bîco, the manager of Amûdê Bakery, since the electricity was cut off, the bakery is now being operated using generators and bread is being produced from approximately 16 thousand tons of flour per day. The bread is being distributed to the people.

Bîco said: "The bakery now operates 24 hours a day without interruption thanks to the generators and well water. However, if the generators break down, we have no other alternative."

Amûdê Electricity Institution co-chair Siûd Elî said: "There was great damage to the Electricity Station. The attacks left the station out of service and the villages of Amûdê and Dirbêsiyê without electricity. Last year, the Turkish state attacked the station that provided electricity and water to Dirbêsiyê and Amûdê."

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## Guerrilla actions against Turkish occupation forces continue

ANF - Behdinan - 2 November 2024

The Press Centre of the People's Defence Forces (HPG) issued a statement providing information about the ongoing resistance of the guerrillas and the attacks by the Turkish army in the guerrilla-held Medya Defence Zones in southern Kurdistan (northern Iraq).

According to the statement, guerrillas from the Free Women's Troops (YJA Star) targeted and damaged a position of the Turkish invasion troops at Girê Bahar in the west of the Zap region with heavy weapons on 29 October.



On 31 October, guerrillas intervened against the military road construction in the area and struck the construction crew from two flanks. Two Turkish army-deployed excavators were destroyed, killing one driver and wounding the other. An armoured car sent to protect the construction crew was also hit, wounding four more of the occupation troops.

According to the statement, the Turkish army has used banned explosives against guerrilla tunnels in the Lolan and Xakurke, Girê FM and Girê Bahar areas of Zap a total of 13 times in the last two days. On 27 October, 31 October and 1 November, fighter jets bombed areas in the Xakurke, Gare, Metîna, Zap and Qandil regions a total of 44 times. 19 further air strikes were carried out by attack helicopters in areas of Metîna and the western Zap region on 31 October and 1 November.

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## 20,206 people from Lebanon arrive in North-East Syria

ANF - 3 November 2024

The Crisis Desk established by the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria to deal with citizens returning from Lebanon announced that new groups including Syrian and Lebanese citizens have reached the region.

The Crisis Desk stated that the number of those coming from Lebanon has reached 20,206, including 87 Lebanese citizens. In addition, 28 bodies have been delivered to the region.

Citizens returning to northern and eastern Syria go either to their homes or their relatives. Those who have nowhere to go are settled in the centres prepared for them by the Autonomous Administration.

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## ‘Turkey attacks North-East Syria to disrupt the peace and security in the region’

ANF - Manbij - 3 November 2024

The occupying Turkish state continues its aggression against North and East Syria, targeting regional infrastructure and strategic centres and leaving civilians dead or injured.

Ezab El Ebûd, Co-Chair of the Executive Council of Manbij Canton, spoke to ANHA about the attacks of the Turkish state on the region.

Ezab El Ebûd said, “All cities and towns in North and East Syria were bombed. The villages of Manbij Canton were also shelled. The crimes against humanity committed by the Turkish state against the people of the region reveal its mentality. The people of Minbij and the Autonomous Administration know very

well what the Turkish state seeks by targeting the infrastructure of the region. With the attacks, it wants to put people into difficulty and drive them away from the Autonomous Administration. But they will not succeed, because the people of the region will not abandon their lands no matter what.”

Ezab El Ebûd pointed out that the attacks of the Turkish state only benefit their partner, ISIS. She continued: “ISIS benefits from the attacks of the Turkish state. While the international community is interested in the wars in Russia-Ukraine and Gaza, the Turkish state is constantly attacking the region and targeting the democratic project of the region. With these attacks, it wants to incite turmoil in the region and disrupt peace and security.”



## Autonomous Administration: Til Kocher border crossing should be opened for the delivery of aid

ANF- 3 November 2024

According to the latest data from the Crisis Desk established by the Democratic Autonomous Administration, which continues to host refugees from Lebanon, 20,206 people from Lebanon have arrived in the region so far.

Şêxmûs Ehmed, Co-Chair of the Refugee Affairs Office of the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, said that the Autonomous Administration has opened its doors to the returning Syrians since the outbreak of the war in Lebanon.

Şêxmûs Ehmed noted that the Autonomous Administration has established centres and camps for those who have no relatives and homes in the region, and noted that more than 50 families were settled in Ed-naniyê Camp established in Raqqa by the Social Affairs and Labourers Committee of Raqqa Canton.

Şêxmûs Ehmed stated that the Autonomous Administration has provided the migrants and refugees with tents, food, health services, blankets and other needs from the first day. He added that concerned organisations did not provide assistance to the migrants staying in the camps, so the Autonomous Administration took the families settled in cities to the Mehmûdlî Camp in Tabqa Canton.

Şêxmûs Ehmed emphasised that after the families were settled in Mehmûdlî Camp, their names were registered, and they will be given a monthly allowance as well as daily bread and fuel aid at the beginning of December. He said that the Autonomous Administration has always offered solutions to humanitarian issues, but the Turkish state has attacked and bombed the strategic and economic infrastructure of the region.

Calling upon the international forces and humanitarian organisations of the UN, the Arab League and the European Union to take a serious stance against the attacks of the Turkish state, Şêxmûs Ehmed stated that the region needs international aid and protection. Ehmed said that international forces should open the Til Kocher border crossing for the passage of humanitarian aid to North and East Syria.



## Co-chair of Ezbe Town Council in Deir ez-Zor assassinated

ANF - Deir Ez-Zor - 4 November 2024

Xelef Elî El Hisên, Co-Chair of Ezbe Town Council in Deir ez-Zor, died in an attack by armed men on a motorbike.

Internal Security Forces launched an investigation into the incident.



## ‘Operation Enduring Security’ in Hol Camp and its vicinity launched

ANF - 6 November 2024

The Internal Security Forces, Women’s Protection Units (YPJ) and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) launched ‘Operation Enduring Security’ to search the Hol camp and its surroundings. The operation aims to pursue ISIS remnants and collaborators within the camp and secure the rural areas near the camp.

A press statement was made in Hol Camp regarding the operation. YPJ Press Officer Rûken Cemal and Internal Security Forces Management Member Qehreman Murad read the statement in Kurdish and Arabic, which said the following:

“Over the past year, ISIS terrorist cells have intensified attacks and movements in and around the al-Hol camp, particularly in the southern and northern countryside of Hol town. These cells have carried out numerous terrorist attacks against the camp IDPs and security forces and planned other attacks that were thwarted and their operatives were captured.

In response, our forces have conducted more intensive preemptive operations and sustained pressure on ISIS terrorist cells. This has yielded significant results, including the elimination of many cells and their leaders, and the prevention of attacks on security and stability, as well as on the people and the military and security forces.

Given the importance of the Hol camp and ISIS prisons, which hold ISIS detainees, ISIS has repeatedly attempted to reach the camp and mobilize its cells. The desert and remote areas in the countryside of Hol and Shaddadi have served as a hub for terrorist operations and the planning of attacks on camps and prisons. This has coincided with the movements of terrorist cells in and around the camp, as well as multiple escape attempts and efforts to sow chaos within certain sectors of the camp to distract the security forces responsible for its security.

With the world's attention focused on multiple wars in the Middle East, the possibility of ISIS resurgence remains a real threat, especially in remote areas where ISIS often resorts to planning attacks on prisons and camps. ISIS' goal is to reunite its elements with their families and revive their terrorist acts. This year has witnessed numerous attempts by ISIS to reach the Hol camp and prisons holding ISIS detainees in north and eastern Syria, which ISIS considers crucial strategic targets that are fueled by its propaganda.

In response to this threat, our forces, who have demonstrated professionalism and dedication in counter-ing the plans of ISIS terrorist cells, remain committed to pursuing ISIS and eradicating the sources of terrorism.

As a continuation of our ongoing struggle, and with the support and assistance of the international coalition forces, we announce today the launch of Operation Enduring Security to search the Hol camp and its surroundings. The operation aims to pursue ISIS remnants and collaborators within the camp and secure the rural areas near the camp.

This operation is based on information and confessions obtained from ISIS elements captured during previous operations, which indicate the resurgence of terrorist cell activity in desert areas and their planning of attacks. The treacherous attack on an Internal Security Forces patrol on the Hol-Shaddadi road on September 26, which resulted in the martyrdom of three members, serves as a stark reminder that ISIS terrorism continues to pose a threat to the region, and the necessary to initiate a large-scale operation to pursue and eliminate terrorist cells.

On this basis, the forces of Operation Enduring Security, comprising the Internal Security Forces, Women's Protection Units (YPJ) and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) reaffirm their determination to ensure the success of the operation and strengthen the fight against ISIS to protect the region from attempts to undermine security and stability."

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## 20 ISIS members captured in 'Operation Enduring Security' in Hol Camp

ANF - Heseke - 6 November 2024

Earlier today, the Internal Security Forces, Women's Protection Units (YPJ) and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) launched 'Operation Enduring Security' to search the Hol camp and its surroundings. The operation aims to pursue ISIS remnants and collaborators within the camp and secure the rural areas near the camp.

20 ISIS members have been captured so far and one was killed. In addition, many weapons and ammunition were seized during the operation.

In the multi-directional operation covering an area of 100 square kilometres, including Hol, Til Hemîs, Heseke, Erîşa and Shaddadi, the movements and actions of ISIS gangs in these regions are monitored.

The operation is based on information and confessions obtained from ISIS elements captured during previous operations, which indicate the resurgence of terrorist cell activity in desert areas and their planning of attacks. The treacherous attack on an Internal Security Forces patrol on the Hol-Shaddadi road on September 26, which resulted in the martyrdom of three members, serves as a stark reminder that ISIS terrorism continues to pose a threat to the region, and the necessary to initiate a large-scale operation to pursue and eliminate terrorist cells.

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## ‘Operation Enduring Security’ in Hol countryside continues on day 2

ANF - Heseke - 7 November 2024

The Internal Security Forces, Women’s Protection Units (YPJ) and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) launched ‘Operation Enduring Security’ to search the Hol camp and its surroundings on Wednesday. The operation aims to pursue ISIS remnants and collaborators within the camp and secure the rural areas near the camp.

On the first day of Operation Enduring Security, the forces successfully executed sweep operations and pursued remnants of ISIS terrorist cells, adhering to the approved plan.

The sweep operation extended to vast areas in the northern and southern countryside of Hol, encompassing the Syrian-Iraqi border region and numerous natural caves and caches identified as potential terrorist hideouts.

The operation forces conducted raids on several houses used as shelters by ISIS elements, engaging in clashes with two terrorist cells that opened fire. As a result, one terrorist was eliminated, and another was wounded during the clashes.

The operation forces captured 40 ISIS cell terrorists and seized a quantity of weapons and ammunition.

“We remain fully committed to the successful execution of this operation and will continue to work diligently to eliminate the threat of ISIS terrorism and secure the region,” said the statement by the Operation Room of Enduring Security.

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## Turkish army continues operation on Bagok massif

ANF - 8 November 2024

An operation by the Turkish army that was launched more than a week ago in the area surrounding the Bagok massif in the Kurdish district of Nusaybin (Nisêbîn) has been expanded. Mezopotamya Agency cited local sources saying that the area of operations has included at least nine villages since Thursday. At the start of the operation on Monday last week, the operation was still focused on three areas.

The towns affected by the military operation in the south of the province of Mardin (Mêrdîn) are currently Mesîlka, Çalê Kevir, Mahlo, Himyê Xezin, Mahsere Simaqa, Benderke Çiyayê Bagok and Marîn.

In Xirbê Mişka and Sedderîye, where the offensive was launched, the operation appears to have ended. According to the report, the remaining villages are surrounded by the army. In addition to regular soldiers, paramilitary special units of the gendarmerie are also involved in the operation.

The aim of the operation was to locate the positions of the Kurdish PKK guerrillas. Military helicopters and reconnaissance drones are also being used for this purpose. Last week, the Barahawşo region, which is home to a cemetery where fallen PKK members are buried, was bombed from the air. A few days before the attack began, on 25 October, guerrilla commander Memed Cûdî was killed in Mardin in unclear circumstances.



## Operation Enduring Security: Phase two launched in Hol Camp

ANF - Heseke - 8 November 2024

The Internal Security Forces, Women's Protection Units (YPJ) and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) launched 'Operation Enduring Security' to search the Hol camp and its surroundings on Wednesday.

In a statement, the SDF said: "On the second day of Operation Enduring Security, the participating forces successfully achieved most of their goals. They conducted extensive sweep and search operations across large swathes of the southern and northern countryside of al-Hol city. By clearing rural and desert areas, the stage was set for the second phase: a thorough inspection of the Hol camp itself."

The statement added: "Additionally, the participating forces captured seven ISIS cell terrorists who had recently concealed in remote areas. These terrorists had exploited the geographical conditions to plan and execute terrorist acts, including extortion and assassinations targeting both civilians and security personnel. The forces also seized a significant quantity of weapons, ammunition, and military logistical supplies. Two hidden caches, prepared to conceal weapons, were also uncovered in two houses.

With these latest captures, the total number of terrorist elements captured during the first two days of the operation now stands at 47."

The statement continued: "On the morning of the third day, the forces commenced combing and searching Hol city and its camp. In the early hours, they focused on the so-called "female migrants" (ISIS fami-

lies) section in the camp, starting with updating and reorganizing the data of the ISIS families. Operations in this section are still ongoing.

The forces of Operation Enduring Security express their gratitude to the residents of al-Hol's southern and northern countryside for their cooperation and support during the combing and searching operations. Their assistance was instrumental in identifying terrorist elements. The forces reaffirm their commitment to protecting the local population and preventing ISIS cells from operating and threatening the region."

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## KDP expels the spokesperson and members of the HDP Representative Office in Hewlêr

ANF - Hewler - 8 November 2024

Hikmet Hatip, Aydın Yalvaç, Sıtkı Vakar and Nasır Yağız, spokespersons and members of HDP's Kurdistan Region Representative Office in Hewlêr (Erbil), were forcibly taken out of the city by the security forces of the ruling KDP.

HDP and DEM Party Spokespersons Hikmet Hatip and Sıtkı Yalvaç, as well as HDP Kurdistan Region Representative Office executives Aydın Yalvaç and Nasır Yağız were summoned to security centres by the KDP's security forces (Asayish) in Hewlêr.

The politicians who went to the Asayish Centre were forcibly taken in two separate vehicles without any notification and left outside Hewlêr, close to the borders of Sulaymaniyah.

The politicians taken out of Hewlêr are expected to make a press statement in Sulaymaniyah in the coming hours.

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## Femicide

### KJK pays tribute to Mother of Plaza de Mayo Mirta Acuna De Baravalle

ANF - 3 November 2024

Mirta Acuna De Baravalle, one of the founders of the Argentinian Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, passed away on Saturday at the age of 99.

The KJK (Kurdish Women's Movement) published a message to pay tribute to the Peace Mother and said: "We learned with sadness that Mirta Acuna De Baravalle, one of the founders of the Mothers of Plaza De Mayo, passed away .

We offer our condolences to the Argentinian women resisters and the Mothers of Plaza De Mayo through the person of resistance activist Mirta Acuña de Baravalle, and share your great pain.

Mirta Acuna de Baravalle was a Plaza De Mayo mother who spent her life in struggle from 1997 to November 1, 2024. Until her death, she was the voice of all mothers and grandmothers who lost their children and grandchildren to oppression and fascism."

The statement added; "The first action against human rights violations during the junta period in Argentina was organized by the Plaza De Mayo Mothers. These mothers, whose children and grandchildren were forcibly disappeared, suffered great injustice because they wanted to learn the fate of their children. This resistance and determination inspired the struggles of many people.

Mirta Acuña de Baravalle maintained her friendship with the people of Kurdistan, especially the Saturday Mothers. However, unfortunately, despite all her efforts, resistance, struggle, effort, ambition and longing, she could not reunite with her grandchild."

The Kurdish Women's Movement said: "We are followers of the truth march and struggle of mothers like Mirta Acuña de Baravalle. We will grow their dreams of a just and free life at every moment of our struggle.

Yes, our valuable friend, defender of justice and freedom, we will never forget you. You have proven that the struggle for justice is the most valuable and sacred thing. Do not worry, our mother of resistance; we are loading your dream into our dreams. We will keep you alive in our struggle. Your flag of resistance is in our hands. We will definitely bring the cause of justice to success by raising your white headscarves."



## 48 women murdered in Turkey in October

ANF - Istanbul - 5 November 2024

At least 48 women were murdered by men in Turkey in October, according to a report by the 'We Will Stop Femicide Platform' (KCDP). The report by the Istanbul-based women's rights organisation contains data on all femicides recorded by the police or published in the media. However, the actual number of femicides is likely to be significantly higher.

According to the KCDP, a further 23 women died under suspicious circumstances last month. Experience shows that perpetrators often stage scenes to make femicide look like suicide, an accident or natural causes. "According to our data, these were the highest numbers we have ever published in a monthly report," the platform emphasised.



Nineteen of the 48 murdered women were allegedly murdered by their husbands, partners or ex-partners. In most of the other cases, the suspects were close relatives, including brothers and sons.

“These women were killed because they wanted to make decisions about their lives, because they wanted a divorce, because they refused to reconcile, because they did not want to marry or enter into a relationship,” the report said. In 31 of the recorded femicides, it is unclear why the women were killed. The platform said that this is because patriarchal violence and femicides are being hidden and covered up in Turkey. “However, as long as the perpetrators are not identified and the motives for the murders are not clarified, as long as there are no fair trials and the suspects and perpetrators do not receive truly deterrent sentences, as long as no precautions are taken, the violence will take on even greater dimensions,” the organisation said.

The report also shows that women are least safe in their own homes: 54 percent of women killed by men in Turkey in the previous month were murdered in their own homes. Other murders occurred in public places such as parks and cemeteries or on the street. In 33 cases, the victims were shot, twelve women were stabbed, the rest were strangled, beaten to death or run over. At least 310 women in Turkey have been the victim of a patriarchally motivated murder since the beginning of the year. 183 more women have died suspicious deaths.



## TAJÊ: We say 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadî' violence against women

ANF - Shengal - 6 November 2024

The Free Yazidi Women's Movement (TAJÊ) is running a campaign in Shengal until 25 November under the slogan "With Jin, Jiyan, Azadî against violence against women". The planned activities were presented on Tuesday in the old market of the city in northern Iraq that was destroyed by ISIS in 2014.

TAJÊ spokeswoman Riham Hico said that the Yazidi women's movement invited all women in Iraq to take part in the "Jin, Jiyan, Azadî" campaign for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November). Hico said: "The 21st century will become the century of the women's revolution with the common struggle of women and the unity of the peoples. We are fighting for a free and democratic life."

### Program of activities against violence against women

As Riham Hico announced, various activities are planned in the Şengal region. The activists want to distribute brochures on the subject of violence and a life in free partnership on the streets and use posters to raise awareness of the issue. In addition, seminars will be offered at various locations. A three-day training course is aimed specifically at men, while another seminar will be held for the Asayîşa Êzidxanê security forces. Other program items include panel discussions in Shengal and Mosul.

There will be a separate educational program for young women and a demonstration on 18 November. The young women want to exchange ideas online with other organizations and talk about Abdullah Öcalan's perspectives on freedom for women.

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## DEM Party Women's Assembly: Government is trying to legalize misogyny

ANF - 6 November 2024

The Women's Assembly of the DEM Party issued a statement condemning the AKP-MHP government for trying to reinforce its "male-dominated" agenda through legislation, particularly targeting women's rights. "We will never allow this," they declared, specifically opposing the reintroduction of Article 187, which mandates that women adopt their husband's surname upon marriage.

In the statement, the Women's Assembly reiterated their firm stance against any legal framework that confines women to family roles, upholds male dominance, or denies women's autonomy. "We reject all legislation that defines half of society – women – solely within the family structure, reinforcing male authority," the statement said.

The assembly highlighted that recent legislative moves by the AKP-MHP coalition aim to legally institutionalize sexism by undermining women's rights, with the proposed changes to Article 187 of the Civil Code, titled "Woman's Surname," as a recent example. They affirmed that this approach "fails to recognize women as individuals, instead defining them within the confines of family and through men."

### 'We will expand our struggle in the streets'

The Women's Assembly pledged to intensify their resistance, committing to take their struggle to the streets to protect women's rights.

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## Human Rights Violations

Family able to take the body of HPG guerrilla Nurşin Bedir after three months wait

ANF - Şırnak - 2 November 2024

The body of HPG guerrilla Nurşin Bedir (Rêgeş Qerqelî), who was buried in the Cemetery for the Nameless in Şirnak was eventually recovered by his family.

The HPG guerrilla fell as a martyr in clashes that broke out on 31 July in the Elkê district of Şirnak.

The remains were delivered to his family after a DNA matching.

Bedir's family arrived in Şirnak from Van, where the HPG guerrilla will finally be laid to rest.

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## 500 people abducted in the occupied territories in Northern Syria this year

ANF - 2 November 2024

The Violations Documentation Centre announced its report on the abductions committed by the occupying Turkish state and allied mercenaries in the occupied territories in northern Syria.

The report emphasised that as armed groups continue to arrest and kidnap citizens with the support of the Turkish state, the number of violent murders, crimes, kidnappings, explosions and assassinations in the Afrin region and in all regions of Northern Syria occupied by Turkish forces has increased.

According to the report, the occupying Turkish forces and Syrian armed groups, the so-called Syrian National Army, and related security institutions have escalated their violations and abduction of citizens for ransom.

“As the Violations Documentation Centre, we are in contact with the families and relatives of those abducted. The abductions of citizens in these regions are not based on the decisions of prosecutors' offices. Most of them are held hostage illegally. Many captives and abductees have not been contacted and there is no information about their fate. Moreover, most of the accusations against those kidnapped are baseless, i.e. lies,” the statement said.

According to the report, more than 501 people have been abducted in Afrin and other areas since the beginning of this year.

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## Gendarmes raid house where journalists Ren and Yıldız stayed in Adıyaman

ANF - 2 November 2024

JinNews journalist Derya Ren went to Adıyaman (Semsûr) to follow some news. The house she was staying in, together with another journalist from Pirha News Agency, Kamber Yıldız, was raided by gendarmes.

A few minutes after the gendarmerie raid, the house Ren and Yıldız were staying at was raided again by a different gendarmerie team. While the gendarmerie wanted to conduct another General Information Scan (GBS) on the journalists, they asked them where they had gone and what news they were following.

The Dicle Fırat Journalists Association issued a statement saying: "We condemn the pressure on our colleagues. The aim of the raid and threats was to prevent our colleagues from reporting. We will not bow to this pressure and threats."



## 11 journalists sentenced to prison in Turkey in October

ANF - Amed - 2 November 2024

Dicle Fırat Journalists' Association (DFG) announced its report on rights violations against journalists in Turkey in October.

"In October, 9 of our colleagues were prevented from covering the news and were subjected to violence and threats by the police. The most obvious example of this was the attacks against Free Press employees. On 13 October, the police attacked a rally in Amed (tr: Diyarbakır) against the isolation of PKK Leader Abdullah Öcalan and prevented four female journalists from covering. On 15 October, 3 journalists were prevented from covering the 'No to war, peace now' demonstration in Başverimli town of Silopi district of Şırnak province and were detained. The government targets journalists by increasing the pressure and attacks against those who want peace. On the one hand, it talks about 'peace', and on the other hand, it increases the pressure and attacks against those who want peace. In October, 9 journalists were detained, 11 were subjected to ill-treatment and 7 were threatened," said the DFG report released on Saturday.

The report stated that 104 journalists were put on trial in October, 11 journalists were sentenced to 19 years, 8 months and 13 days in prison, 7 journalists were subject to investigations and 6 journalists were prosecuted.

'While the government banned access to 119 social media accounts, many citizens were detained on the grounds of their social media posts,' the report said, drawing attention to the crackdown on Yeni Yaşam newspaper and Açık Radyo.

"One of the important developments in October was the Parliamentary Justice Committee passing the 'Influence Agency' law proposal, which was opposed by journalists and the opposition," the report noted.

The report concluded with the following data on rights violations against journalists during the month of October: "1 journalist was attacked, 1 journalist's house was raided, 9 journalists were detained, one jour-

nalist was imprisoned, 11 journalists were threatened, 9 journalists were prevented from covering the news, 7 journalists were subjected to ill-treatment. 38 journalists are currently behind bars.”

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## Music instructor sentenced to 1 year and 15 days in prison for singing a Kurdish song

ANF - Bitlis - 5 November 2024

Cesim Başboğa, one of the instructors at Serhed Cultural Association in Tatvan district of Bitlis, was sentenced to 1 year and 15 days in prison for the song ‘Serhildan jiyan e (To live is to resist)’. A lawsuit was filed against Başboğa on 8 September on the allegation of ‘making propaganda for a chain of illegal organisations’ after he sang the song at the congress of the Peoples’ Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party). The indictment claimed that the Kurdish song had ‘different meanings’ and therefore constituted ‘illegal organisation propaganda’. At the first hearing held at Bitlis 2nd Heavy Penal Court on 1 November, Başboğa was sentenced to 1 year and 15 days in prison for ‘making propaganda for an illegal organisation’.

Başboğa stated that the reason for the sentence reveals the state's approach towards Kurdish culture and language: “We will continue to sing our songs against investigations and pressures. They cannot intimidate us and make us take a step back in this way.”

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## Turkish court orders confiscation of Yeni Yaşam newspaper

ANF - 7 November 2024

The Büyükçekmece Criminal Court of Peace on Duty issued a decision to confiscate the 4 November issue of the Yeni Yaşam Newspaper on the pretext that it contained a photograph of Abdullah Öcalan.

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## Political genocide: Many taken into custody in İzmir

ANF - İzmir - 7 November 2024

Turkish police raided several houses in the western province of İzmir in the morning and detained a number of people.

Those taken into custody include Democratic Regions Party (DBP) Aegean Region Representative Aslan Kızıl, Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP) Party Assembly Member Aydın Çetinkaya, Avesta Language and

Culture Research Association Co-Chair Ramazan Kaygısız, Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) Menemen District Co-Chair Ekrem Karakoç, Aegean Association of Families of Prisoners and Those Convicted (EGE TUHAYDER) former executives Selma Altan, Hediye Tekin and İsmet Akdemir.

Those detained on the grounds of 'being members of an illegal organisation' were taken to İzmir Provincial Security Directorate.

A 24-hour 'lawyer restriction' order was imposed on the file.

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## Trustees and resistance of people

### DEM Party: The address is Abdullah Öcalan

ANF - İzmir - 3 November 2024

The İzmir Provincial Organisation of the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) held its 3rd Ordinary Congress with the slogan 'We are organising against war, exploitation, oppression and poverty, we are marching towards freedom'.

DEM Party Spokesperson Ayşegül Doğan, Group Deputy Chair Sezai Temelli, politician Gültan Kışanak, MPs, Free Women's Movement (Tevgera Jinên Azad, TJA) activists, Peace Mothers, political prisoners released after 30 years, representatives of civil society organisations attended the congress.

Speaking here, DEM Party Spokesperson Ayşegül Doğan stated the following:

"Peace will come to this land. It is time now. What is going on in Ankara? Nothing at all. Whatever is to happen will happen with us. I wish I could announce here today that 'a new process has begun for a democratic solution to the Kurdish question'. But there is no development that we can call a new process yet. Amidst all these developments, our Urfa MP went to visit Mr Öcalan and brought his greetings. He conveyed a message against the speculations. The best development was this meeting and the message that came from it.

Do you want to send the message that a Kurd cannot govern Esenyurt?' Is the state as a whole ready to solve the Kurdish question in a democratic way? If the state is ready, we need to put this promise into practice. We said, 'there are conflicting sides to this issue'. If there is to be peace, the parties need to establish dialogue. Everyone can make new beginnings by learning lessons from the past. If you have a politicisation programme, the address is Mr Abdullah Öcalan in İmralı Island Prison. This truth has resisted the years. The reality of Öcalan is such a reality. They attacked us so much because we showed this truth."

Speaking after, DEM Party Group Deputy Chairman Sezai Temelli stated that Öcalan has been generating the politics of peace for 25 years and said, "Can you tell us about a good development for 25 years? What

positive development is there in the Middle East? Every day we wake up with a new crisis. The economy has collapsed, we talk about misery and hunger. The resources of this country go to war, not to the people. This is the economy created by those who feed on war. They continue to spend resources on UAVs and UCAVs. For 25 years, injustices have been produced every day. We will continue to defend the democratic nation against the nation state. We will defend Rojava and Bashur (South Kurdistan). We will call Rojavas the whole Middle East territories against those who see the Middle East as an arms market. The way to make the whole Middle East Rojavan is for the peoples to claim their own destiny. We have an idea, and we will continue to greet the owner of that idea at every opportunity. Öcalan will come out, speak and the world will change. We will win, we will definitely win.”

After the speeches, Selçuk Odabaşı and Fulya Erdoğan were elected as co-chairs of the DEM Party İzmir provincial organization.



## Trustees appointed to Mardin Metropolitan Municipality, as well as Batman and Halfeti municipalities

ANF - 4 November 2024

The Turkish Ministry of Interior usurped the will of the people and appointed trustees to the Metropolitan Municipalities of Mardin (Mêrdîn), as well as the municipalities of Batman (Êlih) and Halfeti (Xelfetî). The three municipalities were legitimately run by the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party), which had won the elections on 31 March 2024.

### Mardin

The police blockaded the municipality building in Mardin early on Monday morning. The notification of the appointment of the trustee was delivered to co-mayor Ahmet Türk.

Co-mayor Türk shared the following message on his social media: "Never give up. We will not step back from the struggle for democracy, peace and freedom. We will not allow the usurpation of the people's will. Know this!"

### Batman

A trustee was also appointed to Batman Municipality. The municipality building was blockaded.

Gülistan Sönük, co-mayor of Batman, wrote on her social media: "We won our municipality with the highest vote rate in Turkey in the 31 March elections. We won thanks to the efforts of women, young people and our citizens. The municipality has been usurped as of this morning without any notification. We have not accepted and will not accept this plundering and usurping regime. Municipalities belong to the people."

## Halfeti

A third trustee was appointed to Halfeti municipality, in Urfa (Riha). The municipality building was blockaded early in the morning, and co-mayor Mehmet Karayılan was taken into custody. People are not allowed to go near the municipality building.

Halfeti municipality co-mayor Mehmet Karayılan said: "This has been going on for years. The will of the people to govern themselves has always been a reality. Likewise, there is always a mindset that cannot accept this. This is oppression. Our people do not accept oppression. We will be with the people until the end. We will not step back. We will always remain among the people and protect their values. We are the co-mayors elected by the people, and even though we are not officially in office, we will continue to be with the people."

Halfeti municipality co-mayor Saniye Bayram also protested the appointment of a trustee and the seizure of the municipality. Bayram, who went to the front of the municipality building, said: "Shame on you! Don't do this. You sent 10 inspectors and they didn't find anything. The [previous] trustee stole from here, and you didn't do anything. [The previous trustee] Şeref Albayrak stole as much as the world. These people woke up. If there will be an election tomorrow, we will win again. We will always win."

The Turkish Ministry of Interior cited the lawsuits filed against the municipality co-mayors as the reason for the seizure decision.



## DEM Party: Everyone should raise their voices against the illegitimate seizure of the will of people

ANF - Ankara - 4 November 2024

The DEM Party Central Executive Board issued a written statement to protest the appointment of trustees to Mardin Metropolitan Municipality as well as Batman and Halfeti municipalities.

The statement said: "This morning, following the appointment of trustees to Hakkari and Esenyurt, the AKP-MHP government usurped Mardin Metropolitan Municipality, Batman Municipality, and Urfa Halfeti Municipality. The significance of this coup taking place on the anniversary of the November 4, 2016, parliamentary coup, aimed at undermining the will of the Kurdish people, cannot be overlooked. This is a continuation of the same failed attempts at dismantling Kurdish in democratic politics that have persisted since 1994 - a repetitive and bankrupt strategy spanning 30 years. We must reiterate that this is an outright attack against the will of the people. Previous interventions of imposed trustee administrations were firmly rejected by the people, leading to their resounding defeat in subsequent elections, where voters decisively demonstrated their support for our party.



The insistence on using the imposed trustee administrations, which consistently fail at the ballot box, underscores the political exhaustion and desperation of the AKP-MHP regime. The regime has turned usurpation through the judiciary and law enforcement, which it could not win through elections, into a de facto regime. This latest assault also constitutes a serious violation of the Kurdish people's right to vote and be elected. By besieging municipalities and undermining local governments, turning them into virtual police outposts, it is a stark declaration that the democratic legitimacy of the current political regime has come to an end."

The statement continued: "It is deeply ironic that those who claim to oppose authoritarianism and coups have themselves become agents of pure and unchecked authoritarianism. History shows that no power has ever thrived on oppression and tyranny in this land, and this one will be no different. The people of Turkey will never submit to such despotism. In the last local elections, the government faced significant losses due to these tactics, and the longer it insists on this path, the greater its losses will be.

The trustee coup is a crisis of democracy and freedom for all 85 million citizens, and if left unchecked, it will go beyond Kurdish regions and affect municipalities across Turkey. Regardless of party or ideology, this attack now poses a direct threat to the right of all Turkish citizens to vote, be elected, and exercise their political will. We therefore call upon all democratic segments of society to raise their voices and stand against this illegitimate coup mentality with the utmost urgency.

Defending the people's will and safeguarding local administrations are fundamental to our party's mission. These methods and attacks not only undermine any pursuit of dialogue and reconciliation but also raise serious doubts about the sincerity of those in power. While we were hoping for a hand extended for peace and resolution, a hand was instead extended to seize the people's will. While we sought dialogue and negotiation, we see traps being set up to undermine the people's hopes for resolution. We will not surrender; nor will we step back from our struggle. If the government believes it will succeed with these bankrupt tactics, it is gravely mistaken. Our people will continue to defend their will under all circumstances."

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## CHP's Özel and Imamoğlu protest seizure of DEM Party-run municipalities

ANF - 4 November 2024

CHP chair Özgür Özel and Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Mayor Ekrem Imamoğlu have voiced strong objections to the seizure of DEM Party-run municipalities, including Mardin Metropolitan Municipality, Batman (Êlih) Municipality, and Halfeti (Xelfetî) Municipality in Urfa (Riha). The recent appointment of trustees to replace elected officials has been met with criticism from both leaders, who argue that these actions undermine democratic processes and the will of voters.

Özel expressed his frustration on social media, saying, "This morning, two more elected mayors, including Ahmet Türk—one of the most prominent voices for peace and dialogue in Turkish politics—were replaced by government-appointed trustees. We are facing a shameless, unscrupulous force that resorts to undemo-

cratic means to seize municipalities it can't win in elections. Let this be a warning: our patience is running over. Whatever it takes to fight this injustice will be done."

Istanbul mayor, Ekrem İmamoğlu echoed these sentiments, accusing the government of losing control and acting erratically. He announced an extraordinary meeting of the Turkish Municipalities Union (TBB) Executive Council to address the issue. In a social media post, he remarked: "Just a week ago, Ahmet Türk was mediating between families on behalf of the Vice President. Now he's branded a terrorist. In a democracy, the continuity of voter representation is essential. If an elected official is removed, their replacement should also be an elected member, typically from the council. The right to choose belongs solely to the voters. I am returning from the UN Habitat meeting in Cairo tonight and will convene an emergency TBB session on Tuesday."



## Kurdistan People's Initiative: We will be on the streets until we take back our municipalities

ANF - 4 November 2024

The Kurdistan People's Initiative made a statement against the seizure of Mardin, Batman and Halfeti municipalities from the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party).

The statement by the Kurdistan People's Initiative is as follows:

"The fascist AKP-MHP government has once again shown its Kurdish enemy face. The fascist regime, which keeps our leader in isolation and resorts to all kinds of dirty cooperation to destroy our guerrillas, now wants to seize the cities that our people have won with great labour.

Mardin, Batman and Halfeti were won by the resistance and labour of the people. Appointing trustees is not recognising the will of the people. We will not recognise the AKP-MHP government that does not recognise the will of the Kurdish people. We call on all our people, especially young people and women, to embrace their will. We will be on the streets until we take back our municipalities. We will not recognise those who do not recognise us. Let's claim our will and turn all squares and streets into areas of action."



## Gülistan Kılıç Koçyiğit: Today is the day to resist together

ANF - Ankara - 4 November 2024

The Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) Group Deputy Chair Gülistan Kılıç Koçyiğit held a press conference in the Parliament regarding the usurpation of the Mardin, Batman and Halfeti municipalities. Calling the trustee regime "an unnamed state of emergency", Koçyiğit stated the following:

“Having lost all the resources of corruption and plunder in the 31 March elections, they have once again put the trustees in place to seize the resources of the people. Today is the 4th of November and we woke up to great lawlessness again. Of course, this date has a special feature. On 4 November 2016, a great coup was carried out against the HDP. Co-Chairs Figen Yüksekdağ and Selahattin Demirtaş and many deputies were detained in a simultaneous operation and then imprisoned. This morning, on the 8th anniversary of this political genocide operation, Turkey opened its eyes to new lawlessness and a new coup. It is no coincidence that the date of 4th of November was chosen for the appointment of trustees.

We are the only focus of struggle that resists all these conspiracies, all these usurpations, all these antidemocratic practices and all these coups. Those who did not make a sound when trustees were appointed in Kurdish cities in the past were shocked when a trustee was appointed in Esenyurt, Istanbul. When trustees were appointed in Diyarbakır, Van and Mardin back in 2016, we said, ‘If the will of the people of Diyarbakır and Van is being seized today, the will of İzmir, Adana and Mersin will also be seized tomorrow’. We know very well that the issue is actually the seizure of the resources of a district like Esenyurt, which is one of the greatest sources of income. They have turned Turkey into a country of trustees for their own survival and their march to power.”

Gülistan Kılıç Koçyiğit pointed out that Ahmet Türk had recently participated in the reconciliation between Şenyaşar and Yıldız families in Urfa and said, “Was it not Ahmet Türk who was in the same frame with the Vice President? Did Ahmet Türk, who made peace a week ago, become a terrorist a week later?”

Gülistan Kılıç Koçyiğit continued: “Today is the day to resist together. All political parties from the westernmost to the easternmost part of Turkey, NGOs, women's organisations, legal organisations, everyone who speaks for rights, law, democracy and conscience in this country must come together. We need to unite against this oppression. We need to resist shoulder to shoulder. We know very well that if we do not resist this oppression, the country will be dragged into great chaos and a great deadlock, and there will be nothing left in the name of democracy.”

Koçyiğit noted that the DEM Party will hold its group meeting in Mardin tomorrow and will not participate in the general assembly, the plan budget commission and any other commission work in the parliament this week.

“We will defend the usurped will of the people and our municipalities until the end,” she added.

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‘We will respond to the usurpation of our municipalities with resistance’

ANF - 4 November 2024

Reactions continue against the seizure of the municipalities of Mardin, Batman and Halfeti, which were won by the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) in the 31 March local elections.

## Batman

DEM Party co-chairs Tülay Hatimoğulları and Tuncer Bakırhan and Democratic Regions Party (DBP) co-chair Keskin Bayındır came together at Batman Provincial Organisation building and marched to the town hall.

Co-Mayor of Batman, Gülistan Sönük, said, “The municipalities of Halfeti, Mardin and Batman were unlawfully usurped. This municipality is the labour of the people, the labour of our party for 40 years, the labour of the children of this people. Its usurpation is unacceptable. The occupiers should know well that it is not easy to usurp the will of the people and women. We will not bow down. There was 3 billion TL debt when we took over the municipality. The Kurdish people are being told, ‘There is a piece of bread left on your table, I will take that too. I will destroy your language and culture’. They say to women, ‘We will not allow you to govern yourselves’. We will no longer allow you to ignore our will. We will not allow you to take away the future of young people and women. We will not step back until this unlawful decision is reversed and this municipality is put into the service of the people. Either resistance or resistance. None of our friends will step back unless this decision is withdrawn.”

Speaking after, Democratic Regions Party (DBP) Co-Chair Keskin Bayındır said, “The Kurdish people, the people of Kurdistan, do not accept this. We will reject and resist this. Let us claim our will on the streets, in the neighbourhoods, everywhere. Let our people claim their will everywhere in Kurdistan. We will make every inch of Kurdistan a place of struggle and resistance. These invaders have revealed their plan, which is to attack the Kurdish people and prevent their success. We saw Erdoğan and Bahçeli's plans today in Batman and Mardin. Our response to you is struggle and resistance until the end, until success, until we send them away.”

DEM Party Co-Chair Tülay Hatimoğulları said: “This is not only a political coup but also a judicial coup. On 12 September, they carried out a coup with the military. Now they are stealing the will of the people with the batons of the police. The Kurdish people as one body stand against this coup. Together with other peoples and women in Turkey, we will raise the voice of the struggle for freedom and democracy. The will of the people will be on these streets. We will protect this will together.”

Tuncer Bakırhan recalled MHP Chairman Devlet Bahçeli's handshake with DEM Party members in the Parliament and said, “These conspirators, thieves and those who planned the liquidation extended their hands to us. We also extended our hands. We said that maybe they would negotiate; that they would make honourable peace with the Kurdish people, whom they had failed to destroy through liquidation, denial and oppression for years. But we saw that they were organising a liquidation, planning how they would appoint trustees. Again, they were planning how to deny the Kurdish people.”

Stating that they will definitely take back the municipalities, Bakırhan said, “One day we will make you a signboard party in these lands. We will make you unable to hang your signboard. We call on everyone to fight against this trustee mentality.”

People continue to wait in front of the municipality.

## Mardin

Protests also continue in front of the usurped Mardin Metropolitan Municipality, where residents and politicians have gathered, including the Democratic Regions Party (DBP) Co-Chair Çiğdem Kılıçgün Uçar and politician Sebahat Tuncel.

Çiğdem Kılıçgün Uçar said, “We are facing the result of the colonial politics of the AKP-MHP government and the centuries-old state mind in the Kurdistan geography. There is a very clear picture; AKP's politics is rotten. AKP-MHP is looking for ways and methods to govern the country with only a handful of capital. In the 31 March local elections, every municipality won in Kurdistan, every municipality lost by the AKP-MHP, carried Turkey to the light. With the municipalities won by the DEM Party, we did not only express that the Kurdish people won. We did not only say that we won a seat. We expressed that we made the AKP, which dragged the country into the abyss, lose.”

Uçar continued: “There is a special war policy carried out through the security forces. The AKP-MHP, which is trying to drive women and youth away from their own identity through drugs and prostitution, appointed the first trustee in Hakkari. This is a coup d'état. It is both a legal coup and a political coup. Who makes a coup? Those who have no legitimacy left and those who are defeated in the face of the people. Therefore, it is not us who have been defeated and lost, but the AKP-MHP and the hundred-year-old state mind. We were here yesterday, and we are here today. On 31 March, the picture that emerged from the elections was the name of the fact that we would not allow special war policies. It was the name of not allowing war policies. It was the name of not allowing policies of isolation. Our friends continue to resist in Batman, Mardin, Esenyurt and everywhere. Maybe we will be here for days. Ahmet Türk left very valuable traces in the politics of Turkey and Kurdistan. No one should justify the sentences announced by the Ministry of Interior. We do not recognise any decision that the AKP-MHP government and the judiciary put before us. Therefore, the trustee is null and void. What is real is the Kurdish people and their resistance in Kurdistan. We were here, we will continue to be here.”

## Urfa

In the Halfeti district of Urfa, DEM Party politicians, together with a large number of people, reacted to the usurpation of the municipality.

DEM Party Provincial Co-Chair Bekir Karakeçili said, “On 4 November 2016, a coup was carried out against the will of the people. The people did and will protect their will. This is enemy law. Those who call Mr Öcalan to the Parliament appoint trustees to Mr Öcalan's district. This is enemy law.”

Halfeti Municipality Co-Mayor Mehmet Karayılan said: “We know the trustee mentality. For the third time, the will of the people is being persecuted. Like a defeated wrestler, this mentality wanted to face the people again. They will be defeated again. The trustee was appointed not only to the municipality, but to the values of the Kurdish people as a whole.”

DEM Party Urfa MP Ömer Öcalan stated that Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan, whom he met on 23 October, also mentioned the Halfeti Municipality during their meeting: “We had a meeting with Mr. Öcalan on 23 October. Historical developments between the Turkish and Kurdish peoples were touched upon and

the process from Sultan Sencer a thousand years ago to the establishment of the republic was evaluated in detail. We talked about Halfeti and Halfeti Municipality. We told Mr Öcalan that one of the co-mayors of the municipality was a Turkmen citizen and the other a Kurdish woman. Mr Öcalan then talked about Halfeti, which is inhabited by Kurds and Turkmens. It has a ground where Mr Öcalan's paradigm can be implemented. Mr Öcalan said "This is my project".

The DEM Party MP continued:

"Mr Öcalan was surprised when he heard that Karayılan was Turkmen. Halfeti is the reality of Turkey. Mr Öcalan's message is clear; 'I am for a solution if conditions are met'. We insist on democratic politics. What is happening today does not contribute to a solution. The problems are getting deeper. The legal ground is being destroyed. Who is winning? These are wrong policies. Policies that deepen the problem must be abandoned. Is this how you will ensure internal integration? In Halfeti, everyone's right to vote is being taken away. They don't want Kurds and their friends to do politics. There is a mindset that insists on conflict and violence. Against this, we will insist on democratic politics and the democratic nation paradigm."

The sit-in protest in front of the blockaded municipality building continues.

## Van

As the residents of Van gathered on the Art Street in the city center, DEM Party Van MP Gülcan Kaçmaz Sayyigit stated that the AKP-MHP regime defeated in the elections has resorted to the same method again.

Remarking that the people will resist these attacks. Gülcan Kaçmaz Sayyigit said, "Just as the Kurdish people have not bowed down throughout history, they will not bow down today. Kurds will continue their struggle against this mentality that tries to draw them out of the grounds of democratic politics. You implemented all kinds of dirty war policies in Kurdistan. You implemented special war policies, but the Kurds gave you the answer you needed. You committed corruption, theft, and you are laying hands on our culture, our language, our history and our will. Kurds know very well how to fight against you. The trustee is now a regime. No one should expect us to remain silent. Just as we defended our will against the usurpation on 31 March, I swear that we will put up the same resistance once again."

The police attacked the people who started to march after the speech. While many were detained during the attack, people started a sit-in protest on Art Street under police blockade.

## Mersin

DEM Party provincial organisation staged a march in the central districts of Akdeniz and Toros with the participation of the executives of DEM Party provincial and district organisations, Mersin MP Perihan Koca and many citizens. During the march, slogans such as 'Kurdistan will be a grave for fascism', 'The trustees will go, the people will stay' and 'Shoulder to shoulder against fascism' were frequently chanted.

DEM Party Mersin Provincial Co-chair Reşat Aşan made a statement after the march in Akdeniz district and said: “It is a day of resistance, a day of struggle against the putschist understanding, against those who ignore the Kurdish people, against the oppressors who disregard the will of the Kurdish people.”

DEM Party MP Perihan Koca said, “Trustee is theft, usurpation, a coup against the will of the Kurdish people, a coup against the will of women and youth.”

DEM Party Provincial Organisation will make a press statement at 18:00 today.

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## Thousands protest the usurpation of DEM Party municipalities in Amed

ANF - Amed - 4 November 2024

Masses gathered in Amed (Diyarbakır) in protest at the usurpation of Mardin Metropolitan Municipality, Batman Municipality and Halfeti Municipality through the appointment of trustees by the Turkish Ministry of Interior.

Following the call of the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party), Democratic Regions Party (DBP) and Free Women's Movement (TJA), people gathered in front of AZC Plaza in Ofis neighbourhood and marched to the Şêx Seîd (Dağkapı) Square behind a banner that read “The will of the people cannot be usurped, we will not let the trustees pass”.

People frequently chanted the slogans ‘Everywhere Mardin-Batman-Halfeti, everywhere resistance’ and ‘Berxwedan jiyane’ (Resistance is life).

Speaking after the march, DEM Party Provincial Co-Chair Abbas Şahin said, “Those who insist on a deadlock have reappeared behind the scenes to destroy the gains of the Kurdish people. This rotten, putschist trustee politics is to impose a trustee regime not only on the Kurdish people but also on the people of Turkey. Give up this practice as soon as possible. Learn to respect the will of the people. We will never, ever surrender our will to the trustees. The trustee regime is a political coup. We do not accept the trustees.”

DEM Party Women's Assembly Spokesperson Halide Türkoğlu said, “We have no choice but to resist. We will resist. Those who want to bring the Kurdish people to their knees by appointing trustees for 8 years should know that the Kurdish people have never kneeled. Municipalities belong to the people and the people will continue to defend their will under all circumstances. We will not be the “reasonable” Kurds you want. No matter what you do, no matter how many times you appoint trustees, the Kurdish people will not give up their honourable struggle. This is a call for resistance. Those who wanted us to collapse have collapsed themselves, so much so that they are still resorting to trustees and usurpation of the Kurdish will.”

Türkoğlu continued, “They do not know what to do because they cannot rule. They are trying to design politics by appointing trustees. We have no obedience, no fear, only resistance, struggle and defence of freedom. Trustee politics is also enmity against women. In Batman, we elected a female co-mayor with the highest number of votes. In Halfeti and Mardin, we are showing how to build a democratic life with an understanding of governance where different beliefs live together. We will send the trustee politics to the dustbin of history.”



## People of Batman protest the usurpation of their municipality

ANF - Batman - 4 November 2024

People of Batman took to the streets after the usurpation of the municipality through a trustee appointed by the Ministry of Interior early this morning.

Citizens gathered at many points across the city and chanted slogans such as ‘Thief AKP’, ‘The day will come and AKP will answer to the people’ and ‘We will win by resisting’. The centre of the protests was in front of the blockaded municipality.

The police attacked the protesters, who included the Democratic Regions Party (DBP) Co-Chair Keskin Bayındır and the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) MPs with water cannons and rubber bullets. Some people resisting the police attack were beaten and taken into custody.

While some of the protesters marched to the DEM Party Provincial Organisation building, others started to protest at different points.



## KCK: Peoples must resist fascism, usurpation and genocide together

ANF - Behdinan - 4 November 2024

The Co-Presidency of the KCK (Kurdistan Communities Union) Executive Council released a statement on the usurpation of the municipalities of Mardin, Batman and Halfeti.

The KCK statement calling on the Kurdish people to defend their honor, freedom, and will includes the following:

“As of this morning, the fascist AKP-MHP government has once again usurped the will of the people by appointing trustees to the municipalities of Batman, Mardin, and Halfeti. Already before, a trustee was appointed to the Esenyurt Municipality, usurping the will of the Kurdish people there. At a time at which



the possibility of a solution to the Kurdish question and the beginning of a new process are being discussed in Turkey, the usurping of the will of the people once again reveals that there is no true intention to pave the way for a solution; on the contrary, the genocidal mentality and politics continue. It has now become clear that what is said in words and what is done in practice are the opposite of each other. This shows that what is said in words is purely for the purpose of deception. The AKP-MHP government has neither an intention nor a plan for peace, brotherhood, and solution. On the contrary, it has a mentality and politics that exclude peace, brotherhood, and solution. It has only one plan, and that is the plan of liquidation and genocide.

The seizure of the will of the Kurdish people once again has revealed the real intention and plan of the AKP-MHP government. No one should listen to the rhetoric of the AKP-MHP government. The AKP-MHP government stands against peace and democracy, prevents the development of solutions to problems, and ignores the will of the people. The mentality of this government is totally anti-democratic, racist, fascist, genocidal, and usurping. All their made-up discourses have to be seen as the scope of their special warfare. With the methods of special warfare, they are trying to muddy the mentality of society, to deceive and surrender it. The agenda they have developed lately serves the same purpose.

The Kurdish people must mobilize everywhere, regardless of whether young or old, and protect their will. They must never accept this situation; they must show their reaction right now, and they must not stop until the government steps back, until the usurpation of their will is ended, and the municipalities are returned to the people. What is being done is not only usurpation, but is also a clear violation of democracy and law and part of their genocidal concept. Resisting against this anti-democratic, genocidal, and usurping practice is the most basic democratic step.

We call on all our people to defend their honor, freedom, and will. Our people must continue their protests until this usurpation is ended. We also call on Turkish society and the democratic forces of Turkey to stand with the Kurdish people as a whole. Defending the will of the Kurdish people and their demand for a democratic and free life means standing up for the democratization of Turkey. Every blow to the will of the Kurdish people is a blow to the democratization of Turkey. The seizure of the municipalities of Mardin, Batman and Halfeti is a coup. It is a blow to Turkey's democracy and the will to form coexistence. It is very clear that the fascist AKP-MHP government will not stop usurping the will of society both in Kurdistan and Turkey. First, the seizure of the Esenyurt Municipality, and now the municipalities of Mardin, Batman and Halfeti reveal this. The peoples must resist fascism, usurpation, and genocide together and continue their actions until they take back their usurped will."

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## CHP Leader in Mardin: The will of the people cannot be disputed

ANF - Mardin - 4 November 2024

The Republican People's Party (CHP) Chairman Özgür Özel spoke at the protest demonstration in front of the Mardin Metropolitan Municipality which was usurped by the government this morning along with the municipalities of Batman province and Halfeti district of Urfa province.

Özel said, "A mindset that does not recognise the will of the people of Mardin, that could not win Mardin through elections, tried to appoint a trustee to Mardin Municipality for the third time. The people of Mardin, not Tayyip Erdoğan, decide who the Mayor of Mardin Metropolitan Municipality is. When I was born, Ahmet Türk was an MP for the CHP. When Tayyip Erdoğan was the provincial chairperson in Istanbul and wanted to be the mayor of Beyoğlu, Ahmet Türk was an MP for the SHP for two terms. Before the DEM Party, he was a member of parliament for parties that were closed down. For 50 years, the people of Mardin, the Kurds, have been electing Ahmet Türk every time a ballot box is put in front of them to represent their will. This will cannot be disputed."

Stating that he came to Mardin against the usurpation of will, Özel continued: "While Ahmet Türk's experience and Devrim Demir's youth tried to give Mardin a hand and power, those who forcibly held Mardin for two terms, drained and ruined it, could not think this, 'This is not the first time we are doing this. When we dismissed the Mayor for the first time, he had received the votes of one out of two Mardin residents. We dismissed him the second time. This time, Mardin voted him into office with 56 percent of the vote. We dismissed him again, and he was elected with 58 percent of the vote. Dear Tayyip Erdoğan, the evil mind that interferes with the will of Turkey; if you call this the will of the people, this is an evil mind, no matter whose mind it is. It has no place in the conscience of the people. In Manisa, my hometown, whoever the people elect becomes the mayor. In Osmaniye, the hometown of Devlet Bahçeli (MHP), people can choose their mayor. In Tayyip Erdoğan's hometown Rize, the people can elect their mayor. But in Ahmet Türk's Mardin, the people elect the mayor, but when the mayor is not elected the way Mr Tayyip wants, they appoint a trustee. Where is equal citizenship?"

Referring to the AKP-MHP government's 'new process' discussions, Özel said, "I say that we will struggle for democracy until every Kurd in the Republic of Turkey feels as equal as a citizen of Manisa, Osmaniye and Rize. For this, I have come to say equality, brotherhood and peace."

Pointing out that the government is resorting to new conspiracies, Özel said, "Wherever you appoint a trustee, it is wrong. The people of Mardin elected Ahmet Türk and Devrim Demir. If you oppose this will, it means that you have never understood the history, brotherhood and ancient civilisation of Mardin. On the one hand, you will seek a solution to something you do not call a problem, and on the other hand, you will appoint a trustee to the municipality of Ahmet Türk, who is the first name that comes to mind when peace is mentioned in Turkey. There is no intellect here. There is no conscience here. There is a game here, but there is no good in that game, neither for this people nor for him. I came to speak out here because we defend verbally. When I saw the news, I said, 'we are where words fail'. I warn you once again, don't let words fail. Words are precious and mean being able to speak. Words are always the solution. There is no solution without words. Mardin has spoken its word in the election. Do not silence that word. Do not persecute the representatives of that word."

Emphasising that they will fight against these policies until the end, Özel appealed to the government, saying: "You do not take a step forward, on the contrary, you take a step back. Give up this process. Without waiting for a trial, the judiciary appoints trustees before a judgement is finalized and the municipality council is not allowed to elect one of its members because they are all alleged to be terrorists. This under-

standing that completely marginalises and confronts the people is an understanding that strengthens enmity, not democracy. For this reason, starting from tomorrow, we will visit all parties together with Ekrem İmamoğlu, the President of the Union of Municipalities and our Istanbul Metropolitan Mayor. Whoever I need to meet with, I will use all dialogue channels to the end. Someone wants to make us a part of conflicts and gain power for themselves. We will not surrender to this fear. We advocate for Kurdish and Turkish youth to build their dreams in this country, to dance together, to live fraternally and equally. I salute your will and promise solidarity until the end."

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## TJA: Women will stay, trustees will go

ANF - 5 November 2024

TJA (Tevgera Jinen Azad-Free Women's Movement) issued a statement to condemn the appointment of trustees to the DEM Party-run municipalities of Batman, Mardin and Halfeti.

The statement said: "We know very well how this regime, which ignores the constitutional right of a people who have declared their will again after eight years, views women, Kurds, Kurdistan and all others. Today, we are witnessing a policy of femicide where the mindset of 'shoot women first' is embodied and usurped. What the male-state mind has put into effect today with its colonial appetite is essentially a culture of loot.

These municipalities were transformed into institutions where the public could not enter, where men dominated, and where they were used as areas of profit and destruction. All mechanisms that provided free transportation support to women, prevented violence against women, and created living spaces for women were attempted to be destroyed by the trustee regime, which was a male state policy. All women's gains built in local governments, from economy to culture, from health to education and ecology, were rendered dysfunctional. Trustee cadres were appointed to all units established within the municipality regarding women's policies without wasting time."

The statement added: "As of March 31, the first action in all our municipalities that were won was to implement studies on women's policies. Studies based on a democratic operation based on a relationship of trust with the public were breathlessly implemented. A unity was created that organized ourselves and the city together with the public with democratic ecological women's liberation policies.

The fact that this policy is being put back into effect on the anniversary of the November 4 coup, which is a black mark on Turkish history, is meaningful as well as the reality of the AKP-MHP regime. Our municipalities that were usurped in 2016 and 2019 have been subjected to the same mentality's plunder policies today. The practice of this mentality, which emphasized peace and solution in the country more recently, is obvious, which has thwarted itself but also exposed the male state mentality. Despite all the reactions of society, Mardin, Batman, Halfeti Municipalities, who were appointed to Esenyurt Municipality last week, were usurped."

The statement continued: "This regime, these policies are called the regime of usurpation. It is a constitutional violation of women's right to expression and will. What is revealed by this pirate policy is that these practices, which are put into practice through oppression and male state violence, are trying to leave women and peoples with an insecure future and to create themselves by ignoring those who are not their own. We call on all international women's institutions, democratic mass organizations, and individuals to lend their voices to us Kurdish women and to increase solidarity in international circles in order to put an end to these practices that go beyond even the 1982 coup constitution, which is still in effect today."

The statement said: "It is the oppression and violence that is being communicated to the co-mayors elected by women with great will through the coup. We did not bow down to the coup plotters yesterday, and we will not bow down today either. We will take back what is rightfully ours under any circumstances. Women will stay and the coup plotters will go. Our last word to those who left yesterday without an owner, today without anyone and tomorrow without hope is to continue to weave life in the color of women by resisting and winning."



## Young people in Batman continue resisting against usurpation of municipality

ANF - Batman - 5 November 2024

Young people in Batman (Êlih) continued their protests throughout the night in the neighborhoods against the usurpation of the 3 municipalities of Batman, Mardin (Mêrdîn) and Halfeti (Xelfetî) municipalities.

Young people blocked the roads in the Karşıyaka, Petrolkent, Bağlar and Cudi neighborhoods and clashed with the police who attacked them.

The police attacked the youth protesting the appointment of trustees to three DEM Party-run municipalities with tear gas, anti-riot vehicles and plastic bullets.

Young people blocked the roads by lighting fires, responding with fireworks.



## 16 bar associations in Kurdistan protest seizure of municipalities

ANF - Amed - 5 November 2024

16 bar associations in Kurdistan issued a written statement regarding the seizure of the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party-run (DEM Party) Mardin Metropolitan Municipality, Batman (Êlih) Municipality and Halfeti (Helfetî) Municipality. The statement called for the unlawful decision that usurps the will of the people to be reversed as soon as possible and for the will of the voters and the rule of law to be respected.

The statement added that the right to vote and be elected, guaranteed by Article 67 of the Constitution, is the most fundamental element of a democratic society. The statement underlined that the appointment of trustees by the AKP-MHP government has turned into an administrative regime in Turkey, and added: "We have learned that the Mayors of Mardin, Batman and Halfeti were dismissed by the Ministry of Interior and trustees were appointed in their places based on Articles 45 and 46 of the Municipality Law. The right to vote and be elected, guaranteed by Article 67 of the Constitution, is the most fundamental element of a democratic society.

The appointment of trustees to replace freely and democratically elected officials is unacceptable under any circumstances. Even if there is a legal problem regarding the mayors in representative positions, the way to address the issue is by resolving it through the election mechanism among the municipal council members themselves. The trustee application, in which constitutional provisions are suspended, the presumption of innocence is violated and the will of the voters is ignored, has turned into an administrative regime in Turkey. The appointment of trustees produces no other result than causing serious damage to Turkey's democracy, undermining the faith of the voters and weakening trust in the law."

The 16 bar associations "resolutely stress that we are against the trustee regime, and call for an immediate reversal of this unlawful decision that usurps the will of the people, and for respect for the will of the voters and the rule of law."

The following bars signed the statement: "Semsûr Bar Association, Agirî Bar Association, Êlih Bar Association, Çewlêg Bar Association, Bidlîs Bar Association, Dêrsim Bar Association, Amed Bar Association, Colemêrg Bar Association, Îdir Bar Association, Qers Bar Association, Mêrdîn Bar Association, Mûş Bar Association, Sêrt Bar Association, Riha Bar Association, Şîrnex Bar Association, Wan Bar Association."

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## At least 92 people detained during protests against usurpation of municipalities

ANF - 5 November 2024

People have been taking to the streets since yesterday in protest at the usurpation of the municipalities of Mardin, Batman and Halfeti and the appointment of trustees by the Ministry of Interior in the place of the democratically elected representatives of the Kurdish people for the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party).

## 75 people detained in Batman

In Batman, 75 people were taken into custody during the protests that started yesterday. The detainees were subject to brutal police violence and their detention procedures continue.

Gürcan Turşak, who was battered and detained during the anti-trustee protest in Adana yesterday, was released at night after procedures at the police department. The Adana Branch of the Human Rights Association (IHD) will file an official complaint against the police officers who battered Turşak.

## House raids in Halfeti

Many people were taken into custody in house raids in the Halfeti district of Urfa. Those detained are being held at the District Security Directorate and the number of detainees is expected to increase.

Some of those detained in the operation were named as follows: Adle Fidan, Muhammet Algaç, Elif Yalçın, Berivan Kocaoğlu, Yusuf Yeşiltepe, Gürkan Göktaş, Seve Yalçinkaya and Musa Yalçinkaya.

## 9 detained in Mardin

9 people were detained in house raids in Mardin and taken to the Provincial Security Directorate. The reason for the detentions was not disclosed.



## People's resistance against the usurpation of their will continues in Halfeti

ANF - Urfa - 5 November 2024

Protests against the usurpation of the municipality in the Halfeti district of Urfa continue on the second day. In the early hours of the morning, people started to gather in front of the blockaded municipality building and danced to Kurdish music. During the resistance led by the members of Urfa Peace Mothers Assembly, slogans of 'Biji berxwedana Xelfeti' (Long Live the Resistance of Halfeti) are frequently chanted.

Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) MPs Ömer Öcalan, Zülküf Uçar, Ayten Kordu, Ferit Şenyaşar, Mithat Sancar, Dilan Kunt Ayan, Halfeti Co-Mayors Saniye Bayram and Mehmet Karayılan, Hilvan Co-Mayor Serhan Paydaş, Birecik Co-Mayor Berivan İlkaya Manas and many others participated in the resistance in front of the municipality building which remains blockaded by hundreds of police.

DEM Party Urfa MP Mithat Sancar said, "The methods used in the trustee system mean a clear violation of the law. It means trampling the law underfoot."

Sancar said, "We continue our struggle for the construction of a Democratic Republic. There cannot be a Democratic Republic without local democracy. When the trustee regime started in the Kurdish cities, we said at the beginning that it would spread to the whole country."

Underlining that the DEM Party wants a democratic solution for everyone, Sancar said, "The Kurdish people did not and will not surrender to the trustees. Efforts to subjugate them are futile. Kurdish people insist on democratic politics. Let's oppose this practice against democracy all together. Let's pave the way for a democratic republic together. Let's increase the common struggle. The trustee regime will never reach its goal. There is a strong will and belief here."

The wait in front of the blockaded municipality building continues with Kurdish songs.



## Co-mayor of Batman: We will never surrender

ANF - Batman - 5 November 2024

Following the appointment of trustees to the municipalities of Batman, Mardin and Halfti by the Ministry of Interior, protests continue in many cities of Kurdistan.

As demonstrations in Batman continue, the democratically elected and unlawfully ousted co-mayor, Gülistan Sönük, spoke to the Mezopotamya Agency (MA) about the trustee policies.

Noting that the Governor of Batman usurped the municipality, Sönük stated that the governor's threatening statements against the municipality have continued since the day they were elected in 31 March local elections this year. Sönük said, "The Governor of Batman did not get a wink of sleep for 8 months. Just because people breathed a sigh of relief, they themselves could not breathe for 8 months and could not stand it, so they came and usurped the municipality. Of course, this usurpation is not just occupying the municipality building. We consider the trustee as an attack on the Kurdish language, the will of women, the right to life of the disabled and citizens. We took over the municipality with a debt of 3 billion, and it was one of the municipalities with the biggest debt. We do not only see this as a physical blockade of a municipality building. This is also ignoring the labour of the people who went from street to street, house to house during the election process despite the rain, mud, cold and heat. It means not recognising the will of the people in this city who took part in this struggle and paid the price. We do not consider it a simple civil servant entering the municipality building."

Stating that there is no decision notified to them regarding the appointment of a trustee, Sönük said, "We would like the Governor of Batman himself to come and make a statement both to us and to the whole public and convey the decision himself. No notification has been made to us so far, but we are prevented from entering the municipality. There are thousands of police and soldiers, as well as armored vehicles. There is also the reality of a people in resistance against this. We are here. We are not a people who will hand this municipality over to two cheap officials. Someone did not give us these municipalities. We won them with our own labour, with the labour of the people, with the votes of the people. Therefore, only the people can take the initiative to govern the municipality from us."

Sönük pointed out that a special war concept was put into effect during the election process, but women responded to this in the strongest way. “We won these municipalities together, and we will defend them together,” said Sönük and invited everyone to gather in front of the municipality to defend their will. Stating that they will increase the resistance, Sönük said, “We are here, we will not surrender our municipality. Because we are one of those who say ‘Surrender leads to betrayal’. Therefore, we will never surrender.”

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## Criminal complaint against police torture in Batman

ANF - Amed - 5 November 2024

Lawyers Bawer Mızrak and Serhat Kayaoğlu, members of Diyarbakır Bar Association Human Rights Centre’s Anti-Torture Commission, filed a criminal complaint against the police violence against the participants of the protests against the usurpation of DEM Party municipality in Batman.

In the criminal complaint filed to Batman Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, the police officers were charged with ‘obstructing constitutional freedoms and public duty’, ‘abuse of office’, ‘torture and ill-treatment and injury’, ‘deprivation of liberty’.

The criminal complaint drew attention to the articles of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), to which Turkey is a party, and the Constitution's articles on freedom of expression, the right to assembly and demonstration and prohibition of torture, and referred to the decisions of the Turkish Constitutional Court (AYM) and the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).

In the criminal complaint, images of police attacks on people were presented as evidence.

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## Police attack people in front of the usurped municipality of Batman

ANF - Batman - 5 November 2024

The police attacked the people waiting in front of the usurped municipality of Batman.

Following the attack with gas bombs and water cannons, people resisted the police at the barricades they set up at some points. While fires were lit in some streets, people frequently chanted ‘We will win by resisting’.

After a while, the people regrouped at Basın Junction and responded to the police forces that blocked the roads leading to the municipality. DBP Co-Chair Keskin Bayındır, women politicians Ayla Akat Ata and Sebahat Tuncel were among the people.



JINNEWS reporter Pelşin Çetinkaya and many people were beaten and detained during the police crackdown. Pelşin Çetinkaya was dragged on the ground before being taken into custody. Yeni Yaşam newspaper employee Veysi Aküren was also detained.

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## DEM Party Co-chairs vow uninterrupted struggle against the usurpation of municipalities

ANF - Mardin - 5 November 2024

The DEM Party did not hold its parliamentary group meeting in Ankara today, but in front of the town hall in Mardin after the municipalities of Mardin, Batman and Urfa's Halfeti district were usurped through the appointment of trustees by the Ministry of Interior and the dismissal of democratically elected mayors on Monday.

In support of the ousted co-mayors Devrim Demir and Ahmet Türk, who has been replaced by a trustee for the third time in a row, representatives of the parties DP (Revolutionary Party), TÖP (Social Freedom Party), SYKP (Socialist Refoundation Party), ESP (Socialist Party of the Oppressed) and EMEP (Labour Party) attended the assembly in front of the town hall alongside DEM politicians. The co-chairs of the DEM Party, Tülay Hatimoğulları and Tuncer Bakırhan, announced further resistance and demanded respect for the will of the electorate.

Last week, the CHP mayor of Istanbul's Esenyurt district, Ahmet Özer, was also dismissed and arrested for alleged links to the PKK. Özer is a Kurd, as are the DEM mayors Ahmet Türk from Mardin, Gülistan Sönük from Batman and Mehmet Karayılan from Halfeti. Tülay Hatimoğulları said that the Kurdish population is being denied the right to elect and be elected.

Hatimoğulları called the trustee regime an unconstitutional coup against the right to vote and democratic local government, warning: "No one should believe that this regime will only harm the Kurds or the DEM Party. All population groups and the entire opposition in Turkey are affected. The AKP and MHP do not accept any other parties. We are prepared to fight this uninterrupted coup with an uninterrupted fight."

"We repeat our call once again. The solution is in parliament. Everyone should assume responsibility for a solution in the parliament. This will be the real test of sincerity," said Hatimoğulları and added: "We will continue to oppose the trustees in the spirit of Van. We never recognise these injustices, this slaughter of will and we call on everyone to speak out against it. I invite everyone to a democratic struggle against this coup, to claim their rights, to stand in solidarity and to organise more."

Tuncer Bakırhan said that the government is hostile to the Kurds and is dismantling fundamental democratic rights under the guise of the 'fight against terrorism'. According to the DEM co-chair, the trustee politics undermines efforts for peace and a solution to the Kurdish question: "People often ask what the Kurdish question is. The Kurdish question is to knock on the door of Ahmet Türk and Devrim Demir at 5 o'clock in the morning and saying 'we have removed you from the mayor's office'. The Kurdish question is

the drying tree next to the flowing Euphrates River. The Kurdish question is to criminalise all the means of struggle of a people, all their values and rights, to ignore them, to see the Kurds as criminals. You say Kurds should not do politics, you say Kurds should not vote, you say Kurds should not use their language. What should Kurds do? We are explaining what we want and what we are trying to do. Mr Bahçeli, what should Kurds do, Mr Erdoğan, what should Kurds do? I ask all parties in the parliament, what should Kurds do now?"

Bakırhan continued: "The Kurdish question is to isolate Mr Öcalan in İmralı and the DEM Party in politics. Isolating Mr Öcalan in İmralı and the DEM Party in politics will not lead this country forward. It is the greatest evil to be done to this country. Give up this understanding first.

Just last week, the AKP chairman said in a group meeting that 'the addressee of the problem is my Kurdish brothers'. Which Kurdish brothers is he talking about? The Kurds to whom he has appointed trustees are not Erdoğan's brothers. The Kurds, to whose will a trustee has been appointed, do not believe in this fallacy of brotherhood.

They are avoiding negotiation. Why? Because negotiation is one of the most important stages that shows who is genuine, who is in favour of a solution, who really wants this issue to be resolved. They avoid negotiations because their reality will be revealed if they negotiate. As the DEM Party, we are one of the main interlocutors for Kurdish peace, we are ready for a solution. As it has always been, we do not have daggers in our hands, but doves of peace, and this will continue to be the case. But you have trustees in one hand and oppression in the other. Those who miss this historic opportunity by appointing trustees are doing the greatest disservice to the 85 million people living in this country.

While efforts were being made to solve these problems through dialogue and negotiation, they set traps and ambushes to the people's expectations for a solution and appointed trustees. This is a historic opportunity for you, the government. Immediately withdraw the trustees and respect the will of the people. Let no one tell us that 'there is a threat in the Middle East and that we should strengthen the internal front'. Is the appointment of trustees the way to strengthen the internal front? Is it to imprison Kurdish leaders? Is it to restrict the freedoms of Kurds? You cannot ensure internal peace with the trustee mentality and trustee regime. We will never give in."

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## Gülistan Sönük: We will resist until the trustee appointment is revoked

ANF - Batman - 6 November 2024

On 4 November, the Ministry of Interior ordered the appointment of trustees to replace elected DEM Party officials in the Mardin, Batman, and Halfeti municipalities.

In the 31 March elections, the DEM Party had won in Batman, securing 65.13% of the vote (127,939 votes). Sönük was elected as co-mayor with a strong mandate.

After the appointment of the trustee, the citizens of Batman, led by women and young people, quickly took to the streets to protest, affirming their commitment to uphold their democratic choice and maintain local control over their administration.

Batman (Êlih) co-mayor Gülistan Sönük said that they first learned about the appointment of the government trustee when the police blockaded the municipality and barred entry without any formal notice. "When we arrived at the municipality in the early morning, we were denied entry," Sönük explained, adding; "There is tremendous resistance and support from the public, and the crowd is growing with each passing minute. We are here, and we will not leave our municipality until this trustee appointment is reversed. This is a legacy we have inherited from our comrades. This is a legacy we carry from figures like Edip Solmaz. Anyone who thinks we will be intimidated by threats or barricades is mistaken. Together with our people, we will resist until this decision is overturned."

Mayor Sönük underlined their commitment to continue resisting against those disregarding the will of the Kurdish people. "We won this municipality with our people. This is the municipality of a city with a population of 500,000, the municipality of women, young people, and all the active forces of Batman whose will is being ignored. Just as we fought tirelessly during the elections to reclaim these municipalities from seizure, we will continue our resistance with the same spirit. In particular, we call upon women around the world to support women's will being trampled here. We invite all women to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with us on the front lines against this institutionalized oppression."

Mayor Sönük called on leftist and socialist groups to join the resistance in Kurdistan, and said: "We are reaching out to everyone who calls themselves a democrat or a defender of rights. These municipalities belong to all of us. It belongs to the people. The appointment of these trustees aims to dismantle democracy in Turkey. This move will also try to frustrate the people's hope for peace, unity, democracy, and solidarity."

We believe that we can nurture the hope for peace and freedom by standing together in resistance. We call on everyone who identifies as democratic, leftist, or socialist to come to the cities under trustee control and join us on the ground, shoulder-to-shoulder, to continue our struggle."

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## Lawyers appeal detention of Ahmet Özer

ANF - Istanbul - 6 November 2024

The detention of the mayor of Esenyurt, Prof. Dr. Ahmet Özer, who was removed from office and replaced by a government-appointed trustee, has been officially appealed.

His lawyer, Seraf Özer, filed the appeal at the Çağlayan Courthouse in Istanbul, challenging the decision to detain him following his arrest on 30 October.

Ahmet Özer, who was taken into custody and subsequently sent to prison by the court on 30 October, faces charges brought forth under the current AKP-MHP administration, which has drawn criticism for its practice of appointing trustees to replace elected officials.

CHP officials, including Murat Bakan, Deputy Chair for Internal Affairs Policy, Gamze Taşçılar, CHP Deputy Chair, and other local CHP leaders, attended the appeal.

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## Journalists beaten by police in Batman

ANF - Batman - 6 November 2024

The police attacked the crowd protesting in front of the Batman (Êlih) Municipality the appointment of a trustee. The police attacked the crowd with tear gas and pressurized water, and beat and detained the journalists who were following the news.

New footage has emerged of the moments when the police beat and detained Jinnews journalist Pelşin Çetinkaya and Yeni Yaşam newspaper employee Veysi Aküren.

The footage shows the police dragging the journalists to the ground.

On the other hand, it has been learned that the police used violence against the journalists all the way to the Provincial Police Department.

According to the information provided by the lawyers, Çetinkaya and Aküren, who were not taken for a health check, were kept in custody.

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## Esenyurt Municipality under police blockade

ANF - Istanbul - 6 November 2024

Following the arrest of the Mayor of Istanbul's Esenyurt district, Prof. Dr. Ahmet Özer, and the subsequent appointment of a trustee to the municipality, the police blockaded the municipality building. Citizens and elected members of the municipal council are not allowed to enter.

A large number of people, including CHP Istanbul MP Engin Altay, CHP Istanbul Provincial Chairman Özgür Çelik and municipal council members came to the Esenyurt Municipality building and faced police barricades. Altay reminded of his powers given by the constitution as a member of parliament.

Stating that MPs have immunity, Altay said, “I have the right. It is a special right for MPs. He cannot be held or touched. Come on, touch me,” as he reacted against the police.

The police prevented the group from entering the municipality building.

## Background

The Turkish Ministry of Interior appointed a trustee to the Municipality of Esenyurt, after its mayor, Ahmet Özer, was [remanded in custody](#) a week ago.

Istanbul Deputy Governor Can Aksoy was appointed as trustee in Özer's place.

Özer, who was arrested on charges of "being a member of an illegal organization," stated that he had previously worked in numerous public institutions as a public servant and had never faced any investigation before.

Özer added: "I have been successfully serving as mayor for seven months, and this is a politically motivated action where the will of the people is being seized."

Özer emphasized that the allegations lack evidence, noting that framing his past works and accomplishments as criminal acts is a politically motivated move.

He remarked that the trustee appointment process was introduced to the public through the media, and added: "All of this has been fabricated, forced, and orchestrated with political maneuvers to remove me from office. A foundation for appointing a trustee has been laid. Even while I was still at the prosecutor's office, reports on some media were stating that a trustee had already been appointed."

Özer also clarified some of the alleged meetings and relationships cited in the accusations. He explained that his meeting with former Van MP Remzi Kartal was based on their shared background. Both are from the same region and the meeting took place within a framework of a personal and human connection.

Özer noted that even a concert organized in collaboration with the Esenyurt District Governor's Office was cited as evidence against him. He explained that all aspects of the concert's arrangements were handled by officials and emphasized that it was impossible for him to monitor what was said on stage.

Finally, Özer pointed out that a previous wiretap investigation had also found no incriminating evidence against him. Highlighting his stable residence and the absence of any flight risk, he appealed for his release.

The mayor's lawyer, Seraf Özer, filed an appeal at the Çağlayan Courthouse in Istanbul today challenging the court decision to imprison him following his arrest on 30 October.

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## Thousands continue the resistance against the usurpation of municipality in Batman

ANF - Batman - 6 November 2024

Protests continue on the 3rd day against the usurpation of Batman Municipality through the appointment of a trustee to replace the democratically elected co-mayors.

Masses gathered at Yılmaz Güney Park, Kültür Neighbourhood and Seyid Bilal Street and started to march in 3 columns with the slogans 'Trustee get out of Kurdistan' and 'We will win by resisting'.

Democratic Regions Party (DBP) Co-Chair Keskin Bayındır, deposed co-mayors of Batman Municipality Gülistan Sönük and Yeşil Işık, representatives of the Free Women's Movement (TJA), Socialist Party of the Oppressed (ESP) and many of civil society organisations took part in the march towards Gülistan Street.

Those who gathered in Kültür Neighbourhood marched with applause, chants and slogans. People in the neighbourhood supported the demonstration with applause. Arriving at the Basın intersection, the people turned towards the police point and shouted, 'Evacuate our municipality'.

The other group, who included DBP Co-Chair Keskin Bayındır, gathered at Yılmaz Güney Park. More people participated in the march near the meeting point, supported by the people around with victory signs and shouts. When the march reached the meeting point, the slogan 'Thief trustee' was chanted in unison.

Those gathering at Seyid Bilal Street included Co-Mayor Gülistan Sönük. A number of residents participated in the march with victory signs, supported by the people with cheers and applause.

In a short statement at Basın Junction, DEM Party MP Sabahat Erdoğan Sarıtaş said, "As the people of Kurdistan, we will stand up unless this unlawful, dirty decision, which does not recognise the Kurdish people and their will, is withdrawn. We will achieve success through resistance. We are here, we are standing, we will resist. We will surely win."

Thousands of people at Basın Junction continue to wait, chanting slogans.



## Ahmet Türk: They can never silence the Kurdish people or make them take a step back

ANF - Mardin - 6 November 2024

Ahmet Türk emphasised the importance of solidarity and talked about his experiences since the 1980 military coup and the process he went through in prisons: "We went through all this, but we never compromised. We are stronger than yesterday. Today we are in greater solidarity with our people. They can never, ever make the Kurdish people and those who believe in democracy take a step back through the policy of persecution and sticks. We are a people who struggle for an honourable peace and embrace in this country. We struggle for justice and equality in this country. We are not seat lovers. We are in the squares today against the oppressive and intimidation policies pursued against our people. We are here today to fulfil this responsibility. We are based on a life in a country with rights, justice and a democratic republic, brotherly

with all peoples, meeting in common democratic values. This is the aim of our struggle. For this reason, they can never, ever silence the Kurdish people by appointing trustees and throwing them into dungeons, and they can never, ever make them take a step back.”

The Kurdish politician continued: “The understanding that holds a stick in one hand while extending the other hand can never understand the Kurds. They cannot see the just demands of the Kurds, nor can they show the will to answer them. If you do not internalise a people with a language, an identity and a culture, you cannot solve the problem or show the will to do so. Today, you act and govern this country with a logic that does not even recognise the existence of the Kurdish people. When we look at the developments in the Middle East today, when we look at the developments in Iran, they are trying to extend a hand on one side because they know what sort of a period Turkey will be through amid the chaos that will occur in the Middle East. We have indeed held every hand that has been extended until today. We have always put forward our thoughts for a solution. But you have set a table, and there is nothing on the table. You can neither convince the Kurdish people nor initiate a process that can meet the just and reasonable demands of the Kurdish people by just voicing some rhetoric without saying anything about what you will do.”

Noting that the Kurds are a politicised people, Türk said that if the government comes with the right projects, their outstretched hand will be held. But if you come with an understanding aimed at deceiving, you will deceive yourself. Nothing beyond that will happen.”



## MP Tiryaki: The government's actions and words do not match

ANF - Batman - 6 November 2024

After Istanbul's Esenyurt district, the municipalities of Batman, Mardin and Urfa's Halfeti district were usurped by the government through trustees appointed to replace the elected mayors.

While the DEM Party held its parliamentary group meeting in Mardin, MHP (Nationalist Movement Party) Chairman Devlet Bahçeli yesterday reiterated his call for Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan to speak in the parliament.

While Bahçeli said ‘I stand by my words’, according to the statements of various AKP officials and journalist Abdülkadir Selvi, who is close to AKP, the trusteeship practice is expected to continue. Mehmet Rüşti Tiryaki, DEM Party's Deputy Co-Chair in charge of the Democratic Local Governments Committee and MP for Batman province, evaluated the recent developments to ANF.

Commenting on the recent discussions on a possible process of negotiations, Mehmet Rüşti Tiryaki said: “I would like everyone who advocates for peace in this country to know that we will respond positively to this promise of peace. Since the day we were founded, including all the parties whose legacy we inherited, we have defended a solution to the fundamental problems of this country, especially the Kurdish question, through democratic and peaceful means. We have advocated for a solution through dialogue. For dozens of years and today, we have defended the same things. No one can say that we are pursuing an anti-peace politics. No one can say that the political tradition we represent is an obstacle to peace.

We welcomed Devlet Bahçeli's remarks, which were also supported by Erdoğan, and we said that we attributed a meaning to them. But these words were not maintained. The government has taken no further steps to solve the problems of this country through democratic and peaceful means. It is not possible to say that there has been any development other than a meeting between Mr Öcalan and his nephew, our Urfa MP Ömer Öcalan. When he met with Mr Öcalan, he said that the isolation imposed on him continued. He also said that other steps to be taken by the government on this issue would be decisive."

Tiryaki continued: "Unfortunately, instead of taking a step to increase the hope for peace in society, the government first appointed a trustee to Esenyurt, where a Kurdish mayor was in charge, and then to the municipalities of Mardin, Batman and Halfeti. There is a saying 'one's actions speak for themselves'. In this sense, what the government is doing is not something that will serve social peace. It is not something that will raise the hope for peace in this country. On the one hand, you say 'Let Öcalan come, let him speak in the DEM Party group, let him speak in parliament'; on the other hand, you appoint trustees to the will of the Kurdish people. This shows that the government is not really sincere.

If they want to raise hope for peace, there is only one thing for them to do; to give up the trustee politics, end the isolation and take a series of steps to resolve the Kurdish question peacefully, starting with the creation of ceasefire conditions. Only then will the people really think that the government is sincere. With the appointment of trustees, we have seen that the government's preference is again not in favour of peace, but in favour of the politics of conflict. The resistance continues in Kurdistan. We have been in Batman for two days. Thousands of people have been on the streets since yesterday saying 'no to the trustee', resisting."

Mehmet Rüştü Tiryaki also evaluated Bahçeli's defence of his own words in yesterday's parliamentary group meeting and said: "We said that we as a party attributed a value to these words from the very first moment. We said that we held the hand they extended. We do not have any problems in this respect. Of course, we support every step they will take in this regard. But the problem is that the government's actions and words do not match."



## Resistance in Mardin: We will continue to resist until we take back what is ours

ANF - Mardin - 7 November 2024

The protests that started after the usurpation of Mardin Metropolitan Municipality on 4 November continue. Democratic Regions Party (DBP) Co-Chair Keskin Bayındır, Mardin Metropolitan Municipality Co-Mayors Ahmet Türk and Devrim Demir, Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) MPs, members of the Free Women's Movement (TJA), DEM Party Youth Assembly, Peace Mothers' Assembly and many people participated in the ongoing action in front of Mardin Metropolitan Municipality.

Speaking during today's protest, Devrim Demir, Co-Mayor of Mardin Metropolitan Municipality, said the following:



“The trustee's eyes are on the people's food. The trustee is occupation. The trustees are not reciprocated in these municipalities. It is not about our person. The real issue is that Kurds cannot live peacefully in their own land. 2 terms ago, we saw all the theft at the hands of the trustees. If they felt a touch of shame, they would not do the same today and not appoint trustees to the will of the people. They have no shame. We will continue to resist in the squares and streets until we get our rights. We will take back what is ours and send these thieving trustees away.”

DBP Co-Chair Keskin Bayındır said, “They appointed trustees before. The government should look back from that day to today. What have they achieved? The Kurdish people have not taken even one step back against the trustee persecution. What do they want to achieve with trustee policies? Do they want us to give up our language, identity, culture, patriotism and honour? If so, let them look at our history. The Kurdish people have always defended their will and will continue to do so. The current resistance is the biggest answer. The Kurdish people are claiming their language and identity day by day. We see your open hostility. They sacked 418 Kurdish workers. You are hostile to the Kurdish people who want to live honourably in their own land. We will never bow down to you.”

Stating that the trustee appointments are now a national issue, Keskin Bayındır said, “They say they have gained positions by usurping the Kurdish people. You may have taken this building, but you will lose thousands of positions. Millions of people from the Middle East to Kurdistan support the struggle of the Kurdish people. This struggle of ours is just and justified. It is your practices that are unjust. Therefore, it is you who will be defeated. Our people are resisting this oppression in all cities. They do not accept this situation. It is a matter of Kurdishness and patriotism. We will fight until victory.”

Underlining that their struggle is a struggle for freedom, Bayındır concluded his words as follows: “This struggle is a struggle for freedom. It is them who will bow their heads in the face of our struggle and they will be defeated. Their defeat will be at the hands of the Kurdish people. We believe in our people who have not bowed down to oppression until today. Erdoğan and Bahçe will be defeated. As long as you continue with these policies, the Kurdish people will continue to resist on the streets.”



## Legal action against DEM Party Co-chair Tuncer Bakırhan

ANF - Ankara - 7 November 2024

The Turkish Ministry of the Interior has initiated legal action against the DEM Party Co-chair Tuncer Bakırhan over a speech he gave in Mardin on Monday.

According to the statement by the Ministry of the Interior, Mehmet Mihdi Tunç, the DEM Party Mardin provincial co-chair, is also being investigated for a statement made in connection with the removal of Kurdish mayors from office.

The co-mayors of Mardin, Batman and Halfeti municipalities of the DEM Party were suspended by the Turkish Ministry of the Interior on Monday on alleged terror charges and replaced by administrators. Last

week, Ahmet Özer, the mayor of the Esenyurt district of Istanbul, a Kurdish CHP politician and renowned scientist, was dismissed from office and imprisoned on alleged links to the PKK.

Since the beginning of the week, there have been widespread protests against the suspension of the right to elect and be elected for Turkey's Kurdish population. Police have been using force against the protests, and numerous people have been taken into custody.

Tuncer Bakırhan said in his speech in Mardin on Monday that the Kurdish people would not bow down, and pointed to the long tradition of resistance and previous uprisings in Kurdistan. “Neither their trustees nor their policy of oppression, their lies and their tricks will bring us to our knees,” said the 54-year-old politician, alluding to Seyid Roza, the leader of the Alevi-Kurdish resistance in Dersim who was executed in 1937.

A smear campaign against Bakırhan was launched in the Turkish media and virtual networks. The DEM Party issued a statement saying that the remarks of its co-chair regarding Kurdish rebel leaders Sheikh Said and Seyid Rıza had been distorted: “The words of our co-chair Tuncer Bakırhan are extremely clear and unambiguous. The speech refers to historical memory and criticises the methods used to make a solution to the Kurdish question impossible. While our communities are exposed to a trustee coup on the one hand, we are confronted with organised political lynching on the other. We know that the source of both attacks is the same. You cannot legitimise the trustees with political lynching and distortions.”



## Resistance against usurpation of Kurdish municipalities continues

ANF - 7 November 2024

Protests continue for a fourth day in Turkey against the usurpation of the DEM Party-governed municipalities of Batman, Mardin and Halfeti and the removal of the elected co-mayors by the Ministry of the Interior.

### **Batman: ‘Resistance is Life’**

In Batman, many people are still on the streets shouting slogans such as ‘Trustees out of Kurdistan’ and ‘Resistance is life’. In the last few days, many people have been arrested, including children. The exact number is unknown, several people were overpowered on the street by masked men and taken away in civilian vehicles with fake license plates.

Among the demonstrators are the deposed co-mayors and MPs of the DEM Party. In a speech, MP Sümeyye Boz said the following: “Whenever the AKP/MHP government gets stuck and in trouble, it picks a fight with the Kurdish people. They attack the municipalities of the Kurdish people. They pursue a policy of special war against the Kurdish people and impose isolation. With the trustees they appoint, they ride roughshod over the will of the Kurdish people. The trustee policy has manifested itself first in

Hakkari, then in Esenyurt and now in Batman, Urfa and Mardin. While the government has made a name for itself with plundering, thieving and oppression, the Kurdish people have made a name for themselves with democracy and struggle.”

### **Municipal Council meeting in Halfeti**

In the Halfeti district of Urda, the deposed co-mayors Mehmet Karayılan and Saniye Bayram convened a Municipal Council meeting in front of the town hall where the DEM politicians no longer have access to. The mayors explained that they would not leave their mandate given by the people to a trustee.

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## **IHD Co-Chair: The Kurdish question cannot be resolved with isolation**

ANF - Urfa - 7 November 2024

Support continues to increase for the vigil launched in Halfeti district of Urfa against the usurpation of the municipality through the appointment of a trustee and removal of the democratically elected co-mayors, Mehmet Karayılan and Saniye Bayram, on 4 November.

Human Rights Association (IHD) Co-Chair Hüseyin Küçükbalaban, IHD Diyarbakır, Antep, Adıyaman and Urfa branch executives visited the resistance vigil in front of the municipality building on Thursday.

IHD Co-Chair Hüseyin Küçükbalaban stated that the trustee mentality is a product of medieval darkness. Küçükbalaban noted that Kurdish People's Leader Abdullah Öcalan was born in Halfeti, saying:

“Halfeti, the hometown of Abdullah Öcalan, is where the history of humanity was born. The state made some remarks (on a possible process of negotiation with Öcalan), and immediately afterwards, trustees were appointed. The isolation in İmralı continues. There was a meeting (with Öcalan) after 43 months, but this does not change the fact that the isolation continues. The Kurdish question cannot be resolved with isolation. Abdullah Öcalan is the interlocutor and the power for a solution.”

Demanding an end to isolation, Küçükbalaban stated that the trustee practices eliminated the right to elect and be elected and demonstrated the fact that the state is far from seeking a solution to the Kurdish issue. Highlighting the importance of local governments, Küçükbalaban pointed out that the trustee politics should be abandoned and elected co-mayors should take office.

Emphasising that security policies should be abandoned for the achievement of a solution to the Kurdish question in democratic ways, he added: “We are here for this. We demand the withdrawal of trustees as soon as possible.”

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## Actions by MAK militia in Batman and Lice

ANF - 7 November 2024

The Kurdistan Freedom Militia (MAK) announced a series of actions in Batman on the evening of 6 November as the resistance against the usurpation of municipalities in Northern Kurdistan continues.

Regarding the action in Batman, MAK stated the following: “In the evening hours of 6 November, our militia took to the streets in many neighbourhoods of Batman to confront the Turkish occupation troops. Barricades were erected in ten neighbourhoods: Bağlar, İpragaz, Taxa Koçera, Cudi, Petrolkent, Karşıyaka, Emekli Toki, Hilal, Pazaryeri and Bayındır, and together with local residents, resistance was put up against the Turkish security forces. Our militia responded to the security forces' attacks with homemade explosives, Molotov cocktails and fireworks. In the fierce clashes that lasted into the early hours of the morning, many attackers were wounded and numerous armoured vehicles were hit.”

In the district of Lice in Amed (Diyarbakır), the MAK militia targeted excavators working on the construction of a military base in the Ape Musa area. Both excavators were destroyed by sabotage tactics.

“Resistance continues against the attacks of the fascist-barbarian Turkish state against the will of our people. Our resistance against those who ignore the will of the people and impose oppression against our people on the instructions of fascist Erdoğan and Bahçeli has been magnificent. Our people and our militia have once again shown that they will not kneel to fascism with the spirit of resistance they received from Leader Apo (Abdullah Öcalan) and the freedom guerrilla. Our patriotic people and the public opinion in Turkey should know that we will defend our will and our people until the end. Everyone, friend and foe alike, should know that we will ask for an account of every attack and massacre against our people with retaliation,” said the MAK.

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## Police set dog on severely disabled man during house raid in Batman

ANF - Batman - 7 November 2024

In Batman, 25-year-old Medeni Erol with a 70 percent mental disability was mistreated during his detention. His father, Mehmet Erol, a city councilor of the DEM party, said that the Turkish police first beat his son and then let a police dog loose on him. The animal bit the disabled man on the neck, and the wound had to be sewn in hospital. After the procedure, Erol was taken to the police station. He is accused of participating in a demonstration against the appointment of a trustee to replace the deposed co-mayor.

Regarding the violent raid on their house on Thursday morning, Medeni Erol stated the following: “We were woken up by the noise of armoured vehicles in front of our house. Suddenly and without warning, our apartment was stormed with a battering ram. Several police officers immediately knocked me down on

the ground and knelt on me while other officers took my children to another room. I pointed out to them that Medeni has a mental disability. But shortly thereafter, I heard dogs barking and my son's cries for help. When I was allowed to see him, he was lying on the floor covered in blood.”

The police officers are said to have applied a makeshift bandage to Medeni Erol before the ambulance arrived, which had been called by the police. The medical team was horrified by the officers' action and immediately took the 25-year-old to hospital. There, the bite wound was sutured with eleven stitches.

Mehmet Erol said that his son was later taken to the police station and is being held there in a bandage. He added that lawyers are preparing a criminal complaint against the police officers involved.



## Young people continue resistance in Batman

ANF - Batman - 8 November 2024

The resistance continues in the neighborhoods after the government appointed a trustee to DEM Part-run Batman (Êlih) Municipality.

Young people blocked the streets in the neighborhoods and responded to the police who attacked them.

In many neighborhoods of the city, young people took to the streets and fought back against the Turkish police's attacks with stones, fireworks, and Molotov cocktails.

The young people chanted slogans such as “Jin jîyan azadî” (Woman, life, freedom), “Bijî Serok Apo” (Long live President Apo), “Bê Serok jîyan nabe” (Without a leader, there is no life), “Youth is the martyr's vanguard”.

Heavy helicopter activity over the city was reported throughout the night.



## Medeni Erol not given any liquid food

Zeynep Kuray - Istanbul - 8 November 2024

Mustafa Erol, brother of Medeni, said that the prosecutor's office prevented liquid food from being given to the man, even though 11 stitches were needed on his throat.

The state terror continues against the people who have stood up for their will after the government-appointed trustees replaced the freely and democratically elected DEM Party mayors in Batman (Êlih), Halfeti (Xelfetî) and Mardin (Mêrdîn).

Police violence and torture targeted not only children and the elderly but also disabled people. 37-year-old Medeni Erol, who has a 70% disability, was taken into custody by police using a dog. The man was arrested in a house raid at 5am on Thursday, accused of having taken part in the protests against the appointed trustee in Batman.

Mustafa Erol, Medeni's brother, spoke to ANF and said that his brother's throat was injured by police dogs, requiring 11 stitches. Despite his brother being unable to swallow, the prosecutor ordered that liquid food not be given to him.

### **11 stitches after dog attack**

Mustafa Erol said that his brother's photo, taken while he was watching the protests, was used as the reason for his detention. He described the raid, saying: "At 5am, they broke the door of our house. During the raid, my mother, father, and brother were at home. Special operations and anti-terror police broke into the house with long-barreled weapons, first pushing my father to the ground and stepping on him, then locking my mother in a room. They entered my disabled brother's room and set the police dog on him. The dog immediately jumped on my brother's throat. He was left in a pool of blood, and an ambulance was called. He got 11 stitches in his throat, and he was taken to the police station."

### **The forensic doctor at the courthouse said 'he has full criminal capacity'**

Mustafa Erol added that, as there was no space at the Batman Police Department's anti-terrorism branch, his brother was transferred to the Public Security Branch. "We went to the police with a lawyer and presented my brother's 70% disability report. We were referred to the prosecutor. After the report was sent to the prosecutor's office, my brother was brought to the courthouse for an examination by a forensic doctor, who issued a report stating that my brother 'had full criminal capacity,' and sent him back to custody. However, we have official reports from both Istanbul Psychiatry and Neurology Hospital and Diyarbakır Military Hospital, confirming my brother's disability."

### **The prosecutor ordered that liquid food not be given to young man**

Mustafa Erol also pointed out that because of the pain in his throat, Medeni is unable to swallow, yet the prosecutor's order had prevented him from being given liquid food. "When our lawyer informed the police that my brother needed liquid food, they directed him to the anti-terrorism unit. The officers there rejected the request, saying, 'There is a clear instruction from the prosecutor.'"

Mustafa Erol also mentioned that, in addition to his brother, there are other disabled individuals, as well as many children and elderly people, being held in the same detention facility.

### **My brother should be released!**

Mustafa Erol made a call for action. He stressed that his brother had been detained using police dogs and denied food. "My brother is in a life-threatening condition. He is already heavily disabled, and now they attack them with dogs. The justification is a photo of him watching the protests and walking alongside MPs. My mother is in a terrible state. Imagine a mother who has spent 37 years trying to keep her disabled child alive. This child cannot even shave by himself. He cannot meet his basic needs. They ap-

pointed a trustee to the municipality where my father is a council member, and now they are targeting my brother. They are seeking revenge. They must release my brother!"

— ★ —

## Young man imprisoned for calling on the trustee to ‘evacuate the municipality’ in Batman

ANF - Batman - 8 November 2024

The resistance that started after the appointment of trustees to Mardin, Halfeti and Batman municipalities continues on its fifth day. During the protests in Batman, 140 people were detained in five days and 39 people are still under custody.

During the residents’ protests against the usurpation of their will, Vedat Özer, a member of the Youth Assembly of the Peoples’ Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) said, “Attention, this is a public announcement, evacuate our municipalities immediately.”

Özer, who was violently detained by the police on 6 November as protests continued, was referred to Batman Courthouse after the procedures at the Provincial Security Directorate.

Without taking Özer’s testimony, the prosecutor demanded the arrest of the young man on the charge of ‘preventing an officer from performing his duty’. Özer appeared before the judge and was remanded in custody.

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## DBP Co-Chair: Give up the dirty policies and open the doors of İmralı

ANF - Hakkari - 8 November 2024

Protests against the usurpation of the municipalities of Mardin, Batman and Halfeti from the Peoples’ Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) continue. A public meeting and march was organised in the Yüksekova district of Hakkari with the participation of the Democratic Regions Party (DBP) Co-Chair Keskin Bayındır and representatives of civil society organisations and political parties and hundreds of residents.

Speaking in the city centre after the march, Bayındır stated that the people of Yüksekova have never succumbed to persecution and said, “Our people have been resisting this persecution for 5 days. Kurds and their friends are on the streets against the usurpation of will. Our people do not and will not accept the usurpation of the Kurdish people’s will. With this oppressive policy, they think that they will make the

struggle of the Kurdish people regress. If your goal is to bring the Kurdish people to their knees, go home. You will never bring this people to their knees. The government is hostile to all those oppressed. We saw this once again in Esenyurt. This government persecutes all peoples. As you attack the will of the Kurdish people, the Kurdish people will respond much more strongly. The Kurdish people will not submit to your oppression.”

Stating that the Kurdish question can only be resolved under the leadership of Abdullah Öcalan, Bayındır said, “It is not a hand of brotherhood and peace they extend, but a hand aimed at breaking the will. This people will protect their will and honour. We have never let Ankara trample on our honour until today, and we will not let it do so. Stop attacking the will of the Kurdish people. Is there anyone left who has not been investigated because of your persecution? These investigations show how oppressive you are. There is talk about resolving the Kurdish question. The solution to the Kurdish issue has a clear path and address. No one can draw a border on this path. For 100 years this problem has been going on. On the one hand, you say you will resolve the problem, on the other hand, you attack the values of our people. We do not accept this hypocrisy. The solution to this problem lies with Mr Öcalan. This issue can only be solved under the leadership of Mr Öcalan. Therefore, give up these dirty policies and open the doors of İmralı. Abandon your trustee policies so that a solution can be put forward.”

Remarking that the Kurdish people are not alone and have the support of millions, Bayındır said, “This struggle is legitimate. We will definitely send away these oppressors who try to trample our will. We will resist until victory.”



## DEM Party Co-Chair: We will increase our struggle until the trustees are removed from these lands

ANF - Amed - 8 November 2024

People have been taking to the streets for five days in protest at the usurpation of the municipalities of Mardin, Batman and Halfeti on 4 November and the appointment of trustees by the Ministry of Interior in the place of the democratically elected representatives of the Kurdish people for the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party).

In Amed (tr: Diyarbakır), the DEM Party and DBP (Democratic Regions Party) Amed Provincial Organisation and Free Women's Movement (Tevgera Jinen Azad) led a march against the usurpation of municipalities. DEM Party Co-Chair Tülay Hatimoğulları, Democratic Regions Party (DBP) Co-Chair Çiğdem Kılıçgün Uçar, co-mayors of municipalities and representatives of civil society organisations participated in the march.

Thousands of people gathered at Şêx Seîd (Dağkapı) Square and marched through the city center behind a banner reading ‘The people’s will cannot be usurped. No Pasaran to the trustees’.



DEM Party Co-Chair Tülay Hatimoğulları greeted the resistance of the people of Amed and said, “This resistance will continue until we remove the trustees from these lands. The trustee means a coup, stealing the will of the Kurdish people and all other peoples, usurping the rights of the people. The trustee means stealing the right to elect and be elected from all opposition groups in this country, especially the Kurdish people. The trustee has no place in the constitution. It is an illegal practice against the Constitution as well as international conventions to which Turkey is a party and international law.”

Tülay Hatimoğulları said: “The government is committing a crime by appointing trustees on our political will for the third time. They are giving the people, especially the Kurdish people, the message that they cannot govern themselves. The name of this regime is not democracy with the right to elect and be elected. The name of this regime is authoritarianism and fascism. Fascism, the trustee regime and the usurpation of will have brought all the peoples of Turkey together. In Mardin, all peoples joined hands and defended their will. In Esenyurt, regardless of which political party they belong to, all those who suffer from the trustee regime and claim their right to elect and be elected have come side by side, and we should stand together even more.”

Expressing that the appointment of a trustee to Esenyurt is a blow to the Urban Consensus, Tülay Hatimoğulları further stated the following: “They do not want the Turks to stand with the Kurds, they do not want the peoples to stand side by side. They want to bring everyone who opposes them to their knees by appointing trustees to municipalities. But at the same time, they want to give the resources of the municipalities to a handful of cronies. That is why we reject trustees who steal the money of the municipality, which is the right of the people and should be used for service. In the past two periods, we have laid out the thefts of the trustees in front of the public with documents. Even the Court of Accounts reports mention the thefts of the trustees. Like thieves, gangsters and the mafia, this regime usurps the will of the people in every sense.

Today, President Erdoğan congratulated the judiciary on the appointment of the trustees. They are thus admitting that the trustees were appointed through the judiciary. Our elected co-mayors have no finalised sentence and those who are not the subject of a case are facing fabricated lawsuits. Appointing trustees and dismissing them from office is against the law. The people claim their will, the people do not accept the trustee regime. The judiciary is committing lawlessness, acting as the judiciary of the AKP and MHP. It can never judge Mardin, Batman, Esenyurt and Halfeti. Everyone whose heart is in favour of justice, peace, freedom and democracy must stand up for democracy. We will continue our struggle against the trustees everywhere and in every field. We will increase our struggle until the trustees are removed from these lands.

The issue of isolation and the question of whether there will be a solution to the Kurdish question have been on the agenda lately. The Kurdish question is an issue that deserves to be on the agenda in this country. The Kurdish question is not only a Kurdish question. If we are against the trustees, we have to talk by putting the Kurdish question at the centre. Today, the biggest obstacle to the democratisation of Turkey is that the Kurdish issue has not been resolved through peaceful and democratic methods. As the DEM Party, we have always demanded that the isolation be ended and Mr Öcalan be freed.

We would like to send a clear message from the centre of Amed to Ankara, Turkey and the world once again. We are in favour of a peaceful and democratic solution to the Kurdish question. We are a party that

fight for the solution of the Kurdish question with an honourable peace. We have said that we are open to dialogue and negotiation for a solution to this issue. If there is no honourable peace, if there is a desire to liquidate the opposition, we cannot be here, we will not be here. We will continue our democratic resistance and struggle.

We hereby appeal to the Palace, to the two partners; AKP and MHP. Enough is enough, enough of the torment you inflict on the Kurdish people. Stop constantly bringing war and conflict to the agenda in a place where hunger and poverty are deepening, and stop overshadowing hunger and poverty. If there really is to be a resolution process, it can be carried out together. But enough is enough, stop playing games. The games you have set up have been and will continue to be a stumbling block for you. The Kurdish people did not and will not give up their honourable struggle. We will continue to insist on an honourable peace together with the peoples living in this country, especially the Kurdish people. We will continue to call for peace.

Peace is strength, peace is honourable, peace is courageous, peace is effective. Those who fight behind the scenes are afraid of peace. Those who seek personal interests and those who think about the interests of a group of people are afraid of peace. We want peace as peoples. I sincerely believe that the seeds we sow with our hands will flourish in this geography. We will continue our struggle for peace. The struggle against the trustees is also a struggle for peace. Opposing hunger, poverty and femicide is also a peace struggle. Let it be known that we are not withdrawing from any field, we will continue to struggle everywhere as always. We will win by resisting, we will establish honourable peace together.”

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## Six people detained in Mardin and Amed

ANF - 8 November 2024

Dozens of people have been targeted by the police in the wake of protests against the appointment of trustees on 4 November to the municipalities of Mardin, Batman and Halfeti in the place of the mayors elected by the Kurdish population in the 31 March local elections.

Kadri Çakar, Mehmet Emin Şahin, Dilbirîn Şahin, Serhat Yalçınkaya and Hacı Tekin were detained in house raids conducted by the Turkish police in Mardin. The detainees were taken to Mardin Provincial Security Directorate.

In Amed, a young man who participated in the march organised under the slogan ‘Democracy against the trustees’ was detained. Mehmet Ateş was taken away by tens of police officers and tortured on the ground for minutes. Ateş, who is claimed to have a detention warrant by the police, was taken away in an armoured vehicle after being handcuffed.

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# Interview

## Lawyer Sarıca: The right to hope is non-negotiable

ANF - 7 November 2024

Kurdish people's leader Abdullah Öcalan's lawyer, Rezan Sarıca, spoke about the current situation in İmralı and the discussions on the "right to hope," emphasizing that legal changes are necessary to access this right.

Lawyer Sarıca also commented on MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli's statements about the "right to hope" and the previous rulings of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) on the issue. He noted that Bahçeli suggested this right could be granted under certain conditions, but it remains uncertain whether the Parliament will comply with this proposal or whether, even if such a regulation is made, the judiciary will implement it.

Lawyer Sarıca pointed out that the "right to hope" does not directly mean freedom, but stressed the importance of legal reforms in line with democratic and societal needs. He criticized the idea of making fundamental rights, such as the "right to hope," subject to political negotiations and reminded that the government has a responsibility to adhere to international agreements and protect these rights.

Lawyer Sarıca also emphasized that the government's legislative, executive, and judicial branches are obligated to comply with legal norms, and that it is crucial to explain why the necessary actions have not been taken over the past decade. His statements implied that Öcalan's legal situation should be addressed within the framework of fundamental rights and freedoms, rather than being treated solely as a political bargaining chip.

*The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) delivered a ruling on this issue, and some legal articles need to be amended to end the violations. Could you explain which articles the court refers to?*

The ECHR found that the regulation requiring Mr. Öcalan's aggravated life sentence to be served for life violates the prohibition of torture and, in its 2014 "Öcalan No. 2" decision, ruled that Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) had been breached. Similar decisions were made in *Vinter v. United Kingdom* (2013), *Kaytan v. Turkey* (2015), *Gurban v. Turkey* (2016), and *Boltan v. Turkey* (2019). As long as the violation continues, these rulings will persist because the problem is systemic and structural. Articles such as Article 47 of the Turkish Penal Code, Articles 25 and 107/16 of the Execution Law, and Article 17/4 of Law No. 3713, which embody this structural issue, must be abolished or amended.

### **'Legal rights cannot be subject to political conditions'**

As a country bound by the ECHR, Turkey is obliged to comply with these rulings according to Article 46. Likewise, per Article 90 of its Constitution, Turkey must adhere to the ECHR. The Committee of Minis-

ters of the Council of Europe, which monitors the implementation of the rulings in the Öcalan, Gurban, Kaytan, and Boltan cases, called on Turkey in 2021 and 2024 to urgently make the necessary legal changes. Therefore, subjecting the required amendments to any political condition is inconsistent with the Constitution and international law, particularly with the ECHR mechanism. Such a condition is also incompatible with the prohibition of torture and with the logic and rationale of the ECHR ruling. Continuing the current conditions exacerbates torture and mistreatment.

*Do you expect any new legal regulations related to Imralı?*

Introducing a legal regulation that aligns with the ECHR ruling is a procedural matter that must be addressed immediately and without conditions. Only with such adjustments would freedom become a legal possibility for Mr. Öcalan. However, the specifics and structure of these legal changes are critically important. The essence of the issue involves discussing the right to hope in terms of freedom within legal and democratic frameworks. Initiating this discourse right after implementing these regulations - or concurrently without delay - would be more credible, reliable, and predictable.

In other words, the core issue is that Mr. Öcalan has been imprisoned for nearly 26 years. Throughout this time, and even prior to it, he has consistently advocated for a democratic solution to the Kurdish issue, striving for peace. As is widely acknowledged, he has played a role in advancing democratic approaches and stabilizing efforts for a peaceful settlement. Thus, discussing the right to hope and the right to freedom in the context of establishing a democratic order is crucial, and further delays should be avoided.

*In his speech, Bahçeli used the term 'isolation,' marking the first official acknowledgment of it, though for 25 years Kurds have claimed isolation exists at Imralı, despite strong denial of this claim from government circles. Following this official acknowledgment of 'isolation,' the issue has now taken on a new dimension in both domestic and international law. How do you interpret this situation?*

The state of isolation and lack of communication in Imralı has been a long-standing issue raised by us as legal professionals, both within Turkey and on international platforms, especially in Europe. Despite all types of pressure, the Kurdish people, their allies, and the democratic public have protested and exposed this isolation, reaching millions opposing it. Numerous authorities and bodies in Turkey and Europe have been held accountable and urged to take lawful actions. The democratic public had expectations regarding these efforts.

The isolation in Imralı became a prominent global issue, and it's clear that recent developments are also related to this. We have long argued that this system of isolation, along with general stagnation in Turkey, cannot continue indefinitely. Bahçeli's acknowledgment has merely made the issue more visible, prompting even those who were previously silent to start engaging with it. However, it's worth noting that international assessments have already recognized this isolation long ago. These developments extended beyond recognition and also involved calls to end the isolation.

*Is Turkey violating the international law it has signed in Imralı?*

The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT), in its most recent report (2020), found that the justifications used to base the disciplinary sanctions imposed on family visit bans were misleading and political. It recommended that conditions be improved for family and lawyer visits and the right to

defense. The United Nations Human Rights Committee (UNHRC) sent a precautionary decision to Turkey on September 6, 2022, stating that the prisoners 'should be allowed to see their lawyers immediately and without any restrictions.' It reminded us of this decision again on January 19, 2023.

During the 80th session of the United Nations Committee Against Torture (UNCCT) in July 2024, many important issues, such as isolation, visit bans, lawyers' inability to access files, consecutive disciplinary punishments, the fact that these processes are carried out in secret from lawyers, the fact that no news has been received since March 25, 2021, and the lack of steps in line with international standards regarding life sentences were asked as questions to Turkish government officials.

Of course, the delegation could not provide convincing, sufficient and legally justified answers, and the İmralı isolation could not be defended. The following week, the UNCCT rapporteurs published their interim observation report and recommended that the isolation conditions be made legal and that legal changes be made for the right to hope. I would like to remind you that they will be in contact with the government to ensure that these recommendations are fulfilled by September 2025. In parallel with such developments, there were many developments such as calls and letters from Nobel Prize winners.

*Do you believe that things will change in the coming days?*

Currently, no lasting development has occurred to eliminate the multi-faceted legal irregularities at İmralı. A family visit was allowed for Mr. Öcalan, after 43 months. This only partially lifted the veil on isolation. Apart from that, no real changes have taken place. We haven't been able to meet with him for over five years, and the ban on lawyer visits remains in effect. Our requests for meetings continue to go unanswered.

As lawyers, we are still denied access to disciplinary actions and other restrictive decisions, which are conducted secretly and illegally, preventing the exercise of his right to defense. Disciplinary sanctions continue to be issued.

Since being transferred to İmralı in 2015, we haven't had a single meeting with Mr. Konar, Mr. Yıldırım, or Mr. Aktaş, nor have their families. Mr. Aktaş, despite reaching 30 years of detention this past April, has not been released. There's been no direct communication with them. It's clear that Bahçeli's statement has not changed anything yet. Arbitrary and political systems are in place instead of legal standards and international laws. There has been no adherence to the recommendations from the CPT or the UN Human Rights Committee regarding the lawyer situation.

For instance, the report from the CPT's last visit to İmralı in September 2022 is in Turkey's possession but has yet to be published. The UN's precautionary decision regarding lawyers has also yet to be implemented. So, while the İmralı isolation system remains firmly in place, we have not seen any shift in policy on the societal, social, or judicial levels that would suggest a solution to the Kurdish issue.

## Muslim: Salvation of Turkey is in the hands of Abdullah Öcalan

ANF - 6 November 2024

While the Turkish army is bombing Northern and Eastern Syria, some within the Turkish government camp speak in a way intended to suggest a willingness to find a solution to the Kurdish question. In an interview with ANHA news agency, board member of the Democratic Union Party (PYD), Salih Muslim, assessed these developments.

*The Kurdish question is being discussed in Turkey and North Kurdistan. The Turkish government has made statements about this. At the same time, the army attacks by the regime in Ankara are escalating. How do you evaluate this?*

A change is underway in the Middle East. Some people think that a third world war is taking place in the Middle East, and that is true. In every world war there have been changes, and the current war is bringing about changes in the system. In World War I the nation-state came to the fore. In World War II the world became bipolar. This system collapsed in 1990, so a new system was needed. This reordering process is now called World War III. In this new system many things can change. Sovereignty, borders, state, government, etc. can change. This process has been going on since 2010 and what is happening now is part of it. Those who stand in the way of this project will be eliminated. This included Hamas and Hezbollah.

### "The Turkish state is in a hopeless situation"

Turkey also sees what is happening. Erdoğan says: 'Israel will attack us.' This is not geographically possible, but Erdoğan does not want to admit that the world is changing. The conditions and developments in the Middle East make this necessary. Turkey has never stopped the war it has been waging against the Kurds for ten years now. The Kurdish representative and Kurdish intellectuals have said: 'If you solve the Kurdish question, both the Kurds and the Turks will win; Turkey could become a major power in the Middle East.' But they have not listened. Now it has been understood that change is necessary and that nothing is possible without a solution to the Kurdish question. After ten years of war, Turkey is on the brink of economic, political and diplomatic collapse. Turkey must find a solution. The way is to solve the Kurdish issue, but the Turkish government has not yet been able to bring itself to do so.

### "The Ottoman game does not end"

Many words and speeches have been made, but nothing binding. Apart from that, no practical steps have been taken. Whatever the government says, it is denied the next day. We saw this after the Dolmabahçe Agreement in 2015. Back then, it destroyed everything. The Kurdish people should also learn from their experiences. During the Turgut Özal era, some promises were made, but they were not kept. In 1993, there was a negotiation process, but this was also broken off by the Turkish side. Another attempt was made in 1998 during the Erbakan era, but Turkish fascism destroyed it too. The same thing happened in Oslo and in 2015. We should learn from this. It is true that the internal and external situation force us to take action. But the Ottoman game does not end. No practical steps have been taken so far.

*Turkish government officials made similar statements at the beginning of the Rojava revolution. They invited you to Ankara, but then labeled you and your party as “terrorists”...*

In 2013, 2014 and 2015, we came to the fore as a force. The international powers did not recognize us. We waged war against al-Nusra, the Muslim Brotherhood and other mercenary groups. Turkey had incited them against us. At that time, Turkey had just recognized us, they said: ‘A new group has emerged.’ This is how they wanted to reverse the situation. It was about getting us to line up with them and eventually join the Muslim Brotherhood. That was what it was about then. At that time, İlham Ehmed, Asya Abdullah and I traveled to Ankara and Istanbul and sat with Turkish government officials. When they realized that we would not put ourselves under the control of the Muslim Brotherhood and that we were choosing the Third Way in Syria, they declared us “terrorists.”

*Is the situation today comparable to that?*

It is a game. It was a game then, and it is a game now. The games may be different. They want to distract the Kurds from their goals and fob them off without giving them anything. The Turkish government will go before the press and say that it did this and that, but in practice nothing will happen. Back then it was only about Rojava, now it is about all Kurds.

*Ömer Öcalan, nephew of Abdullah Öcalan and a member of the DEM party, was recently able to visit the Kurdish people’s leader in İmrālî. Öcalan conveyed an important message. How should we assess this?*

Visits to İmrālî are a right of Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] and the Kurdish people. After four years of total isolation, a visit took place. We were seriously worried about Abdullah Öcalan's health. For this reason, this visit is very important for us and our people. He sent his greetings to our people and is following the process closely. In his message he said that if the conditions are right, he has the theoretical and practical power to move this process from a conflict and violent environment into a legal and political one. He has international power, the whole world is watching him. Now it is up to the other side, and it will be seen how honest they are.

*But will Turkey take its necessary steps?*

There is no alternative, the external and internal conditions make it imperative for them. The key is Abdullah Öcalan. Of course, the Ottoman game will continue to be played. It is about weakening and destruction. But the salvation of Turkey is in the hands of Abdullah Öcalan. The moment has come, the government can no longer refuse.

*So what needs to be done for a solution or a meaningful process?*

The conditions must be created for Abdullah Öcalan to be able to communicate freely with individuals, his people and his organization. If this does not happen, nothing will happen, and then we cannot talk about a negotiation process. These are the preconditions. Conditions must be created for the peace process to take place. If you want peace, you must first give Abdullah Öcalan these opportunities.

*During the Dolmabahçe trial, Abdullah Öcalan insisted on bringing the matter to parliament. Because the issue was being discussed both officially and by the whole people. It should be discussed in parliament. The Kurdish people want equality, nothing else. Where do you think the current situation will lead?*

Global developments make the Kurdish question as urgent as the Middle East issue. If you want peace in the Middle East, Syria, Turkey and elsewhere, you must solve the underlying problems. International and regional powers have recognized this. The more games are played, the later a solution will come. Delays make the situation worse. This question must be solved. The solution depends on the Kurdish people and other peoples. There may be games, but we should not be deceived. The Kurdish people have been subjected to tyranny many times in their history, but they have also played a pioneering role for humanity. Today, the Kurdish people and other peoples are ensuring unity and peace. We are the pioneers of democracy in the Middle East, so we are expected to play our historic role today. International powers have also recognized this. We must continue our struggle in accordance with this reality.



## Besê Hozat: We stand behind the will of Leader Öcalan

ANF - 7 November 2024

KCK Executive Council co-chair Bese Hozat said in this interview that the Turkish state could solve the Kurdish question with Leader Öcalan.

*To begin with, we would like to talk about what people are currently most concerned about. A meeting with the people's leader, Abdullah Öcalan, has taken place. What does that mean? How do you evaluate this? And what impact does it have on ongoing processes and discussions?*

As a result of a great struggle, Rêber Apo [Abdullah Öcalan] was allowed to hold a meeting with his family, meeting Omer Öcalan. Before that, various rumors were spread to the public regarding the health condition of Rêber Apo. It has always been like this in the past 26 years. At various times, this, on the basis of the continued special warfare persisting state, has been disseminating rumors regarding Rêber Apo's health and security status through various individuals, causing great concern and anxiety among the Kurdish people, almost creating an outcry, and then having various short-term meetings for a few times or maybe even just once. It is trying to create a perception in the public opinion, as if the isolation has been broken, as if it has been overcome. In this way, it is trying to pacify the rising resistance and break its effect. After that, the special warfare policy continues with all its violence and without any change.

Now again, the same procedure can be observed. The global freedom campaign aiming for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo has reached a very important impact. A very strong resistance and a high level of people taking responsibility in the struggle for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo have emerged globally. From the academic sphere, over many non-governmental organizations to so many other relevant institutions, masses of people have taken the struggle against the torture and isolation system in İmralı on their agenda. Social resistance grew everywhere.



The level of resistance that emerged through the global freedom campaign has brought such games to the agenda of the Turkish state. Because it was stuck and was facing difficulties. Also, the developments in the region are pushing the Turkish state to the limit. It is experiencing a serious deadlock in domestic and foreign policy. When all this came together, it led to the decision to allow this meeting.

Of course, this in no way means that the isolation has been overcome. Again, the Turkish state is with great effort trying to create a perception that the isolation has been broken. This has nothing to do with reality. This is part of their special warfare concept. Whatever the purpose of such information provided in the framework of the special warfare and propaganda regarding the health and security of Rêber Apo, whatever the calculations of the Turkish state, these will come back to the Turkish state in a very bad way. This is something I want to particularly point out.

Rêber Apo has always stated this in the past years. Any negative development in İmralı cannot be considered normal by this movement, these people, and the general democratic society. Nothing is normal on İmralı; nothing is left to fate. Everything that happens in İmralı develops as a result of a genocidal policy, attack. If even one single hair of Rêber Apo's is harmed, these people will take it as a reason to destroy the Turkish state. There will be no such thing as Turkey, no such thing as the Turkish state anymore. Turkey will turn into hell. This would mean a civil war in Turkey that would end with the collapse of the Turkish state and the disappearance of the Republic of Turkey.

Rêber Apo is the mortar of the brotherly coexistence, unity, and alliance of the Kurdish and Turkish people. Rêber Apo stands for the Kurdish people. Rêber Apo stands for the alliance of the Kurdish and Turkish people. Rêber Apo stands for the democratization of Turkey and for the freedom of the peoples of Turkey. In this sense, any approach or practice that threatens Rêber Apo's health or security will bring the end of Turkey. It will bring the end of the Turkish state.

They are playing with fire. Over the past 26 years, they have tried many things and played many games. The rumors that they spread regarding his health and security solely serve their special warfare. This is done by the state itself. They are trying to create a perception in society in order to pacify it. They are trying to break the impact of the developing freedom struggle, the freedom campaign that especially aims for the physical freedom of Rêber Apo. But the system of torture and isolation is continued with all its intensity. The genocidal attacks against the Kurdish people are being continued without interference.

As I pointed out before, what happened is staged. The rising struggle and the people's outrage brought such a meeting to the agenda. Now again, the attacks of the state are intensifying. It started with the attack on the municipality of Shevshek (tr. Esenyurt). Now, they appointed trustees to the municipalities of Mardin (tr. Mardin), Elih (tr. Batman), and Xelfeti (tr. Halfeti) as well. The entire infrastructure of Rojava was bombarded on the pretext of the TUSAŞ attack. The genocidal attacks on Rojava have without a break continued and intensified. Similar attacks continue with all intensity and violence in northern Kurdistan, as well as in the Medya Defense Zones<sup>2</sup>. This situation has once again reveals the true face of this special warfare state, this special warfare government of the AKP-MHP, and the fascist government with all its nakedness. It was Rêber Apo who once again ripped the mask off their faces and emphasized that the isolation continues.

Rêber Apo revealed his stance and his approach in a very striking way. He said that if the conditions arise, he has the theoretical and practical power to turn the process from the armed struggle to the political and

legal ground. He has this power, and as he pointed out, he can play a strong role in the democratic solution of the Kurdish question and can fulfill his duty and role in bringing peace and democracy to Turkey. As he said, he wants to serve the peoples of Turkey, wants to serve the democracy of Turkey, the democratic republic, and the democratic solution of the Kurdish question. The interlocutor of the Kurdish question is Rêber Apo. Rêber Apo is the negotiator for our movement, for our people. He represents the will of our people. He is the leader of the peoples. He is the pioneer of freedom. The Turkish state must solve the democratic solution of the Kurdish question by taking Rêber Apo as an interlocutor. Rêber Apo is ready for negotiations. He openly declared this to the public again.

If this state is going to take a step in this regard, if it is ready to solve the Kurdish question democratically, to save Turkey from a great catastrophe, from tumbling into the abyss, and from being dragged into hell, it will solve this issue with Rêber Apo. Rêber Apo is ready for this, and we as a movement stand behind him. As had been announced, we as a movement will take the solution and approach that Rêber Apo will develop as a basis for any step we take. We are a movement that will implement the instructions and perspectives of Rêber Apo.

The problem lays with the Turkish state, which is yet again after another of its games. By trying to deceive the Kurdish people, it hopes to get itself out of this difficult phase with little damage. This is the entire calculus of this government. For them, it is not about the democratic solution of the Kurdish question and not about the democratization of Turkey. It isn't interested in the brotherly coexistence of the peoples. All it cares about is its own power and its own survival.

There are serious developments in the region, and they strongly affect Turkey and form a serious challenge for the government. Turkey's geopolitical and geostrategic position can no longer be marketed as effectively as it used to be. Turkey's geopolitical position is gradually weakening, and so its general influence is also weakening. The developments in the region and the agreements made create serious new situations for the Turkish state. Now, the government itself is in a great panic. It is in great fear and anxiety of losing its power. It is in search of how to get out of this. And so they try to abuse the influence of Rêber Apo and his movement to their advantage. The Turkish state is trying to surrender the freedom movement. It is trying to break the will of the Kurdish people and surrender the Kurdish people. It is gradually trying to completely neutralize the democratic forces in Turkey and take them over. And is trying to design the opposition in Turkey according to their own needs. It is trying to drive everyone into the service of its own power. Therefore, it is conducting such intense special warfare.

Our people should not fall for these games. No inappropriate and unrealistic expectations should arise among our people and in democratic public opinion. One must be aware that this government is after a game. It is after deception and deceit. It is trying to break and neutralize the resistance and will of the people. In this respect, there should be no relaxation, no weakening, especially regarding the global freedom campaign. The global freedom campaign must continue to grow bigger and stronger. Today, if the state has been forced to let Omer Ocalan meet with Rêber Apo, if it has created a very limited and partial relaxation in this regard, it is because it has resorted to tactical maneuvers in order to get out of this situation.

The influence of the global freedom campaign is very crucial in this regard. The resistance developed by our people, of the guerrilla, of the women, and of the youth has a huge impact. All this resistance, all this struggle, hence the level of the campaign, have brought about such a situation that they were forced to a

tactical maneuver. The global freedom campaign must grow even stronger. Social resistance must develop and grow everywhere.

On November 16th, a big rally is going to take place in Cologne. Young and old must participate in this extremely meaningful march. From the beginning of the month until the 16th, there need to be strong and meaningful actions in the four parts of Kurdistan, and the diaspora also needs to strongly mobilize. In itself, however, this does not only apply to the current phase. We are in an extraordinary situation. A genocidal war is being waged against the Kurdish people, against the peoples. Very historical developments are taking place. We are going through a fate-determining process for our people and for the peoples of the Middle East. So constant action and mobilization are necessary. This should not be limited to the march in Cologne. But of course our people, together with their international friends, in Europe must show a strong will there as well. But this must continue in the form of a *serhildan*<sup>3</sup> both in the four parts of Kurdistan and outside the country. And this must be pioneered by the women and the youth. They must lead this mobilization strongly and continuously until concrete results are achieved, until Rêber Apo's health, security, and physical freedom are ensured. As a matter of fact, when Rêber Apo attains his physical freedom, the Kurdish question will be solved democratically, Turkey will be democratized, democracy will spread to the region, and the peoples will be liberated. The key is the physical freedom of Rêber Apo.

Therefore, the global freedom campaign has such historical meaning and importance. It needs to be carried out and strengthened in every regard. The social, legal, political, diplomatic, and ideological resistance must continue with all its strength. And concrete results must be achieved. The level reached by the campaign has proved that if this struggle is continued vigorously, exponentially, the physical freedom of Rêber Apo will be ensured. We will realize the democratic solution to the Kurdish question. We can ensure the democratization of Turkey and the democratization of the region. There is already more than enough ground for this. The signs of this have also emerged. With this hope, belief, and excitement, and motivated by the beautiful greeting received from Rêber Apo, the campaign must be continued strongly. Based on this, I sent my greetings with great respect, love, and longing to Rêber Apo.

*To have a closer look at the discussions in Turkey about the possible start of a new solution process. How do you assess this in view of the developments of the last few days?*

There is no solution process, as they say. There is no will in this state for a solution in the current situation. There is no change in its mentality. There is no change in the century-old policy of denial and annihilation. On the contrary, the current state mentality and the AKP-MHP government aim to finalize and complete the century-old Kurdish genocide policies by mobilizing all its means. This is very clear and something they admitted themselves. There is no will for a solution on the part of this state, this government, and this ruling power. What exists are the ongoing genocide policies. There are a thousand and one special war methods and games developed to bring these genocide policies to a conclusion. This is how this process needs to be evaluated, understood, and grasped. There is a very intense special war. In the frame of this special warfare, many games and tactical maneuvers take place. I mean, one can't even say that there is a change of discourse; there is literally no change. There are just games and special warfare.

But still, one needs to question why these discourses developed lately. These discourses need to be read and evaluated together with the developments in the region. The region is going through a very serious process. The borders are changing in the region, and new maps are being drawn. A different situation gradually emerges in the region. In other words, the region is currently being redesigned on the basis of Is-

rael's interests, on the basis of guaranteeing its security. Therefore, Israel is being provided with all kinds of means and support. Israel is currently waging a massive imperialist war in the region. In the same way NATO offers all kinds of support to the Turkish state, the US offers all kinds of support. The Turkish state is conducting a similar policy in the region under the name of neo-Ottomanism; an expansionist, occupying, and imperial policy. Israel and the Turkish state are conducting a similar policy in the region and therefore are in very serious competition.

Each state is trying to establish its hegemony over the region with the support of NATO, America, and Britain. And now the situation is this, that the Greater Middle East Project, which is being developed under the leadership of Israel with the support of Israel, America, Britain, and generally the West, and the concept developed for the region, currently excludes Turkey at many points. Many new energy and trade agreements have been made. Turkey has been left out of most of the agreements and equations developed in many regions, from India to the Mediterranean to Europe. Turkey is extremely worried about this development. It is experiencing great fear and anxiety. Because the policy and strategy currently being implemented in the region brings with it the shrinking of nation-states in the region. The ongoing discourses should be evaluated in relation to these developments. The Turkish state is trying to get out of this difficult situation, this impasse, with as little damage as possible by deceiving the Kurds, by neutralizing their struggle, by neutralizing the opposition in Turkey, and by aligning everyone with the government. It is trying to save itself. And the government wants to do this through special warfare, deception, and subterfuge. But it couldn't keep this up for very long. The TUSAŞ attack unmasked this immediately. It revealed their true face. The TUSAŞ attack revealed how false these discourses were, how such a horrible genocide plan was trying to be carried out in a more violent way, and how it wanted to develop it. It revealed the true face of the AKP-MHP government.

How did they react to the TUSAŞ attack? Without any research or investigation, they immediately claimed that those who carried out the action had come from northern Syria and used it directly as a pretext. Their language is fake, and their mentality is genocidal. There is obviously no change. There are just their games, tactical maneuvers, and their special warfare. Already on the same night of the TUSAŞ attack, they bombarded the entire infrastructure and all the service centers of the people in North and East Syria. In the course of their prepared attack, they bombarded the peoples of North and East Syria everywhere and launched a horrible genocidal attack. And they developed the same intensity of an attack on the Medya Defense Zones. And then, immediately afterwards they appointed the trustees. This shows clearly how false the rhetoric of this government is – that it is a deception. It immediately deflated the mood of those who had been listening to this, who had wondered whether there was really a solution process, whether a step would be taken, whether something would happen. All this happened in such a short period of time. It is a game played by the state. If there was a real will for a solution, would it be possible for all this to happen, particularly in such a short period of time? No one must fall for their games.

Right now, the whole aim and goal of this state, this government is to bring the genocidal policies aimed at the Kurdish people to a conclusion. That is why they are carrying out relentless genocidal attacks everywhere and will continue to do so. It will persistently continue this.

As long as the government does not give up its policies of denial-annihilation, as long as it does not give up its genocidal policies, this trustee policy will not end; it will continue. When the trustee was appointed to Shevshak the other day, we said that this would spread to Kurdistan as well. And it did. We knew it because we knew the mentality of this state and this government. It comes one after the other. The other

morning, they appointed trustees in Merdin. Elih and Xelfeti. They will gradually appoint trustees to other municipalities as well. In Turkey, they will gradually appoint trustees also to the Istanbul municipality. Gradually, they will appoint trustees to every place where democrats have been elected.

They are conducting a genocidal policy. Turkey is currently being ruled by a fascist dictator. The opposition did not want to see this. All kinds of lawlessness, injustice, persecution, oppression, and even torture against Kurds were seen as normal. Everyone turned a blind eye to these. Now they are gradually turning against them too. As they say, those who are the most silent will be the next in line. And they were very silent. This will not be limited to Kurdistan and Shevshek. It will gradually spread to Istanbul and Izmir as well. It will reach everywhere. Wherever dissent is heard, trustees will be appointed. Those who criticize will be locked up. Particularly for this reason, they had prepared the so-called law against espionage. They will lock up anyone who makes the slightest criticism, raises a voice, or objects. They will say they are associated with terrorism and that they are a threat to Turkey's survival. This is how they try to crush all opposition. This is a reality that we have been pointing the finger at for years. If there is injustice and lawlessness and you don't speak out against it, it will some day come back on you. When decay starts, when morality and conscience disappear, and you do nothing about it, then one day it will fall on your feet. What is the origin of all this? The torture and isolation system of Imrali. A horrible lawlessness takes place there. It started there, spread to all of Kurdistan, and now it is spreading to Turkey. There has not been a single voice from the opposition against the isolation until now. No one has put forward a reaction. If you don't speak out against the system of torture and isolation in Imrali, if you don't take a stance against the lawlessness and injustice there, you cannot prevent the lawlessness and injustice in Turkey. This will come to Istanbul and to Izmir as well. It will come to the CHP's doorstep as well. Who knows, maybe tomorrow they will say that the CHP is affiliated with terrorism and will seal the CHP party office. Maybe they will arrest Ozgur Ozel, they will arrest Imamoglu. If you don't take a stance, you won't be able to prevent this.

We reached a point where everyone, including the fascists Bahceli and Erdogan, the government, and the opposition, admit that there is isolation in Imrali. They confessed what kind of crime against humanity they commit. Because that is what isolation is – a crime against humanity. Now they all admit that they have been committing a crime in Imrali for 26 years. To confess isolation is to confess that they are committing a crime against humanity.

There are nationalist, chauvinist circles in the CHP that do not even want to mention the word isolation. They are living such a nightmare. They want to prevent that the conditions of Rêber Apo change, that the so-called right to hope is discussed, and that Turkish law is applied. They want to prevent Rêber Apo from being taken as an interlocutor. They are playing games, trying to find others to be taken as interlocutors, and generally searching to prevent the solution of the Kurdish question. They say that the representative of millions, the representative of the will of a people, should not be seen as an interlocutor. What a poisonous mentality and language is that? What kind of Kurdish enmity is this? Opposing Rêber Apo means opposing the Kurdish people. Enmity against Rêber Apo is enmity against the Kurdish people. Whoever has such an approach towards Rêber Apo has a wrong approach towards the Kurdish people. Rêber Apo represents the will of the Kurds. He is their leader. He is the interlocutor for the democratic solution of the Kurdish question. Opposition and hostility towards Rêber Apo is hostility towards the Kurdish people.

At the moment, there are some circles within the CHP who are called leftists, some say they are social democrats, some say they are patriots, and things alike, but live enmity to Rêber Apo. They live in Kurdish enmity. No solution can emerge from such people.

Recently, the CHP has given some positive statements. It has been admitting that there is a Kurdish question. When Devlet Bahçeli said that there is no Kurdish problem but a terror problem, Özgür Özel objected to this and pointed out that indeed there is a Kurdish problem. Devlet Bahçeli denies the existence of a Kurdish question, and so does Erdoğan. Ok, so there is no Kurdish problem in Turkey, but a 'terror problem', but why does this 'terror problem' exist? Where did this 'terror problem', as you call it, come from? Where did it come from? If there was no Kurdish question, the PKK would not have emerged. Now they call all Kurds who struggle for freedom terrorists. They call all Kurds who demand rights and law terrorists. All Kurds have been declared terrorists by this state. It calls all Kurds who want freedom, who want an honorable life, who want to share a common life with the Turkish people, who want to live together democratically, terrorists.

Now the CHP also objected to this, saying there is a Kurdish problem and that they would solve it. Good; one needs to applaud this approach. But the Kurdish people are fed up with this rhetoric. This is not new. All past governments have at some point said that there is a Kurdish problem. Even Erdoğan did so back then when it suited him. When it no longer suited him, he started to deny it again. When it suited him, he said the path to the solution of the Kurdish problem passes through Amed (tr. Diyarbakir); when it didn't, he said there was no Kurdish problem if you don't think about it. Erbakan from his predecessors also said this, as did Özal and Mesut Yılmaz. Saying it, putting it into a program with a few sentences... That period is over. This has expired. Now the Kurdish question imposes itself with all its urgency. The solution imposes itself. The democratic solution to the Kurdish question in Turkey is imposing itself with all its urgency. But the question cannot be solved with the current discourse. The CHP has to put forward a program for the solution of the Kurdish question. It has to put forward a road map for the solution of the Kurdish question. Accordingly, they will have to hold rallies everywhere and organize meetings with the Kurdish people. They will have to talk with the Kurdish people, with civil society organizations, with workers and laborers, and all the interlocutors of the Kurdish people, and listen to their demands. And first and foremost, they have to go to İmralı and take Rêber Apo as interlocutor. There is no way around this. The interlocutor is Rêber Apo. If the CHP is sincere on this issue, then it will have to be brave. If it is sincere, it will have to put forward its will. If it is sincere, it will have to take practical steps. If it is sincere, it will have to back up this promise. Against all kinds of pressure, all kinds of attacks, all kinds of blackmail, it will have to put forward a strong will for a solution and make it count. For example, if there had been serious social resistance in response to the appointment of a trustee in Şevşek, including from the CHP, then it could have become the leading party in Turkey again.

The CHP has taken 70 percent of the municipalities across Turkey. In fact, the CHP is currently governing Turkey at the local level. All the metropolitan cities of Turkey, the industry, the economy, and all sources of income are in the hands of the CHP. The CHP governs the intellectual world, that is, all the social circles that we can call intellectuals, or modern as they call them. Now, when the trustee was appointed in Şevşek, if the CHP had mobilized all its grassroots, if it had mobilized the people, if it had taken to the streets, Ahmet Özer would have persisted in charge of the municipality. But the CHP did not put forward a serious will. Their resistance remained in words again. It made statements, held meetings, and made objections as if there is a judiciary, justice, and law in Turkey. There is no judiciary; there is no law. What law are you talking about? Is there the state you think there is? That state has collapsed. The institutions of the state have been liquidated. The CHP is deceiving itself. It is trying to deceive society. It is not putting forward anything serious. For example, if it had conducted effective politics, if it had mobilized millions of people behind it, if it had taken to the streets everywhere, would this situation have hap-

pened? It would not have happened. Now they have appointed trustees in Kurdistan. They will appoint municipal trustees like this everywhere.

What is the appropriate thing to do now? The thing to do is for the whole society, regardless of young or old, to take to the streets. A strong social resistance must emerge. Politics must be conducted through this social resistance. The opposition must take the social resistance behind them. This is what will change the situation. Otherwise, it will not stop until the opposition is completely eliminated. With this, they are also sending a message to Istanbul. They want to close the political space of Kurds in Turkey, prevent democratic politics from spreading in Turkey, and prevent the unification of the Kurdish and Turkish peoples. The fascist Erdogan talks about Kurdish-Turkish unity and brotherhood, but this is all demagoguery. He speaks into the void. They have a terrible fear of the unity, common struggle, and alliance between Kurds and Turks. They are afraid of it.

So what is the thing to do now? To resist strongly in Kurdistan, Turkey, and everywhere. Hundreds of thousands, millions of people must stand up and resist. This is the only way democratic politics and the opposition can achieve results. Otherwise, if they don't do this, they will be neutralized. Moreover, our people have that will. It put forward a very strong stance from the very first moment. It must continue this. Hundreds of thousands, millions, should be in a continuous struggle. They must protect their will. They must protect their votes.

The Turkish State is applying colonial law in Kurdistan. It has abolished the right to be elected and to elect. It recognizes neither the elected nor the votes of the Kurdish people. It has actually deprived the Kurdish people of their citizenship. It is applying a law of genocide. Everything to be done against this is total resistance. It is necessary to wage a strong social and political struggle and, through this, achieve results.



## Besê Hozat: Women must organize everywhere

ANF - 8 November 2024

In the second part of this interview, KCK Executive Council co-chair Bese Hozat spoke about the war in Kurdistan, the guerrilla resistance and the war in the Middle East.

*Both the war in Kurdistan and the guerrilla resistance, as well as the war in the Middle East is intensifying. What can you tell us about it?*

The TUSAŞ attack was a very big action. It represents the peak of the guerrilla of democratic modernity. It shows the development of a new style, tactic, and strategy in the restructuring of the guerrilla. And, accordingly, had a great impact. In a place where genocidal weapons are produced, such an action is, of course, of great significance. It constitutes the strongest response to the total genocidal attacks that have been going on for a century, and that has intensified particularly in the last ten years. It constitutes a strong response to the Imrali torture and isolation system. This also shows in the letters of the two comrades, in which they express very strikingly why they carried out this action.

I would like to take this opportunity to commemorate comrades Asya Ali and Rojger Helin with great respect, love, and gratitude. Indeed, they became a symbol of courage, great will, and devotion to Rêber Apo, the peoples, and the values of freedom.

The political and military consequences of this action are enormous. This will be felt even more in the future. This action took place at a time when the genocidal attacks were continuing in a very violent way, and it was a response to these. It happened at a time when the Imrali torture system was going on very intensely and a terrible special war propaganda was being carried out on Rêber Apo. They represent the peak in the fedai struggle. They represent the peak of the guerrilla of democratic modernity. They represent the way of the new guerrilla, its tactics, and strategy with their action. At the same time, this action has a very important ideological and philosophical meaning.

The fact that comrade Asya and Rojger stayed together for a long time, prepared for this action, did reconnaissance, overcame many difficulties together, and carried out such a successful action and achieved it together also expresses the level of the joint struggle of women and men for freedom. The liberated woman also expresses the level reached by the liberated man. Comrade Asya and Rojger became symbols of the free relation between women and men. They stayed together for months, maybe even more than a year, and never deviated from the goal until the end, which is the most striking expression of the level reached in the liberation of women and the liberation of men. It is the most striking expression of the relationship between free women and free men. We need to see and evaluate this in this way. It is the result of a personality and a life dedicated to freedom. It was a very competent and professional level of action.

Of course, the struggle continues in the same spirit in the Medya Defense Zones and in northern Kurdistan. The war continues with all its intensity. The HPG has also expressed this. Now the Turkish state was saying that it would conclude its aim in November. Obviously, it was not the last November of the guerrilla. It still has many years ahead of it. The lock they've been talking about closing for months around the guerrilla has closed around them.

With the current mentality, this state will go nowhere. This state will bring its own end with this denialist, genocidal mindset. It will not yield any results. This genocidal mentality will lead to the establishment of fifty, a hundred, a thousand PKK's against them. Against this nationalist, genocidal mind, many more Asyas and Rojgers will rise. All the children of this people follow the path of Asya and Rojger. As long as these genocidal policies continue, as long as the torture and isolation in Imrali continue, thousands and tens of thousands of Asyas and Rojgers will emerge. This resistance will continue forever in the spirit of Zap, Metina, and Xakurke. It will continue by spreading everywhere. This anti-Kurdish mentality will not bring Turkey anywhere; it will solely lead to the collapse of the state. It has already put it in hell, and it is increasing the fire of that hell with its current policies.

It is clear that they will continue this war. Just the other day, Iraqi National Security Chief Kasim Arici visited Turkey; afterwards, Sudani also went there. They held meetings in Baghdad on the so-called development road. They are in intensive dialog with each other. Also, Nechirwan went to Turkey in November, just before the elections, and they want to meet with Assad. They are pushing Russia to play a role. They beg everyone like this. They beg NATO for more support. They beg the US. They beg for more support, promising that they would finish and destroy the Kurds.



The world is not the old one anymore. This is not the era of Sheikh Said; this is not the era of Seyit Riza. This is a different era. In this period, there is now an organized people, a conscious Kurdish people, a Kurdish people with a will. There is a people who know themselves, who stand up for their identity, personality, honor, and freedom, and who are willing to pay any price for this. Tens of thousands of them are currently resisting in the prisons under torture conditions and do not give in. All kinds of pressure, persecution, torture, and genocidal attacks are targeted at this people, and they resist and do not give in. No matter what is done, this people is organized and conscious and will not submit; they will resist and struggle because they gained the power of self-defense. The old times are over. If the state approaches this people with the same mindset, it will only bring its own end. They may appoint trustees everywhere, but the people will never surrender to them; they will resist and not back down. They may continue their genocidal war, but they won't achieve anything. Turkey will sink deeper and deeper into the swamp; its resources will dry up until it totally collapses.

Now that the Kurdish question is open, the solution is imposing itself. Either the state mentality will change or it will end itself. No matter who it enters into alliances with now, be it the Iraqi state, the collaborators from the KDP, or whoever, that will inevitably not prevent this.

Turkey is misreading the developments in the Middle East. If Turkey were to read the current developments correctly, if it had a rational mind, if it were to consider the interests of the peoples of Turkey, it would shift to a policy based on a brotherly coexistence with the Kurds. It would shift to a policy based on the democratic alliance with the Kurds. It would take the solution to the Kurdish question as a basis, base its relations with the Kurds on dialog, and develop a peaceful policy. It would take a similar policy with the Kurds of Rojava, in northern Kurdistan and everywhere else. This would make Turkey grow and strengthen it. It would make Turkey a great power and country in the region. In fact, it would make Turkey the strongest democratic country in the region.

But since the Kurdish hostility, denialist, extermination policy, and mentality in Turkey have not changed, since it insists on this policy, the destruction of Turkey continues. It persists in its policy of genocide, occupation, and annihilation against Rojava. On the night of October 24, they once again bombed all critical infrastructure above and below ground for the population of northern and eastern Syria. It massacred many civilians and wounded dozens of them. They hit wheat silos, bakeries, printing presses, libraries, hospitals, and schools. These are war crimes. These are genocidal crimes, crimes against humanity. That is the way of the Turkish government: genocide. It is hostile to the entire population of North and East Syria and attacks them. It is trying to turn Kurds and Turks into enemies of each other, and gradually and persistently, it is trying to lay the groundwork for civil war with all its power. It is trying to prepare the environment for this.

It is this policy that destroys Turkey. There is a war in the region right now. The region is in serious chaos. An international concept is being implemented in the region. There are a lot of calculations. Therefore, the region will no longer be like it has been before. The borders will change in the region. The nation-states have disintegrated in the region and will continue to do so. Now, this process is a crucial and historical process for the revolutionary democratic forces in the region, for the freedom movement and for all revolutionary democratic forces. They need to be in a very organized and united struggle. They need to rely on their own forces. Our people, especially in North and East Syria, need to be organized strongly based on the principles of the revolutionary people's war. Our people and everyone must take part strongly in the according self-defense.

The Turkish State is on the wrong path. It has made wrong choices. The choices it made will bring the end of its own state and will sink it even further in the swamp. Being aware of this fact, it must be clear to us that the state will not limit itself to the existing attacks. It will intensify its attacks, especially in northern and eastern Syria, both from the air and from the ground, in order to occupy the remaining areas. This state is always looking for opportunities. It is making its preparations at full speed. In anticipation of all this, our people in North and East Syria must always be prepared. On the basis of self-defense on the basis of revolutionary people's war, regardless the age, they must defend their own lands and homeland. With all the attacks, the Turkish state is trying to expel the people and depopulate the area. It is trying to prepare the ground for a ground invasion. We need to be aware of this and prepare accordingly.

While the Turkish state is making these calculations, Israel has entered Lebanon and will also enter Syria. The moment Israel enters Syria, Turkey hopes that it can take it as an opportunity to launch a broad invasion attack against North and East Syria. It speculates that nobody would say anything against its move under such circumstances. All these attacks are preparations for this.

What they have now put on the agenda is the so-called David Corridor and say that it is Israel's attempt to establish a corridor from Jordan and the north of Saudi Arabia through Teneef and Deir ez-Zor in Syria, via Shengal (Sinjar), to Mosul. They are intensively discussing this, and many advocate that while Israel pursues such a policy, they should create a corridor by themselves. Erdogan showed his map at the UN. Their whole concept is based on this. There is not a single step back on this issue.

Our people should be well aware of this. That is why our people in North and East Syria must prepare against any attack, against any attack in any scope. Based on the revolutionary people's war and the according self-defense, they must quickly organize and prepare themselves in every dimension. The peoples need to defend themselves. The way to success is through the revolutionary people's war, through self-defense. This is the only way to protect your existence and freedom. If self-defense based on the revolutionary people's war is developed, the 21st century will be the century of the Kurds. It will be the century of the peoples of the Middle East. It will be the century of women. This possibility also exists in the course of current developments. There are many severe dangers, but there are also many opportunities. It offers great possibilities and opportunities to the freedom and democratic forces as long as we are organized and as long as we are able to develop total and social resistance everywhere along the principles of the revolutionary people's war. The according preparations must be continued with conviction and determination. In this way, there is no doubt that great results will be yielded.

*Is there anything else you would like to add at the end of our conversation?*

Social decay in Turkey is directly linked to the war being waged. This genocidal war against the Kurds has created a serious decay. It has dissolved morality, conscience, and all moral values of society. Violence has become part of the social reality. The ideology of male domination feeds on violence and war. That's why it is now everywhere. A great enmity against women, enmity against children and a horrible masculinity aroused. This constantly growing and spreading sexism also obviously intensifies violence against women. Two to three woman and two to three children are murdered on a daily basis. This is a terrible massacre. At the same time the women's struggle is growing. This is something the state is truly afraid. That is why violence against women is encouraged and developed even more by the state.

The thing to do against this is to develop the women's liberation struggle, to organize and educate women. It is about the development and the growth of the common struggle of women. In other words, there is a great need for women's joint struggle in these times.

The women's movement in Turkey must also take a stand against the İmralı torture and isolation system; it must take a stand against the genocidal war on the Kurds. Because all this violence against women and children feeds on this. The isolation and torture system in İmralı and the genocidal war on the Kurds feed on this policy of violence and massacre against women and children. From this point of view, against war, violence, and against the isolation and torture system, the women's movement in Turkey, the female intellectuals from Turkey, and generally the women from Turkey should also stand against this. They should be in a joint struggle with the Kurdish Women's Movement.

In this sense, the appropriate thing to do is to organize women everywhere, not to leave a single woman unorganized, to form women self-defensive everywhere and to develop an organized, self-defensive, strong, common, united women's struggle. It is to grow the struggle against the war and isolation.



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